

Sex, Love, and Romance



"I am a rare species, not a stereotype."

- Ivan E. Coyote

This zine is a product of
Feminist Studies H150: Sex, Love, and Romance,
Spring 2014

The events of May 23, 2013 weigh heavily on our minds

We honor the memory of those who died

And send light to those who were wounded,
both in body and spirit.

don't forget the SCRIPT

By: Aybuke Koyuncu

Be Modest, But Not too much.

Be SEXY, BUT not too much.

hook UP, BUT NOT too much.

don't forget the SCRIPT.

Have fun, BUT Not too much.

Like sex, BUT not too much. not

AS MUCH as he does. not AS

MUCH as she does. don't

forget the SCRIPT. EXPLORE YOUR

sexuality, BUT not too much.

don't accept the double

STandard, BUT not too much.

stick to YOUR gender ROLES,

don't forget the SCRIPT.

We Accept the Sex We Think We Deserve

Alessandra Albanese

I am done with hooking up.

A year ago, about to graduate high school and a virgin from everything but kissing, I would have jumped at the chance to jump on a man. But a year later, I have had more sexual partners than I can count on the fingers of one hand, and I don't intend to run out of fingers.

At first, the casual sex was great. He would be satisfied, I would be satisfied (sometimes), and I would feel desirable. But then I started wanting more. Not a lot more, mind you; just some post-coitus cuddles and maybe a lunch date now and again. And even though he was coming, the lunch invitations weren't.

I met men at parties. I met men through my extracurricular activities. I met men through friends. I met men online. I met men, I fucked men, and then I bade men goodbye after they expressed that they were "not looking for a relationship."

And I asked myself: Why can't I be happy with casual sex?

Because, I realized, I wasn't hearing "I'm not looking for a relationship." I was hearing, "I'm not looking for a relationship with *you*." And even though I knew that wasn't true, my brain pointed out that in all of these failed flings, I was the common denominator; if I wasn't getting dates, it had to be my own fault.

I became depressed. I savored the few minutes of stagnancy after sex, because it was the only time I could pretend there was intimacy in my life. I threw myself at men, hoping that if I could please them enough sexually, they could fulfill me emotionally.

And then, I got angry.

For fuck's sake, I am made up of beigish-yellow eyelids, purply-pink lips, and brownish-green eyes. I am made of soft, pale curves and an eager smile, of raucous laughter and a gentle touch. I am made of many things, and the only things you want are my tits and cunt? Am I no better than a warm blow-up doll in your eyes?

And so I have given up hookups. I have not given up sweat, and heat, and sex. I have not given up closeness, or pleasure. I am only giving up where there is an absence - an absence of intimacy, of affection, of joy.

Because pardon my French, but if you want to fuck me twelve ways to Tuesday, you had better be there come Wednesday. And if you want to fuck me without a condom, you had better be prepared to be by my side, whether it's twenty years from now at the door to our house or twenty minutes from now at the door to the clinic.

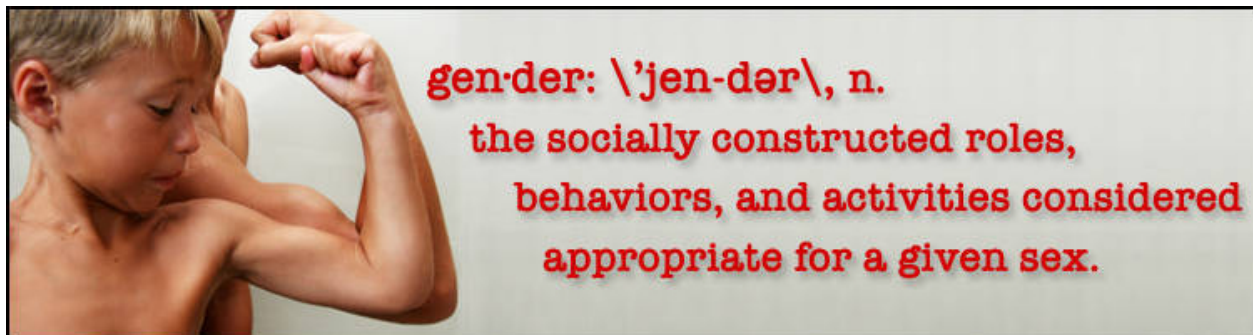
Because I love sex. I love men. But more importantly, I love me.

And I deserve better.

"'It's better not to argue with women,' Putin said, taking specific aim at Clinton's gender. 'But Ms. Clinton has never been too graceful in her statements...When people push boundaries too far, it's not because they are strong but because they are weak,' he added. 'But maybe weakness is not the quality for a woman.'" - [ABC News](#)



"We're fed all of this advice about what we should do to catch a man, keep a man, make him happy, but what about us? We're drilled on what to dress, how to wear it, and how to look, and men can just wear jeans and a tshirt and feel like they just did something in the fashion department! Do men go out buying relationship books about what to do to make us happy? NO! They don't even WRITE books for men about these things!" - Kendra Koger, [MadameNoire.com](#)



"Growing up, it was always blue toys for boys and pink toys for girls. Never mind that some girls like blue and there's no reason a boy shouldn't wear pink... but I digress. Thankfully, after middle school, 'boy stuff' isn't such a big deal, right? Ummm that's a big nope. I can't decide what's worse: that brands are making money off these tired gender stereotypes or that we keep buying into them." - Franchesca Ramsey, [Upworthy](#)



“...Women were also more likely than men to say the harassment ‘happened sometimes, often, or daily’... The survey found that everyone who’s not a wealthy, straight, white man is disproportionately affected by public harassment. That includes women and LGBT people, but also lower-income people of color. Meanwhile, the people responsible for the harassment of both men and women were overwhelmingly male...One way or another, street harassment is everybody’s problem. But like many forms of gendered violence, the ubiquity of the phenomenon serves to reflect the toxic power structures inherent in American society---not provide evidence of an equal -opportunity offense.” - Amanda Hess, Slate.com

“Young men who read magazines like Maxim, Playboy, and Men’s Health are less likely to seek their partners’ consent or respect sexual boundaries, according to a recent study conducted by Washington State University researchers. The study’s lead authors say that could be because magazine articles providing tips about how to have a better sex life often give readers a ‘false impression’ about how to negotiate a consensual sexual encounter...In other words, the men who read articles about how to land a hot girl are more likely to make inappropriate sexual advances toward women who aren’t interested, or push a sexual situation too far even when their partner is telling them to stop...” - Think Progress

“It took me back to a time in middle school where the boys would make these lists, ranking the girls from one to...however many girls there were in the class. Then they would rank all the girls in the entire school. I remember refusing to look at the list to see where I ranked, because I had finally started to grow comfortable with my looks by that time...But to make matters even more bizarre, when I tried to rally the girls to do the same thing for the guys (“let’s rank them, and show them how it feels! Right Ladies! ...Ladies??”) no one joined me! It was as if the girls were okay with being judged and ranked. No one wanted to break the status quo.” - Kendra Koger MadameNoire.com

**Zine By:
Rashidah Iddrissu
Feminist Studies 150, Honors**

No Feelings , No Emotions- They Claimed Hookups – Poems by Sheridan Gomez

Never expect, because you will regret.

Hookups.

Not emotional right?

Hookups.

No communication after

Hookups.

One and done

Hookups.

Someone is always wanting more

Hookups.

Was it just a fuck?

Hookups.

Don't get too invested

Hookups.

I hate them

Hookups.

She saw him from afar,

They met at a bar.

Number were exchanged,

And plans arranged.

Is this more than a hookup? She asked herself,

But her friends reminded her to put her feelings on a shelf.

No call, no text, not even a friendly hello

She wanted to call him first, yet wanted to seem mellow.

"Guys call girls first", her friend stated,

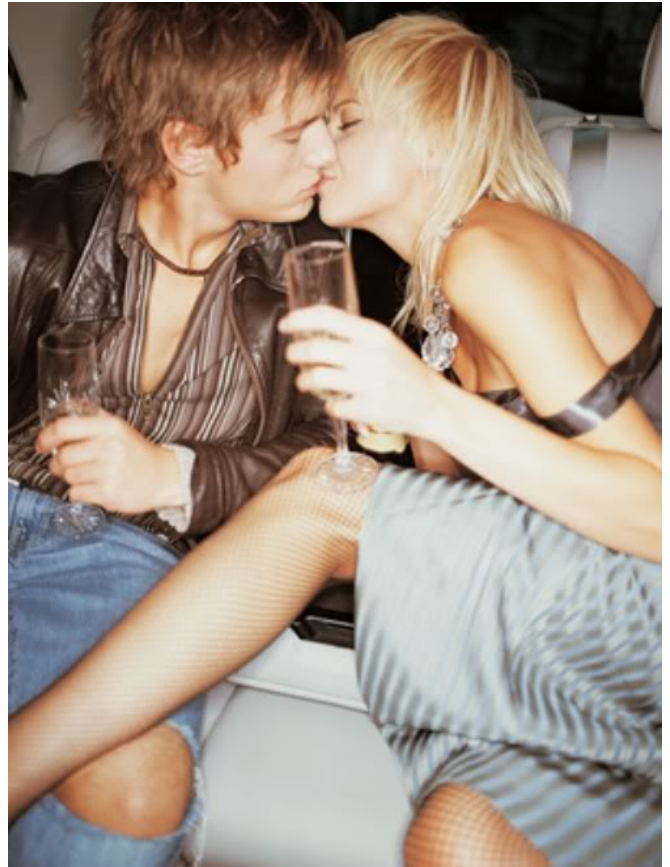
Yet she glanced at her phone as she anxiously waited.

No acknowledgement or follow up,

She recognized she was just a yuppie sup.

It was just a hookup they say,

But she regretted that she went all the way.



Women's Sexual Subjectivity in the Mexican-American Family

Diana Vargas

This piece is part of a bigger research project exploring how Latina sexualities are constructed—specifically, the sexual subjectivities of Mexican-American women, and how these are constructed within the space of the family. This research focuses on how sexual subjectivity is shaped by race, class, and gender. After conducting interviews with Mexican-American women and men, these are the themes that emerged about female sexuality in the family:

- Within the family, it is part of the mother's role to educate both daughters and sons about sex; fathers only talk to sons, if ever. Mothers only talk about practicing safe sex, warning daughters to not be taken advantage of; the message is that women should not have sex until they are married
- Religion plays an important role in how the family constructs female sexualities
- There are no discussions of queer sexualities, it is always assumed that daughters and sons are heterosexual
- Women feel that it is acceptable to be sexual once they have established a career and are on the path to marriage

The (In)Visibility of Female Sexuality

“No, sex is not even mentioned. I think once I got into high school and I had my first serious relationship ,[my parents] kind of noticed that I wouldn't be around a lot but they still didn't want to talk about it . So I feel like if I would say something I would disappoint them and that is the last thing I want...I want them to respect me.” —Female respondent

Within the space of the family, there is a great difference between how male and female sexualities are constructed. Men are encouraged to be sexual to the point where being a virgin is something to be ashamed of. Men's sexuality is recognized and openly discussed with men, where they are given advice to not get girls pregnant. On the other hand, women are told to not have sex and to wait until marriage; thus while men's sexuality is seen as natural, women's sexuality is only recognized within marriage and even then it is implied that it is only for purposes of reproduction. So while there is an invisibility of female sexuality within the familial space, women are also seen as hypersexual beings constantly at risk for having sex—women are warned to not get taken advantage of and are constantly policed by family members to ensure this. Their sexuality is simultaneously visible and invisible in that their sexuality isn't recognized yet it is visible in that this “absent” sexuality is constantly policed. Women keeping their sexuality invisible is associated with having respect for the family.

Self-Policing

“I was uncomfortable talking about sex in general because there is a certain role that we have to fulfill, because we are Latina...sex is viewed as a negative thing and I feel like as a woman of color you have to represent yourself a certain way. Even if you are in college, you have to be viewed as a good girl...you cannot represent yourself as sexual person.” –Female respondent

Because women are expected to render their sexuality invisible, they learn to police themselves to make sure that they are not explicitly sexual both within and outside of the familial space. This self-policing is also due to women feeling the need to be sexually respectable in order to counter the stereotype of Latina women as hypersexual. Latina women counter this stereotype by reversing the roles and putting white women in the role of “bad” girl. Sexual respectability then becomes part of a Mexican-American identity, where in order to claim being Mexican-American, women must first render their sexualities invisible both within and outside the space of the family.

Compulsory Heterosexuality

“I think [my mom] is okay with heterosexual sex. That is all that was talked about, as for anything other than that I’m pretty sure she would tell me not to do that and say it is bad...I feel pressured to just be heterosexual, I wouldn’t feel comfortable experimenting because my family expects me...to be married and have children, so there’s that pressure.” –Female respondent

The family also functions as a space where heterosexuality is reinforced as the norm. Women are told to wait until they are married and this therefore assumes that they are heterosexual, thus pressuring women to reproduce ways of living associated with heterosexuality. By leaving out discussions of sexualities that are not heterosexual, by omission of queer sexualities, the institution of the family compels women to be heterosexual and to feel hesitant to explore other sexualities.

Negotiating a Sexual Subjectivity: Politics of Silence

“I just don’t say anything because for [my family], it would be ideal for me to not be sexual until I get married at, like, age thirty...but maybe they wouldn’t get mad if I tell them once I have a career.” –Female respondent

Given all of these things, women negotiate their own sexual subjectivity by simply not talking about it; by being silent then, is how women maintain an image of sexual respectability both within and outside the familial space. The women I interviewed seemed to agree that it was acceptable to be sexual once they had a career or were married; again, they internalized these

messages and reinforced the notion that sexuality is a hindrance to academic or economic success, this notion implies that women cannot be sexual and claim a female gendered identity in the same way that they cannot be sexual and Mexican-American. This politics of silence, however, reinforces the notion that women's sexuality is invisible. By being silent, women inherently accept their sexuality as invisible and thus may internalize it to the point where they are unable to experience sexual desire and to recognize themselves as sexual beings.

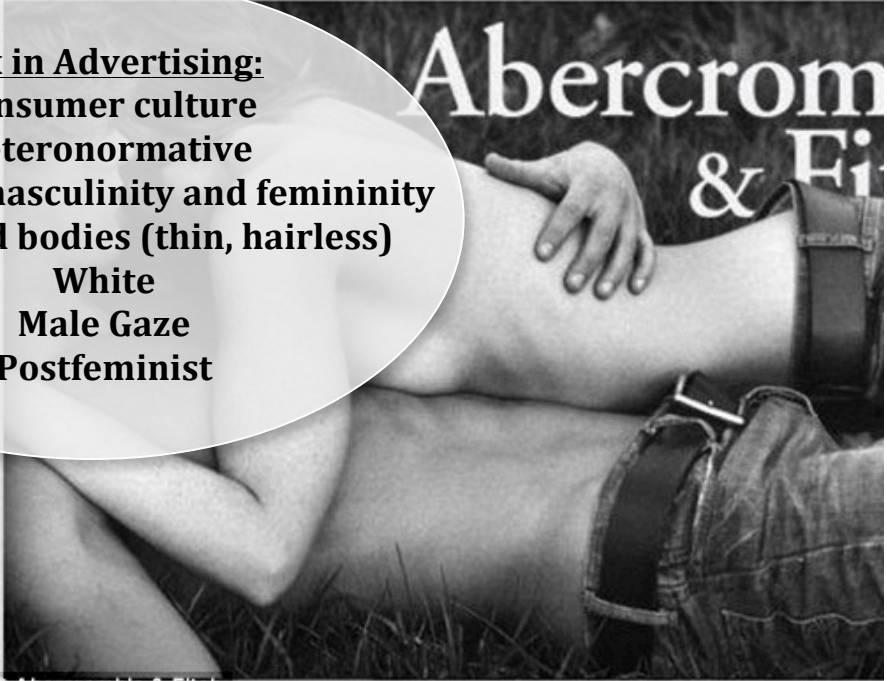
Conquering Sex

"Sex was always something that I felt like I had to conquer and I feel like now I have... Whatever feeling that I was fighting against, now I'm okay with it... Now I feel empowered." - Female respondent

Despite of all of these pressures and restrictions on women's sexuality, they are still able to construct a sexual subjectivity that is not contingent upon familial expectations. Conquering sex is recognizing the role of agency in forming a sexual subjectivity and thus saying that it is possible to transcend the intersections of race, class, and gender and all the pressures that these create within the space of the family along with the pressure to be heterosexual; it is transcending all of that to achieve a mode of understanding where one is aware of the factors that influence sexual subjectivity. Conquering sex, then, is a form of self-craft where one can consciously choose which ideologies will inform how we constructs our sexual subjectivities and how we think of ourselves as sexual beings.



Sex in Advertising:
 Consumer culture
 Heteronormative
 Hegemonic masculinity and femininity
 Disciplined bodies (thin, hairless)
 White
 Male Gaze
 Postfeminist



By Kalie Jayne
 FEMST 150H

fence sitter/switch hitter
stephanie vasquez

fence sitter/switch hitter
“pick a side already
you’re either gay or you’re straight
don’t be greedy
fence sitter/switch hitter
pick a side”
i can no more pick a side
as i can pick what blood runs through my *mestiza* veins
alma entre dos mundos
soul within two worlds
both and neither at the same time
fence sitter/switch hitter
ex-lesbian
attention seeking
confused
curious
faking
you’ll stray for dick
no one wants a bi girl
anyone but a bi girl
fence sitter/switch hitter
we expect essentialism to explain nature
instead of letting nature explain itself
as if binarism buds naturally all year round
as if nothing has ever existed in the margins in the middle
as not charted yet not understood by western thought
pick a side already pick a team
fence sitter/switch hitter
i’m not sitting on a fence
on a hill
taking my sweet time
your essentialist fence is sitting on me

Sex, Love, and Romance as Defined by Subreddits on Reddit.com










By Kana Horie

On r/sex, the top 3 posts are...

- 1  3499   **Duke Freshman outs her porn identity, criticizes porn consumers for shaming porn performers** (xojane.com)
submitted 3 months ago by phoebugreen
2701 comments share
- 2  2949   **Quotes from men who have been sexually assaulted** (imgur.com)
submitted 8 months ago by Maxxters
709 comments share
- 3  3430   **What If We Admitted to Children That Sex Is About Pleasure?** (psmag.com)
submitted 14 days ago by _Keir_
879 comments share










What did I get from this? Sex is related to porn, assault, and pleasure!

On r/love, the top 3 posts are...

- 1  5   **(One helluva rant/story) It's 1:30 a.m. and I can't stop thinking about it all...** (self.love)
submitted 9 hours ago by strychninesmileface
1 comment share
- 2  1   **The neighbor** (self.love)
submitted 10 hours ago by IYANETI
comment share
- 3  0   **theres this guy.** (self.love)
submitted 15 hours ago by cantstop yawning_
2 comments share

What did I get from this? Love is about going on and on about a person you're interested in.

On r/romance, the top 3 posts are...

- 1  42   **...Be my penguin?** (imgur.com)
submitted 1 year ago by AwesomeNeckBeard
3 comments share
- 2  49   **Only gonna be our second Valentines day together, I already can't imagine my life without him <3**
(i.imgur.com)
submitted 1 year ago by Valkofox
2 comments share
- 3  29   **Still high.** (imgur.com)
submitted 1 year ago by engagejoe
comment share

What did I get from this? Romance is about being high on love.

Would you have upvoted these posts too?

Haikus
Sean Tanabe

This love, natural
Thought we'd take things gradual
But fast lane so good

Took her to the beach
Thoughtless romance, easy come
Go easy baby

Heart beats fast sometime
Pools of feeling stream onward
Connection really

Time away from you
Gaps in growing together
Can it be patched up?

Love is hard, really
Thought I would go on without
Until I met you

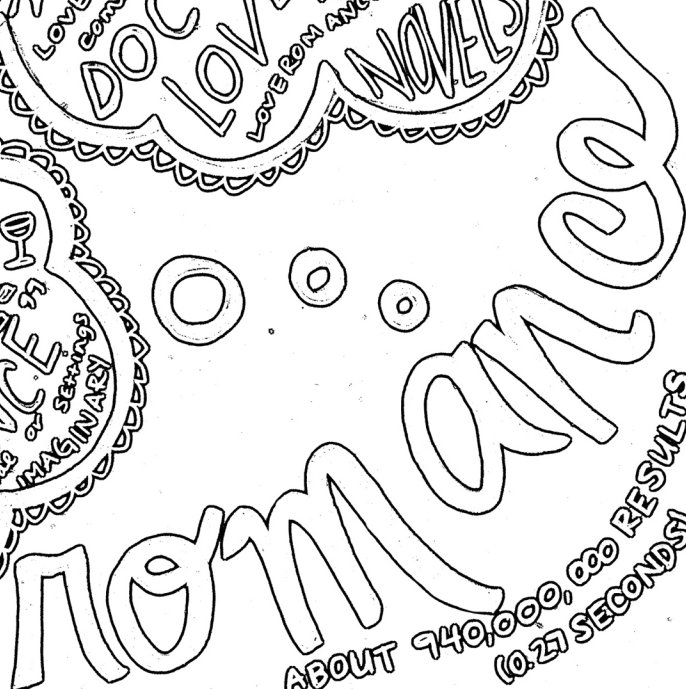
Sex, love, and romance
Our ways develop oddly?
Sing it away doll

Lets lay in this bed
Endlessly, no need to move
Ed Sheeran sounds good

What does Google know about sex? Better yet, what does Google think YOU want to know about sex, love, and romance?



ABOUT 844,000,000 RESULTS
(0.24 SECONDS)



ABOUT 740,000,000 RESULTS
(0.21 SECONDS)

Lori Willhite

Why Friends With Benefits Works Perfectly

“I’m too young to be tied down. I’m not looking for anything serious. I’m not really a relationship person. Hooking up with a friend eliminates the worry of a constantly growing “number.” I don’t want to have to keep switching partners or be in a relationship just to have sex. I don’t feel comfortable having sex with someone I don’t know very well, or someone that doesn’t care about me. So having a friend with benefits is perfect. A friend cares about me, we know each other and like each other. No strings attached. If I go out and don’t find someone to hook up with, I can always text that friend. We can totally hang out in a non-romantic setting and it’s perfect. No expectations, no awkwardness, no wondering what the other person wants or expects. Simple. Easy. No drama, no break ups, no commitment, no one gets hurt. I sometimes wonder why people even date when they could live like this? Freedom to do as I please but I don’t have to worry about finding a sexual partner when I want one. Does it ever get confusing? Sure. But relationships are confusing too. No, I wouldn’t want to see my fuck buddy hooking up with someone else, but that doesn’t mean I care if they do. We could talk about it, and if one of us starts to actually like someone else, then we just stop. Simple as that. Like, we can do whatever we want. We’re friends before anything, and that’s not going to change. This is a win/win.”

Why Friends With Benefits Never Works

“At first I thought this was perfect. We liked each other, we flirted, we were obviously attracted to one another, but neither of us wanted a relationship. Why ruin a friendship by dating? The first time we hooked up I was hesitant, but I wanted it. I wasn’t sure what would happen next. Then the suggestion of friends with benefits seemed so perfect for us. No worries right? Wrong. It works for a few weeks sure. But then you start to tell yourself you are the most special person in your partner’s life. Like somehow being friends who have sex makes your relationship even more meaningful. You start to feel superior to any other person that your fuck buddy is interested in. Like no one else could ever understand them like you do, and everyone else is temporary while you are permanent. Ugh. Then it starts to sting when you know they’re going out to find someone to hook up with. I sit there and wonder why I’m not enough, why do we need freedom to be with anyone else? I don’t want anybody else, why do they need anyone else? Do I care more? When did we fall off the same page? What’s wrong with me? I start to freak out whenever I don’t get a response to my texts. Why am I being ignored? Am I being annoying? All of these insecurities flood my brain, I cry when I’m alone. I feel unlovable. This is so complicated. I thought we loved each other, but maybe I’m being stupid. I feel used. Friends start to tell me I don’t respect myself and it makes me look weak because I can’t stop even though I know this is hurting me.”

Naiveté

By: Adena Merabi

I remember the first time we met;
In the warm summer night, your skin dabbled in sweat.
Your sweet brown eyes, how could I ever forget?
But it quickly turned into a game of Russian roulette.
The months went by and you promised me things,
While I promised myself I would never cling.
But each night when you crawled in my bed,
I couldn't say no, so you took my freedom instead.
And while you slept, I perpetually wept
Mourning my dream of you, once so perfect.



words for 19 year old me

Nancy Yang

“The time has come to tell the truth. Again. There is no love without justice. Men and women who cannot be just deny themselves and everyone they choose to be intimate with the freedom to know mutual love. If we remain unable to imagine a world where love can be recognized as a unifying principle that can lead us to seek and use power wisely, then we will remain wedded to a culture of domination that requires us to choose power over love.”

bell hooks, *communion*

And I ain't tryna mess ya thing up
But I just wanna see you dream up
I finally understand
It ain't easy to raise a girl as a single man
Nah, the way mothers feel for they sons, how fathers feel for they daughters
When he date, he straight, chip off his own papa
When she date, we wait behind the door with the sawed off
Cuz we think no one is good enough for our daughters
Love

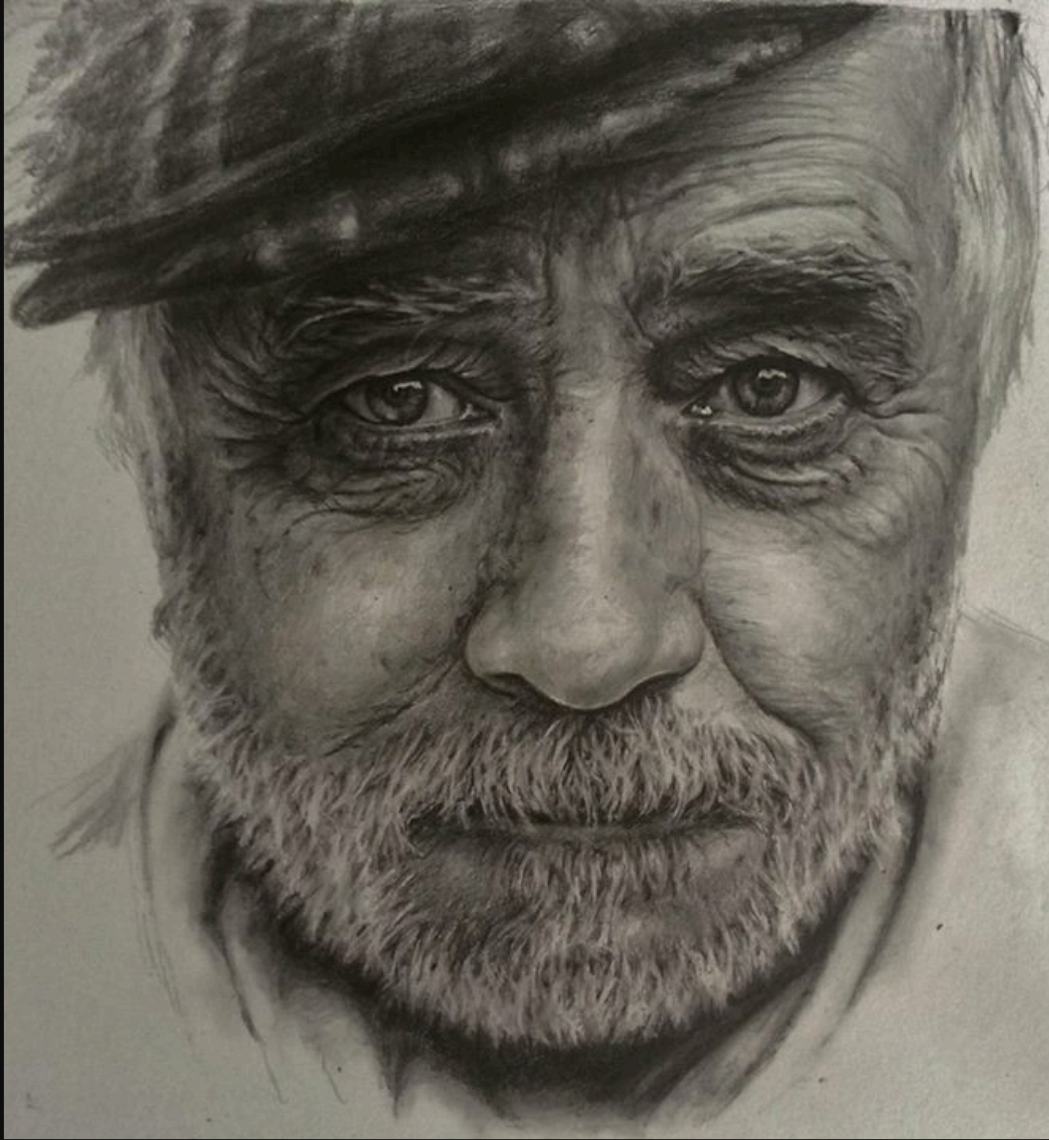
nas – daughters

And we are put on earth a little space/
That we may learn to bear the beams of love

william blake

Age and Sexuality

By Mikaela Gurney



"The truth is I'm getting old...what happens is that you don't feel it on the inside, but from the outside everybody can see it."

- Gabriel García Márquez

Despite the bodily transformations that individuals experience with age, the internal self is preserved throughout the years. Yet, the external appearance of age oftentimes ostracizes the elderly from the public world of sex in popular society.



"I am a rare species, not a stereotype."

- Ivan E. Coyote

While the sexuality of the elderly is frequently censored in media and discourse, traditional societal representations of young adults tend to be excessively sexual.

Where the elderly struggle to retain vestiges of their sexual identities, the young frequently encounter difficulties in casting off the sexual assumptions specific to their age group that is espoused by popular American culture.

Both the old and the young, therefore, are vulnerable to sexual typecasting.

