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• 性社会学 •

Orgasm in America: Current Beliefs and Practices

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【Abstract】 The paper examines the cultural penetration of issues raised by scientists, sexologists and feminists. Based on a 27-question Internet survey of 1 053 men and women, gender, age and cultural differences figure strongly in performance, incidence of multiple orgasm, faking of orgasm, simultaneous orgasm via penile vaginal intercourse and means by which orgasm can be achieved and enhanced. Female respondents in their middle years (30-35) were the most likely to fake orgasm with their partners and had the lowest levels of gender alignment in reporting the incidence of simultaneous orgasm. Our respondents overwhelmingly believe there is a difference between clitoral and vaginal orgasms (64.3% male and 73% female) while our oldest respondents (36-69) were the least likely to believe that it's possible for females to reach orgasm without direct clitoral stimulation (76.1% male and 77.2% female). Orgasmic enhancements were highly gender-based except for those who practice tantric sex (16.4% male and 17.4% female). High gender differentiations were seen with use of stop-start techniques (70.6% of males vs. 40.3% of females) and activation of the pubococcygeus muscle (25.6% males vs. 60.2% females). Being a voluntary survey that attracted sexual explorers there were impressively high rates of female ejaculation (46.4%) and non-ejaculatory male orgasm (44.8%). Nearly half (46%) agreed that sex could be satisfying without orgasm with another 43.7% claiming "it depends" on things like emotional connection, love and rewarding touch.

【Key words】 Orgasm; Sexual sociology

性高潮: 美国的观念和实践

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【摘要】 本文调查了由科学家、性学家和女性主义者关注的文化渗透问题。在对 1053 名男性和女性实施的一项由 27 个问题组成的网络调查中发现, 性别、年龄和文化明显地影响了性高潮的表现、发生频率、假装高潮、性交时的同时高潮、达到和促进性高潮的方式。30~35 岁年龄群的女性最有可能与伴侣性交时假装高潮, 并在报告同时高潮发生率时表现出与男性较低水平的一致性。大多数调查对象都认为阴蒂和阴道高潮有差异(男性 64.3%, 女性 73%), 而老年组(36~69 岁)则认为没有阴蒂刺激是不太可能激发女性性高潮的(男性 76.1%, 女性 77.2%)。除了实施唐乐可养性健身术的调查对象外(男性 16.4%, 女性 17.4%), 促进高潮的方式是具有性别特异性的。在使用启动停止技术(男性 70.6% 相对于女性 40.3%)和耻尾肌刺激技术(男性 25.6% 相对于女性 60.2%)后两性性行为存在显著差别。作为一项志愿参加的调查, 女性对象报告了较高水平的射精高潮(46.4%), 而男性对象报告了较高水平的非射精高潮(44.8%)。接近半数(46%)的调查对象同意不经历高潮也可以拥有满意的性交体验, 而另外的 43.7% 的调查人群则认为性交中高潮的重要性要依赖于情感纽带、爱与相互亲抚。

【关键词】 性高潮; 性社会学

【作者简介】 [美] Leanna Wolfe(1953-), 女, 博士, 主要从事性人类学方向的研究。

1 Introduction

The conundrum between male anatomy which orgasms easily from penile – vaginal intercourse and female anatomy which often does not has confounded scientists, feminists and loving couples. In 1905 Sigmund Freud postulated that clitoral orgasms were distinct from vaginal orgasms with the former being an adolescent sensation and the latter a mature woman's experience. It took until the 1960s for William Masters and Virginia Johnson to conduct clinical research that concluded that there is no physiological difference between a vaginal orgasm and a clitoral orgasm; however a woman reaches orgasm, still counts as the real thing. 1970s feminists (Hite, 1976; Koedt, 1970; Sherfey, 1972) challenged the Masters and Johnson directive that penile thrusting alone would effectively bring women over the edge. Anne Koedt (1970) proclaimed that vaginal orgasm was a myth, while Shere Hite (1976) conducted a national study which concluded that 70% of women are unable to orgasm through intercourse alone. Psychiatrist Mary Jane Sherfey (1972) posited that the female capacity for multiple orgasms implies that women are by nature polyandrous and insatiable. Anthropologist Donald Symons (1979) weighed in on the adaptive nature of the female orgasm, noting that it is neither universally known nor experienced and that females may elect to fake orgasms to facilitate enduring bonds with their mates. In the next decade sexologist Beverly Whipple (1982) conducted laboratory research that located the Grafenberg Spot (G – Spot), a spongy area adjacent to the bladder that when stimulated can lead to both orgasm and female ejaculation. Recently a team of scientists (Kilchevsky et al, 2012) have contended that the G – spot is not a distinct organ, but rather part of the clitoral system. Meanwhile, the British – led International Orgasm Survey 2011 requires respondents to evaluate differences between vaginal and clitoral orgasms whilst promoting the use of a pelvic floor toner.

Amongst today's scientists the issue of whether there is a physiological difference between vaginal and clitoral orgasms seems to be moot. The latest topic capturing media spin is headed up by neuroscientist Barry Komisaruk (2011) who uses fMRI to measure the impact that of

orgasms on brain chemistry, such as the release of pain blockers and hormonal neurotransmitters including dopamine and oxytocin. Michael Roizen, creator of the RealAge series and Chief Wellness Officer of the Cleveland Clinic touts the health benefits of orgasm including release of neuromuscular tension and the increase immunoglobulin levels. His correlations posit that thrice weekly orgasms can add four years to life expectancy.

2 Methodology

“Orgasm in America: Current Beliefs and Practices” analyzes the Loveology University Orgasm Internet Survey which was designed by Leanna Wolfe, Ph. D. incorporating interests and concerns of Ava Cadell, founder and president of Loveology University. The survey was designed and analyzed using Survey Monkey software and was open from January 10, 2010 to November 12, 2011. The survey featured 27 questions which included basic demographics such as gender, age, sexual orientation and marital status followed by others that targeted respondents' sexual practices and beliefs regarding orgasm. Dr. Cadell promoted it through a link on the Loveology University website as well as through email and twitter announcements. Survey designer Dr. Wolfe promoted the survey via links on her two websites:

www.AskDrLeanna.com and www.DrLeannaWolfe.com. 54.5% of the respondents reported that they found the survey via Dr. Wolfe; 17% found the survey from the websites and 28.5% heard about the survey via a communication from Dr. Cadell.

3 Information of Respondents

Of the 1,253 individuals who began the survey 1,053 completed it, generating an 84% response rate. 667 males (53.6%), 566 females (45.5%) and 12 transgendered people (1%) participated. Due to the very small percentage of transgendered respondents, they are not included in the study data analysis.

Our male respondents were largely heterosexual (81.3%) while our female respondents were primarily divided between heterosexual (57.6%), mostly heterosexual (23.4%) and bisexual (13.1%).

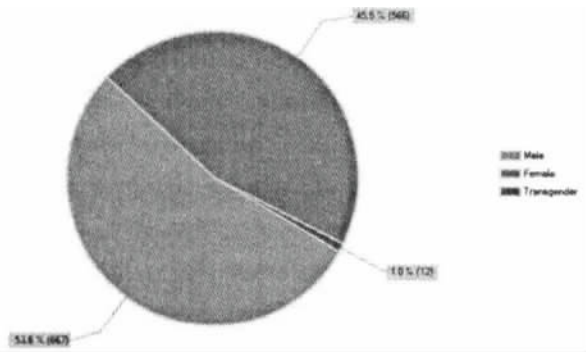


Figure 1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

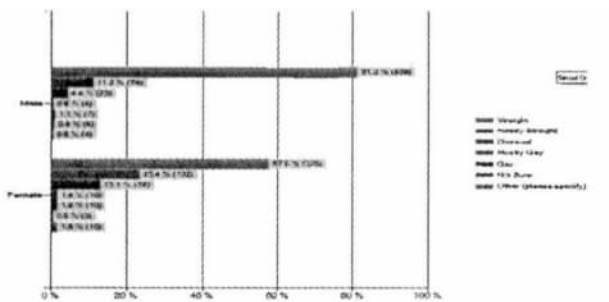


Figure 2 Sexual Orientation of Respondents

More than half of the males in the sample were married (54.3%), slightly more than one-fifth (22%) were single, another fifth were either living with a partner (10.5%) or in a non-residential relationship (9.6%). The females were more evenly distributed amongst these statuses with 33% married, 26.6% single, 14.6% living with a partner and 17.3% in a non-residential relationship.

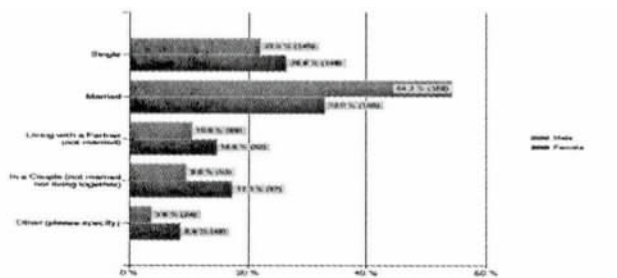


Figure 3 Relationship Status

While open relationships were not the norm for this sample, 24.7% of males and 22.1% of females reported being in a relationship with such an arrangement. More of the females (9.5%) than the males (7%) reported that they were "not sure" if they were in an open relationship.

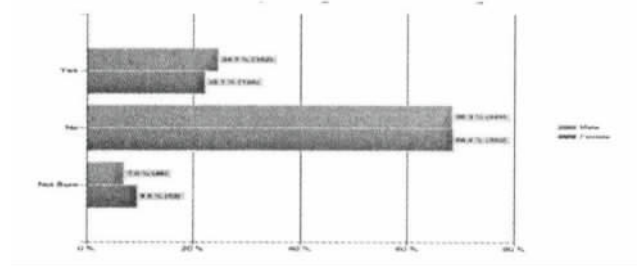


Figure 4 Incidence of an Open Relationship

Respondents in open relationships were more likely to be bisexual (18.2% vs. 8.5%), more likely to engage in a wider variety of sexual activities and more likely to use a wider variety of techniques to intensify their orgasmic experiences.

Our respondents most often reported that they'd had between two and four lifetime partners. Respondents ranged from no partner experience (3.4%), a single partner (8.6%) to upwards of 150 partners (less than 1%). Greater numbers of males reported more than 21 lifetime partners, while there were more females than males reporting between 8 and 20 lifetime partners (29.9% vs. 24.5%).

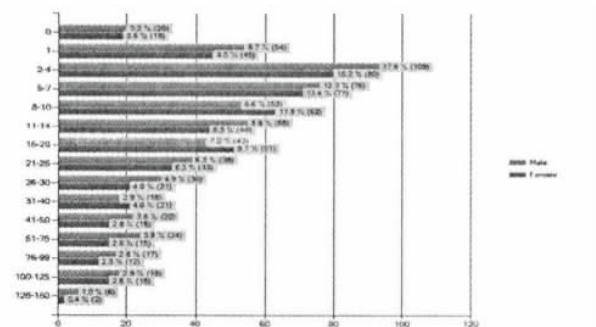


Figure 5 Lifetime Sexual Partners

4 Sexual Behaviors of Respondents

Respondents most often reported engaging in sexual activity with a partner between three and four times a week. About 60% of our sample report partner sexual activity at least weekly with over 10% reporting at least daily activity.

Masturbation patterns revealed the highest frequencies for males (57.8%) for multiple times a day, daily, and 3 -

4 times a week. Females were most likely to report 3 – 4 times a week (21.2%); more also reported low frequencies relative to the males with 9.8% noting “rarely.”

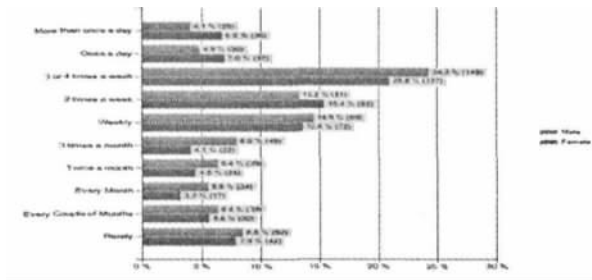


Figure 6 Frequency of Partner Sex

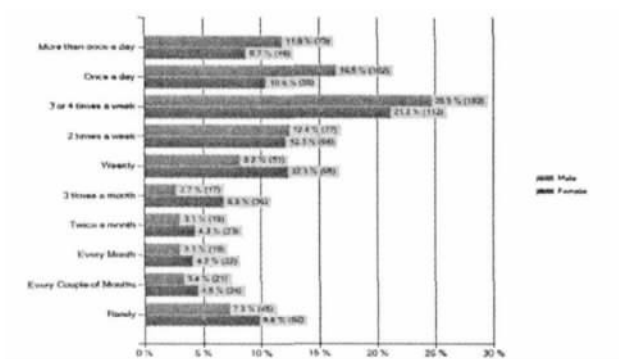


Figure 7 Frequency of Masturbation

5 Orgasm Experience

Over ninety percent of our respondents had experienced orgasm either through masturbation or partner sexual activity (males 97.6% and females 90.8%). Greater numbers of females than males had not experienced orgasm (4.3% vs. 1.3%) or were unsure whether they had experienced an orgasm (4.9% vs. 1.1%). These figures may reflect limited sexual education, lack of body awareness and/or inhibition on the part of females, especially.

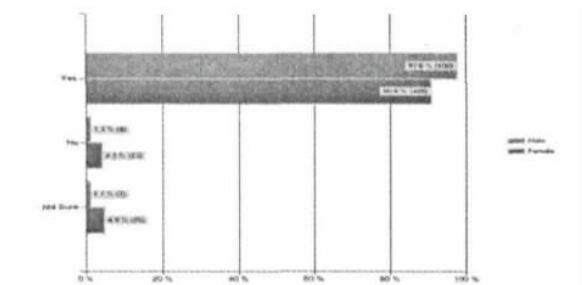


Figure 8 Orgasmic Experience (full survey)

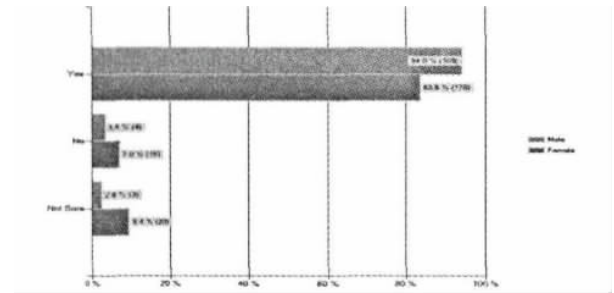


Figure 9 Orgasmic Experience (younger respondents)

Respondents aged 17 – 29 were slightly less orgasmic than the survey average. We especially see the impact of time and experience for females. Here 83.6% of females in this younger cohort vs. 90.8% of females in the full survey have experienced orgasm. And nearly twice as many younger females are “not sure” if they have experienced orgasm relative to females reporting in the full survey (9.4% vs. 4.9%).

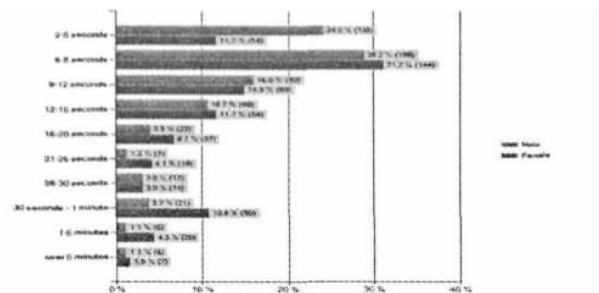


Figure 10 Orgasm Duration

While our survey average for the duration of an orgasm is 6 – 8 seconds, we found more males reporting shorter (2 – 5 second) orgasms (24% vs. 11.7%), and three times as many females reporting 30 second – one minute long orgasms (10.8% vs. 3.7%). Being that our respondents were not connected to lab equipment to measure their pubic pulsations, these duration reports are clearly in the eye of the beholder. Generally this data reveals that more of our females believe they experience longer orgasms than our males.

6 Multiple Orgasms

Some of what may generate the sensation of a long – lasting orgasm may in fact be several orgasms in succes-

sion. Here, like with our duration findings, we have far more females reporting multiple orgasms (64.6% vs. 24.1%) with a relatively equal and small number of respondents (6.5% males and 8.8% females) not sure if they've had the experience. Again, access to deeper and perhaps more meaningful sensation appears to be more in the realm of our females than our males.

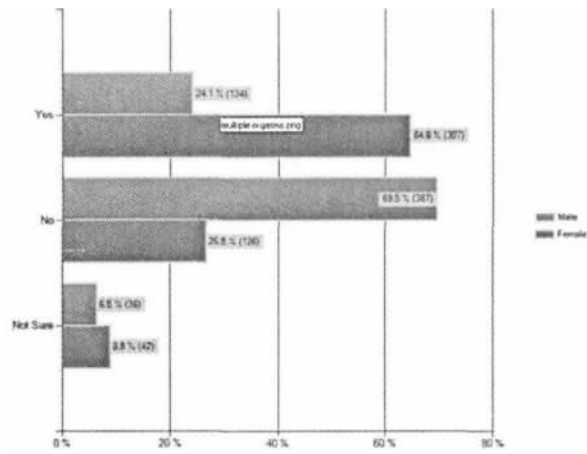


Figure 11 Experienced Multiple Orgasms

7 Faking Orgasm

There are many reasons why someone might choose to fake an orgasm ranging from pleasing a partner to ending an unsatisfying sex act. Our data show many more women fake orgasm than males with two-thirds of women (66.3%) and a bit less than one third of men (30.6%) revealing that they have faked an orgasm.

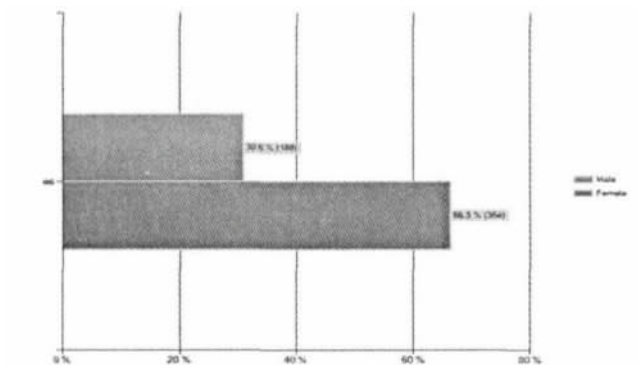


Figure 12 Faked Orgasm - Total Survey

Our younger respondents (17 - 29) report less orgasm faking than the full survey complement. Fewer

younger males (19.7% vs. 30.6%) report faking orgasm, perhaps reflecting their overall physical health. Younger females also reported slightly less faking (59.2% vs. 66.3%) perhaps reflecting physical health, self-confidence and better partner communication.

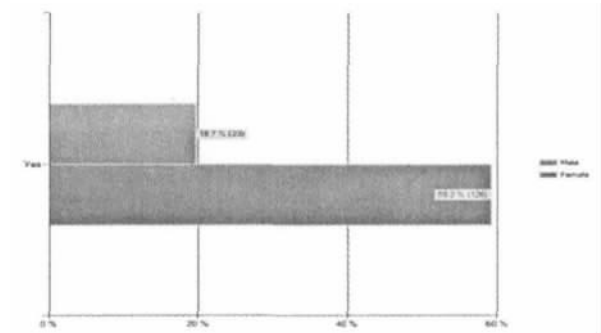


Figure 13 Faked Orgasm Younger Respondents

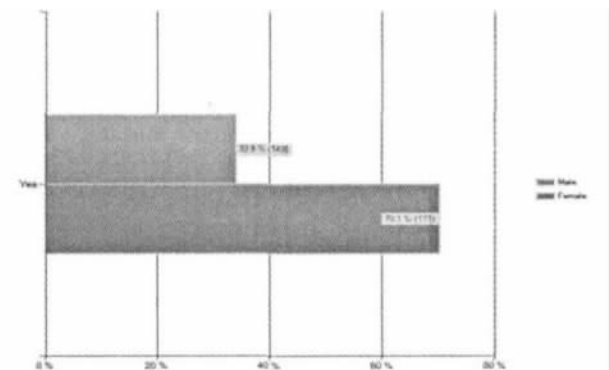


Figure 14 Faked Orgasm - Older Respondents

Our oldest male respondents (ages 36 - 69) report the highest rate of orgasm faking (33.9%). This rate may reflect declining physical health while the female rate of 70.1% may reflect more years of partner activity where this might have felt necessary.

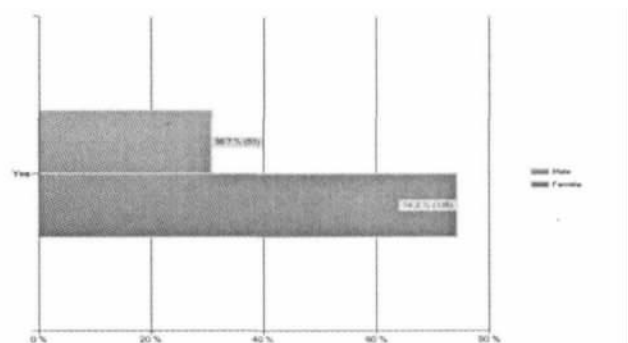


Figure 15 Faked Orgasm - Middle Years

Respondents in their middle years (30 – 35) reveal slightly lower rates than for older males (30.7% vs. 33.9%), perhaps reflecting slightly better physical health. The females in this group report the highest rates of faking orgasm (74.2%), 4% higher than the older females and 15% higher than the younger females. These females may feel the greatest pressure to perform sexually both to establish long – term family building relationships and/or to maintain such relationships.

8 Reaching Orgasm Together

The synergistic erotic goal for many couples is to reach orgasm in the same moment through penile – vaginal intercourse. While human anatomy and fertilization (infertility technologies aside), easily enable the male orgasm through intercourse, the female orgasm is more quixotic. For many females raised in Western society, it doesn't occur readily without direct stimulation of the clitoris. This may require sexual learning via the engagement of particular positions, routines, strengthening the kegel muscles and communication with a partner to facilitate the use of fingers, tongues and vibrating toys.

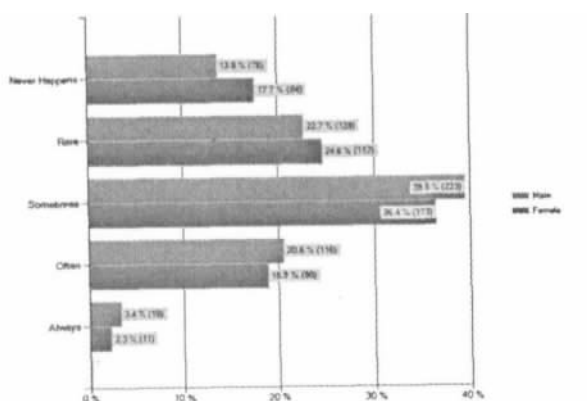


Figure 16 Reaching Orgasm Together – Full Sample

Male respondents report higher rates of reaching orgasm simultaneously with their partners than female respondents. While it's possible that males engaging the survey do experience higher levels of synergy with their partners, a more likely scenario is that female orgasm fakery is going unnoticed by some of these males.

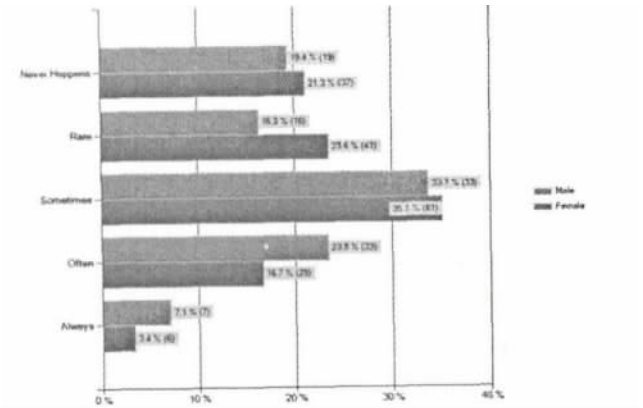


Figure 17 Reaching Orgasm Together – Younger Respondents

Our younger male respondents (17 – 29) report the highest rates of simultaneous partner orgasm which may reflect either physical prowess or faulty communication with their partners. The greatest difference between the youngest females and the full survey report, is the higher number of females (21.3% vs. 17.7%) reporting that they have never experienced a simultaneous partner orgasm. This is likely to reflect limited sexual experience and low partner communication.

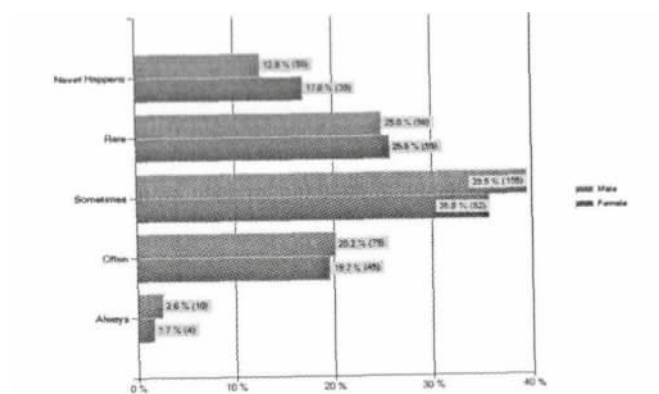


Figure 18 Reaching Orgasm Together – Older Respondents

Relative to our younger respondents (17 – 29), our older respondents (36 – 69) report higher levels of gender alignment for simultaneous partner orgasm with a .9% difference between males and females for “always” and a .5% difference for “often.” Having more years to acquire partner experience, these females report lower rates of it “never happens” (17%) relative to the younger female respondents who report 21.3%.

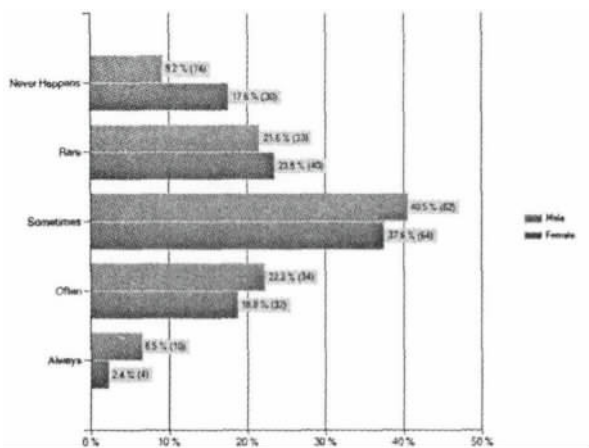


Figure 19 Reaching Orgasm Together – Middle Years

Our respondents in their middle years (30 – 35) show lower levels of gender alignment than our older respondents (36 – 69) regarding partners reaching orgasm together with a 4.1% difference between males and females for partners “always” and a 3.4% difference for “sometimes.” The most dramatic difference between males and females is seen with it “never happens” with the females matching the survey average with 17.6% and the males reporting just 9.2% which is the lowest male cohort report for this category. This parallels this group’s highest level of female orgasm faking (74.2%), again (perhaps) reflecting pressure to build and maintain families during these years, at the expense of honest partner communication.

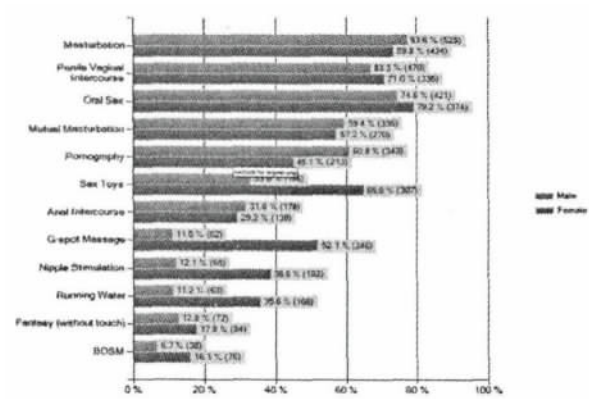


Figure 20 Methods for Achieving Orgasm

Our query regarding methods for achieving orgasm (with and without a partner) revealed several areas of

gender alignment and many areas of gender differentiation. Masturbation was the most reliable method for both males (93.6%) as well as for females (89.8%). The second most frequent method for males was penile – vaginal intercourse (83.3%); females reported receiving oral sex (79.2%) in this category. We see much higher reports of the efficacy of pornography for males vs. females (60.8% vs. 45.1%). Females, meanwhile report nearly twice as much benefit from the use of sex toys (65% vs. 33%), as well as markedly higher rates for g – spot massage (52.1% vs. 11%), nipple stimulation (38.6% vs. 12.1%) and running water (35.6% vs. 11.2%). Finally, females also report higher rates of fantasy (17.8% vs. 12.8%) and for the practice of BDSM (16.1% vs. 6.7%). Altogether we note while the female orgasm may not be as reliable as the male’s, a far wider number of materials and methods do lead to female erotic pleasure.

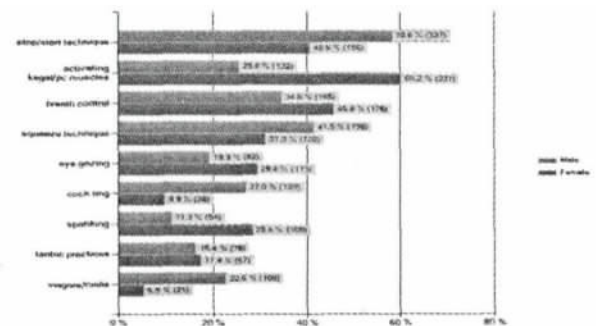


Figure 21 Methods for Intensifying the Orgasmic Experience

Other than the use of tantric practices where males and females were aligned in their efficacy (16.4% vs. 17.4%), the genders require different methods to intensify the orgasmic experience. Males find the greatest value in stop – start techniques (70.6% vs. 40.6%) whereas females find the greatest value in activating the pubococcygeus muscle (re: kegel exercises) (60.2% vs. 25.6%). Males find greater value in the squeeze technique (41.5% vs. 31.3%), the use of a cock ring (27% vs. 9.9%) and the use of Viagra or Cialis (22.6% vs. 5.5%). Finally, females find greater value in breath control (45.8% vs. 34.6%), eye gazing (29.4% vs. 19.3%) and being spanked (28.4% vs.

11.3%) . What is revealed here is that what works for men erotically is often very different than what works for women. Ultimately , heterosexual couples need to communicate with each other to best achieve mutual satisfaction.

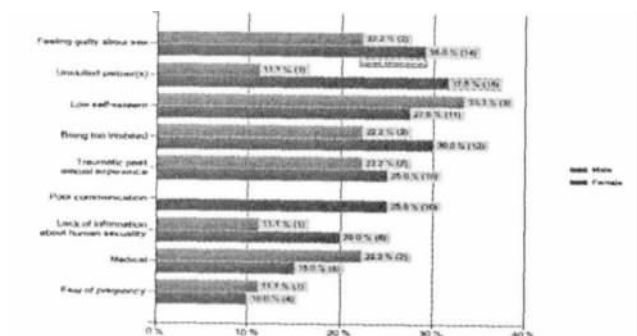


Figure 22 The Orgasmically Challenged

Considering that the number of males reporting anorgasmia was just nine individuals , their explanations cannot be accorded much significance other than to note that a third of them (three) considered low self – esteem to be a factor. Altogether 40 females presented as anorgasmic; their top explanations were unskilled partners (37.5%) , feeling guilty about sex (35%) , being too inhibited (30%) and low self – esteem (27.5%) . Other explanations included: traumatic previous sexual experience (25%) and poor partner communication (25%) ,lack of information about human sexuality (20%) , medical issues (15%) and fear of pregnancy (10%) . For a gender for which pleasure is accessed in diffuse ways , certainly sexual learning either via increased partner communication or through classes (such as offered by Loveology University) can contribute to increased access to orgasm. Issues tied to inhibition ,guilt and trauma may be best addressed through therapy either with a skilled psychotherapist or sexologist.

One of the ways that Dr. Ava Cadell has provided orgasm education is to devise names for orgasms that are achieved through single , dual or triple touch. She ’ s named them accordingly:

unigasm , bigasm and trigasm. A unigasm might be accessed just through penile – vaginal intercourse , while a bigasm could include stimulating the clitoris during intercourse and a trigasm would add anal stimulation into the mix. By creating these terms , she ’ s been able to normal-

ize the practice of males offering their female partners additional points of stimulation. In our study we queried regarding awareness of these terms and found that the majority of our respondents , both males (74.4%) and females (59.5%) , were unfamiliar with these terms.

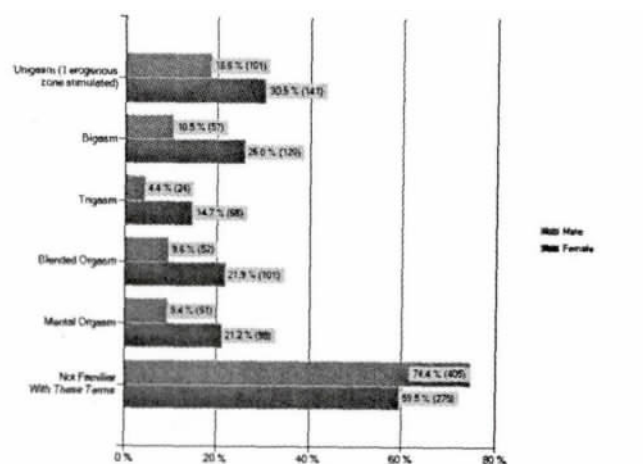


Figure 23 New Orgasm Terminologies

9 Ejaculation

While it has been largely a given that the male orgasmic experience includes a potentially impregnating load of sperm , in recent years there has been much buzz amongst the sexually curious about male non – ejaculatory orgasm and about female ejaculation. Amongst our respondents 46.4% of our females reported experiencing female ejaculation while 44.8% of our males reported having experience non – ejaculatory orgasms. While both of these experiences can occur spontaneously , in some circles there has been an interest in both learning and practicing such techniques.

Back in the mid – 19th century , the free – thinking Oneida community pioneered in coitus – reservatus , a love – making technique where males were trained to withhold their ejaculations so as to prevent pregnancy. Considering that modern – day birth control methods such as pills , patches and inter – vaginal rings had yet to be invented , the community was able to spare its female members from the dangers of frequent pregnancies and the exhaustion of non – stop mothering. Recent interest in non – ejaculatory male orgasm finds its roots in Asia , with the teachings of Taoist Master Mantak Chia and the Indian

tantric practices. Men who become skilled in these techniques are able to offer their partners a sustained erection; many do report that an ejaculatory orgasm provides a fuller feeling of completion.

Female ejaculation can occur apart from or in conjunction with an orgasm. Women may access the experience when the G – spot ,the spongy region adjacent to the bladder ,is engaged either by a partner’s fingers ,a penis or a specially designed dildo. The fluid that is expelled is chemically different from urine. One of our respondents in her 60s notes , “Female ejaculation (squirting) can develop later in life ,feels fantastic ,and is not peeing. ”

Beliefs about Sex and Orgasm

We used our survey to ferret out a variety of beliefs , which may ultimately affect sexual practices. One belief we explored was whether vaginal orgasms are different from clitoral orgasms. Back in the 1970s ,American feminists (Koedt ,1970; Hite ,1976) were highly vocal about the importance of direct stimulation to the clitoris to achieve orgasm. They contended that penile – vaginal intercourse functioned solely to satisfy male sexual fulfillment and that the 1966 findings of Masters and Johnson which verified that the clitoris is the sole source of female erotic fulfillment had been disregarded by men. Later in the 1980s research on the G – spot conducted by sexologist Beverly Whipple (1982) led to a resurgence of interest in vaginal penetration as a means for females to access erotic pleasure. Recently a team of scientists (Kilchevsky ,2012) contended that the G – spot is not a distinct organ but rather a continuation of the clitoral system. Considering the apparent challenges of labeling female genitalia ,there is no doubt that our respondents had varying observations.

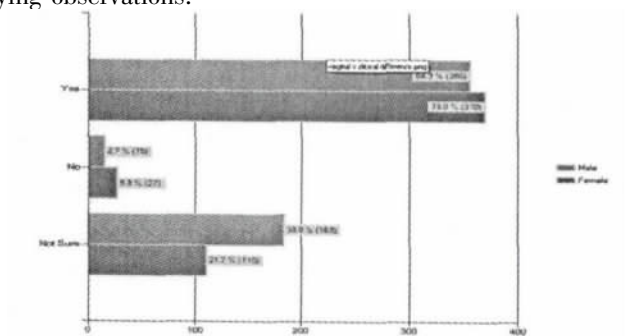


Figure 24 Whether Clitoral Orgasms are Different from Vaginal Orgasms

Our respondents tended towards believing that there is a difference between vaginal and clitoral orgasms (64.3% males vs. 73% females) . Meanwhile more of the males remained confused ,perhaps because they personally lack the anatomy to be certain ,with 33% not being sure vs. 21.7% of the females.

Continuing with the female anatomy issue ,we asked whether women are able to orgasm without direct clitoral stimulation. Here ,there were marked differences in opinion both between the genders and between different age cohorts.

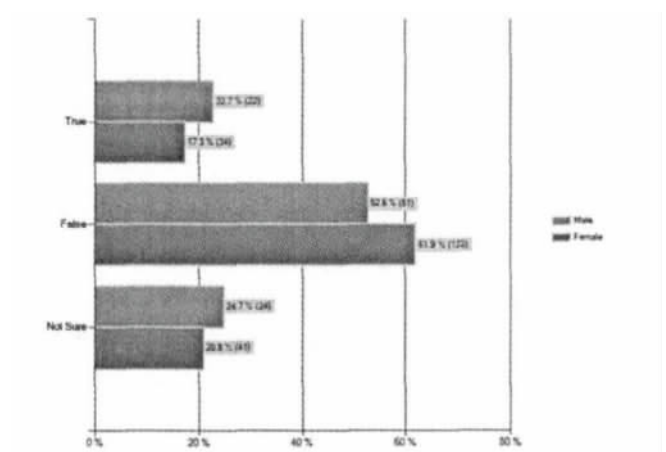


Figure 25 Whether Females Can Climax without Clitoral Stimulation – Younger Respondents

For our younger respondents (17 – 29) we see some marked differences between the genders with males being more certain that females can climax without direct clitoral stimulation (22.7% vs. 17.3%) along with 61.9% of females vs. 52.6% of males contending that this would be impossible. Males in our older cohorts were more likely to agree that a female climax requires direct clitoral stimulation ,perhaps resulting from more years of experience.

Respondents aged 30 – 35 were less convinced that females can climax without direct clitoral stimulation with just 17.4% of males and 14.5% of females believing this to be possible. Rates for being “not sure” drop 8% for the males and 6% for the females. Meanwhile ,70.5% of females and 65.8% of males contend that direct clitoral stimulation is necessary for a woman to climax.

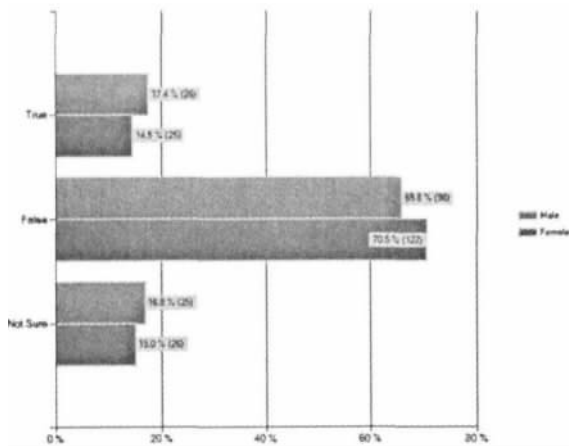


Figure 26 Whether Females Can Climax without Clitoral Stimulation – Middle Years

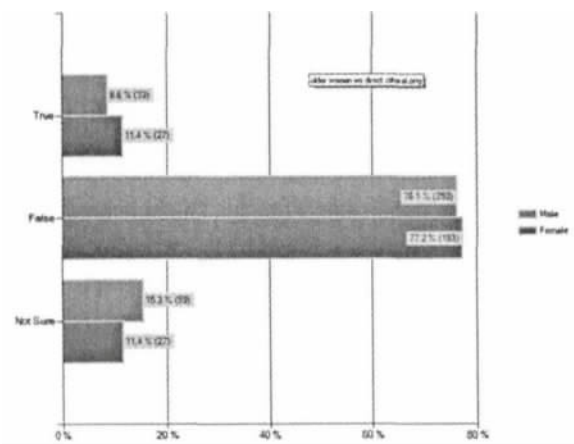


Figure 27 Whether Females Can Climax without Clitoral Stimulation – Older Respondents

Our older respondents (36 – 69) registered as the least convinced that females can climax without direct stimulation with 76.1% of males followed closely by 77.2% of females. Here, too, we see the genders being very closely aligned with just 1% difference between males and females. The numbers that are “not sure” drop, too, with just 15.3% of males and 11.4% of females registering this assessment. Ultimately, more years of sexual experience lead both men and women to confirm that females require direct clitoral stimulation in order to reach an orgasmic climax.

We also queried whether women take longer to reach orgasm than men. While we suspected there might be differences between the ages our respondents, there in fact were not. Gender differences reveal a slight discon-

nect between the experiences of males vs. females. More males (84.5%) than females (78.9%) contended that females take longer to reach their climaxes. No doubt some of this perception might also be in the eye of the beholder!

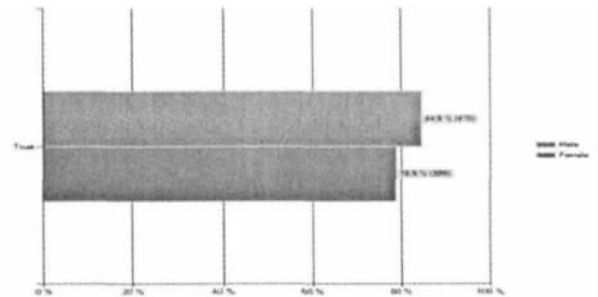


Figure 28 Whether Females take Longer to Reach Orgasm than Males

Another belief we explored was whether sex can be satisfying without orgasm. Here there were no appreciable differences between the ages and genders of our respondents. We see a robust 46% contending that an orgasm isn't necessary for sex to be satisfying with another 43.7% offering that “it depends” perhaps on things like emotional connection, love and rewarding touch.

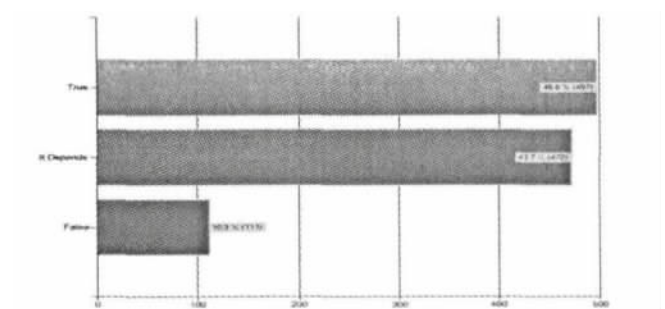


Figure 29 Whether Sex Can be Satisfying without Orgasm

A final topic we explored was how the orgasmic experience is perceived. Here our respondents could select a single or multiple answers. The most often selected choice was physical (91%) followed by emotional (84.2%), followed by addictive (71.3%) and spiritual (60.1%).

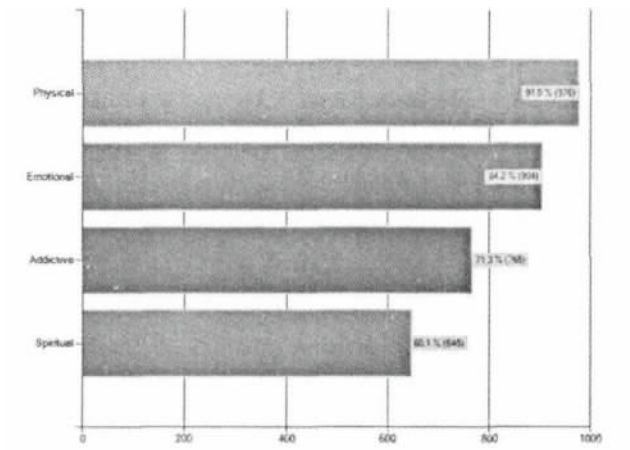


Figure 30 How Orgasm is Perceived

10 Discussion

Our findings reveal a wide range of beliefs and practices regarding what women require to achieve orgasm, the likelihood for couples to achieve orgasm via simultaneous through penile vaginal intercourse, and what techniques are useful for orgasm enhancement. Regarding female orgasm, we're left with two schools of thought. One is that exercising the pubococcygeus muscle through kegel exercises and/or use of a pelvic floor toner can enable a woman to orgasm through penile vaginal intercourse while the other is that a majority of women require direct clitoral stimulation (apart from or in conjunction with penile vaginal intercourse) in order to achieve orgasm. Ultimately, both of these approaches to female erotic fulfillment require cultural learning via sex education and facility in partner communication. With increased availability of sex information via the Internet and the ease in which the current culture of Hooking Up enables experience with a variety of partners, young people know more about sexual functioning than previous American generations.

Respondents in their early 30s reported the lowest levels of communication with their partners re: the rates in which females fake orgasm and males believe a simultaneous orgasm has occurred. This cohort is most likely to be consumed with family building – either finding a mate to start a family, generating or maintaining a positive connection with such a mate, or the often selfless job of parenting. Especially for parents of babies and young children, sleep may be far more desired than a simultaneous

splashy orgasm.

Respondents aligned with erotic subcultures which focus on tantric practices, female ejaculation and male non-ejaculatory orgasm, challenge our surveys general findings that the female orgasm requires direct clitoral stimulation and that orgasm is largely a physical experience. Ultimately, this raises the question of what kind of sex education should we be offering our youth. Do we focus on breathing techniques and eye gazing (as tantric practitioners do) or do we make sure that every girl has access to a pleasing vibrator? Do we encourage beliefs that sex without orgasm is satisfying and that it takes females longer to reach orgasm than males or do we create education campaigns to encourage the use of (female) pelvic toners?

While much of the focus on this survey has been on the challenges of aligning the female sexual response with that of males, an area for fruitful sex education would be to educate males how to gain more sensation and fulfillment from their orgasms. With a quarter of our male respondents reporting that the duration of their orgasms was between two and five seconds, it's unlikely they have access to a set of skills that might enable greater levels of fulfillment and ultimately deeper bonding with their partners. Again education for such skills is often connected to unique subcultures like the Body Electric School's workshops and trainings.

Limitations

Internet surveys such as the "Loveology University Orgasm Survey" are fraught with limitations. Respondents may not read the questions carefully and ultimately pick inaccurate or untruthful selections. Being a single-time engagement that typically lasts about 10 minutes, their current emotional state may color their answers in an overly negative (or positive) way. Considering that no remuneration was offered, respondents may have been drawn to participate due to greater comfort with and interest in sexual topics than the population at large.

Respondent Comments

If more people cared as much about orgasms as they do about politics ours would be a more peaceful world. Female, 55 No other experience in life can match the ecstasy of really good sex with the woman I love. It doesn't

happen often , but when it does. . . wow! Male , 61

For most of my life the only way I could orgasm was with a vibrator. After a breakup of a 22 – year relationship , I wanted to learn to come without a vibrator. Through a combination of tantra with Margo Anand , Patti Taylor , Jan Robinson , Carla Tara , The Welcomed Consensus videos and teaching myself I learned to have energy orgasms , hour long orgasms , orgasms without touch , O from intercourse , O while lying next to a lover or being woken from sleep cumming and from doing oral sex on a man. Female , 57

The more people realize that an orgasm is a very personal experience . . . the less people feel compelled to compare or judge . . . the more we can all open to the natural energetic “pump” of living in blissful union with all of life in all its symphonic expressions. Male , 52

Sex is a basic need , like food and shelter. I talk to my three sons that they need to be having good sex , even if it’s just masturbating. All men laugh at this , because they say boys already know this , but I want to make sure that they didn’t have any guilt attached to masturbating. Female , 43

I believe for women to experience the best sex possible , the man must go round after round , so that the woman has the best chances of obtaining orgasm after orgasm , since each round will continue to grow longer & longer in time , with non – stop penetration a woman’s chance of actually experiencing numerous orgasms , increases substantially! Male , 58

I have only had an orgasm four times in my whole life; I’m trying to find out ways to be able to have more. Female , 33

I can have up to 25 orgasms in 1 hour. Female , 36

The best Os occur when you prep yourself mentally over a period of time. The anticipation generates the intensity. Mine start in my belly button area. As I ejaculate I envision a piston pressing down as I feel it flow through my stomach area through past my insides and prostate and through my vas deferens and out. Male , 58

I experience what I call an orgasmic wave , which seems to be multiple orgasms that go on and on – but which sometimes leaves me wondering whether I ever really came , since it sometimes doesn’t come to a definite

conclusion (as if I came , but immediately started back up again) . Female , 60

I think my orgasms have become more intense and longer lasting , but not as easy to achieve , as I have gotten older. Male , 60

I’m over 60 and having more satisfying sex on a regular basis than I’ve ever had in my life. . . including the free love¹ hippie days when I was in my 20’s! Female , 65

Sex is pleasure , with or without orgasm. Male , 58

Over time , I’ve changed so that “m much more vaginally orgasmic , but these tend to be very hard to define , since it’s not always a simple clear single orgasm. About six years ago I began to have ejaculatory orgasms. I’ve also experienced half – hour to hour – long orgasms or collections of orgasms , depending on how you think about it. It’s hard to pin down a “typical” orgasm length for me , as they can range anywhere from a few seconds to a couple of minutes on a regular basis , with not – uncommon longer sessions if I have the time. Female , 46

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