

0.1 Chapter 3: relationships: Sex

0.2 Sex

1 A Brief Philosophy of Oral Sex

Why is it so interesting and exciting? Few philosophers have explored the topic with the necessary rigour.



It has to do with loneliness and self-disgust. When we begin in this world, if we're lucky, everything about us is acceptable and adorable, from our toes to our temples. We lie naked on our parents' skin, they can hear our heartbeat, we can see the delight in their eyes as they watch us do nothing more accomplished than blow a saliva bubble or suck our fingers.

Then gradually comes the fall. The nipple is taken away. We grow ashamed of our nakedness. Ever-expanding areas of our outer selves are forbidden to be touched by others. We have no choice but to keep a minimum of 60 or, even better, 90 centimetres distance between us and others at all times, to make it absolutely clear that our compromised selves have no intention of intruding into anyone's personal space. We grow guarded. We become adults, expelled from paradise, unappealing to almost

everyone we walk past.

But deep inside, we never quite forget the needs with which we were born: to be accepted as we truly are, in every area; to be loved for just existing.



Hence the significance of oral sex. It sounds disgusting when we think of doing it with an inappropriate person and that's the point. Nothing is erotic that isn't also, with the wrong person, revolting. But with the right person, at the precise juncture where disgust could be at its height, we feel only acceptance, welcome and permission. The privileged nature of a relationship is sealed by an act which, with someone else, would have been sickening.

It's rude in the best way. Normal life continually requires us to be polite. We cannot win the respect or affection of anyone without severely repressing all that is ostensibly bad within us: our secretions, our aggression, our heedlessness, our fragility, our lust. We cannot both be accepted by society and reveal who we really are. Hence the erotic ecstasy (which is more accurately really just an emotional relief) when oral sex permits our secret self, with all its bad and dirty sides, to be witnessed and enthusiastically endorsed by someone we like.



The bond of loyalty between a couple grows stronger with every increase in explicitness. The more unacceptable our behaviour would be to the larger world, the more we feel as if we are building a haven of mutual acceptance.

Sex liberates us for a time from that punishing dichotomy between dirty and clean. It literally purifies us by engaging the most apparently polluted sides of ourselves in its games. We can press our mouths, the most public and respectable aspects of our faces, the seat of language and articulacy, eagerly into the most contaminated parts of the other thereby symbolising a total psychological approval, much as a priest would accept a penitent, guilty of many transgressions, back in the fold of the Catholic Church with a light kiss on the head.



1.0.0.0.1 From a psychological point of view, very similar to oral sex

The pleasure of oral sex is hence deeply rich and significant. It isn't primarily about a pleasant physiological sensation at all, it's about acceptance. It's about an end to loneliness.