

YOUR VOICE

THE DIALOGUE BOX MAGAZINE



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ISSUE THEME

SEXUALITY



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Mission Statement & Editorial Process

We take pride in bringing various human rights and current affairs issues to the foray on a regular basis to our readers. The publication is a quarterly magazine which will be a compilation of essays, articles and artworks (including photo-essays and poems) written by practitioners, academics and students worldwide.

This is a thematic magazine and the entries are expected to critically reflect upon the individual themes concerned. This magazine will provide a platform to all ignited minds waiting to make their voices count through their writings and artwork.

Each entry will undergo a double-blind peer review on the content, style and originality by our experienced editorial team, comprising of academics, journalists, lawyers and students across the world. Contributions which do not meet the acceptable standards will be rejected and decisions of the editorial team will be final.



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Editorial Note

The past few decades have witnessed rapid development and societal transformation. These developments have also exposed the complex social issues that have remained largely on the periphery. Sexuality is one such issue which has been ignored and vehemently resisted by societies even in the present times. Despite constitutional guarantees in liberal democracies and well-developed international human rights law frameworks, sexuality-based discrimination and persecution continue as a social norm. However, recently, the debates around Sexuality have intensified, and several successful attempts have been made towards protection from sexuality-based discrimination and neutralizing resistance against sexuality issues. I am proud to present the first issue of **Your Voice**, themed on **Sexuality**.

This issue brings forth some individual dialogues on Sexuality through photo essays, short articles, and poetries. In the first photo essay, **Sandhya Kerketta** critically reflects on the use of female Sexuality and objectification of women's bodies in the marketing industry. She highlights the role of patriarchy and strict heteronormativity in reducing female Sexuality to moral responsibility and societal honour. Through his photo art series Isolation, **Dheeraj Kumar** searches through deep and entangled emotions within that inspire him to embrace and reveal his authentic self, shattering the barriers of social construct that enslave him. Deconstructing the myths surrounding Sexuality education, **Subhashree Pattanayak** emphasizes the need for comprehensive Sexuality education in India. **Ahmad Hasson** narrates the role of the movie Fire in addressing the taboo surrounding homosexuality in South Asia in the late 1990s. He applauds the early and significant effort made by Deepa Mehta, the director of the movie Fire, in depicting the oppression of homosexual persons in India. In 'The Transness of Intimacies and Desires: Can You Love Me Like This Now?', **Raghavi and Ragi** portray the ordeals of transness in seeking love and intimacy through a beautiful allegory. This issue concludes with 'Fluidity', written by **Sanjana Choudhary**, which is an ode to a person's gender expression and self.

I am immensely thankful to all the contributors and team members of 'Your Voice' for their tireless efforts in creating the magazine's first issue and making it unique.

Signature.

Asadulla Iqbal
Editor in Chief.



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Image Credit: University of Sussex, U.K. (Instagram Page)

The contradictory approaches to female sexuality
 - By Sandhya Kerketta

This photo is taken outside a club-cum-restaurant in Brighton, United Kingdom. It is called Duke's at Komedia. The picture displays a pair of female legs stretched out upwards, perfectly shaped, nicely poised, and at once attention-grabbing and attractive. Given some thought, this idea for the exterior of the restaurant is captivating. Diving deeper, this highlights the use of female sexuality in marketing, which has been practised by the advertising industry for an eternity.

In this patriarchal, heteronormative society, female sexuality is curtailed by gender and social norms. Since birth, female bodies are gendered, discriminated against, differentiated, and regulated. The way women should walk, sit, talk, smile, clothe, etc. are all part of governing the sexuality of women. On one hand, women's bodies are moralised and restricted to be presented in a conformist way. On the other, they are sensualised, manipulated, and represented for the male gaze and pleasure.

This dichotomy has become an opportunity for the advertising industry. In the name of marketing strategy, women's bodies have been objectified and demeaned endlessly. This has not only pushed women into more subservient positions but also hampered and degraded their dignity. A recent advertisement for the body spray Shot caught global attention and faced backlash for the inappropriate usage of language against women's sexuality. This shows how the ad agencies casually dishonour women. Similarly, there are many instances where women are shamed in different ways in order to boost the sales of products.

However, if women want to use their bodies and sexuality for a living, society has a problem with that. If a woman wants to dress in a certain way that she considers comfortable society raises opinions and objections against that.

There is hush-hush speculation if a woman is out till late at night. She is shamed and blamed if something wrong happens. Inevitably, these become issues of morality, honour, and cultural harm.

It is high time that we stop burdening women with the responsibility of upholding morality and honour. Instead, it is important for society to be sensitised towards women and honour and value them. It is time we considered women as human beings and not as mere objects.

About the author



Sandhya Kerketta is a sociologist who graduated from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India. Sandhya is currently a PhD candidate at University of Sussex, United Kingdom. Sandhya's research interests are gender studies, intersectionality, domestic violence among many more. Prior to joining University of Sussex, Sandhya has worked as a Program Associate at Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA), New Delhi. She handled important roles such as fund monitoring for welfare projects, planning and allocation of budgeting among others. Sandhya also has enormous field experience as a support worker and has worked extensively with domestic violence survivors.



SERIES' – ISOLATION
@silentstoryteller_art

Isolation

- By Dheeraj Kumar

Who am I when no one is looking?

The current climate of our world has brought about words like 'quarantine' and 'isolation' into common parlance. Ironically so, the more aggressively we isolate during the pandemic, the sooner we can hope to put it behind us and re-join the cacophony of the society.

To some, its loneliness, and to others, it's solitude.

A time of reprieve where one can shed the Armor one wear to be able to face the world. This is the safe space- to just be, recuperate from the clingy world-weariness. A place to dream and to breathe.

This work - ISOLATION is an 'outsider's/viewer's intimate glimpse into the 'bare' soul of the creator/ artist, which is at once charged with exhilaration and teeming with life as it is riddled with an inexplicable turmoil brought upon by isolation.

Who am I when no one is looking?

Am I just a body, an object of sex contorted with desires? Or am I an extended love song- that wants to break free? Am I the Gay, the Queer, the Sublime or the Vile?

Or do I just want to feel the sensation of the skin- free from the we fight of arbitrations.

The artist circumvents the linear narrative in favour of intangible invocations of emotions. The work represents an overwhelmingly visceral desire to play with human bodies to achieve abstraction. It aspires to exemplify the artist's deep-seated desire to break the chains of his upbringing, the boundaries of the social construct he was raised in. It depicts his personal revolution, which is to shatter the constricting barriers that tried to enslave and conquer him. He wants to fully embrace and revel in his raw, authentic Self with all its avarices and frustrations without the fake veneer of propriety and with a primal rectitude that is true to his essence.



SERIES – ISOLATION

ENCLOSED, TRAPPED, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL DISORDERS OR BEHAVIOURS, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, SELF HARMING, SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, LOW SELF ESTEEM, LOW SELF CONFIDENCE, AGGRESSION, WITHDRAWAL FROM PEOPLE AND ACTIVITIES.

About the Artist

Dheeraj Kumar hails from Muzaffarpur, Bihar and is a trained fashion designer turned photographer and artist. He aspires to define with his lenses, his personal approach towards life, beauty and art. Dheeraj is inspired by artists like Frida Kahlo, Robert Mapplethorpe and Henry Moore.

Anonymous male bodies have been a constant motif in his art. He uses the body as a canvas over which he experiments by superimposing different styles of ornamentations- ranging from botanical floral drawings to masks and markings inspired by the art of Rangoli. Dheeraj draws from his own experiences of the human body to represent it untethered by the burden of rigid gender conventions imposed by society and his own cultural upbringing.

He exposes, through elaborate staging and meticulous contortions, the landscapes of the human body and the many hidden nooks and crannies that carry traces of untapped and concealed emotions. The body becomes the subject and the object in his work- rendered into abstraction, reminiscent of organic rocks and boulders but somehow still retaining its 'human-ness' albeit in an unsettlingly intimate way that provokes the viewer's primal instinct to touch and experience the sensory pleasure of bare skin.





Short Articles

Does India need "Comprehensive Sexuality Education"?

- By Subhashree Pattanayak

Sex is a hush-hush topic of discussion behind closed doors in India to date. Ironically, openly talking about sex is frowned upon in India, which is the second most populous nation in the world with nearly 138 crore inhabitants.

Even today, in the 21st century, "sex", "sexuality", and "sex education" are only preferred to be discussed discreetly or perhaps not at all by most parents, teachers, or elders.

So, let's first unpack and understand from a socio-cultural perspective the reason for sexual discourse to be a no-no topic in India and why there is a necessity for Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). The Indian society projects that it is vile and "cheap" to talk about sex openly and only sees sex as an act or means for the married couple to produce babies. With time the Indian culture slowly imbibed this vicious mindset and passed it down to the next generations. However, it forgets that India is the land of the "Kama-sutra", a historical piece of Indian Sanskrit literature on human sexual behaviour. So, shying away and forbidding to talk about the very natural instinct of any living being paves a path of ignorance and evokes unwanted curiosity in young minds.

The adolescent gets vague, half-baked answers to no answers at all, with their inquiries or questions, often being brushed off by their elders/parents/teachers, leaving them to seek information from their friends (who are in the same boat), senior high school students, or the internet (probably their best friend in this journey of exploration).

Young teenagers are natural inquisitors. Their curious mind often tries to find answers to the questions for topics around conception, contraception, relationships, consent, puberty, and gender. Upon not getting their queries resolved sensitively, the young individual often falls prey to the abundance of unverified and incorrect information. Adolescents seldom receive reliable information, and the process of self-discovery leads them to receive sensational, incorrect information, ultimately causing them to acquire false beliefs and notions about the very natural human sexual instinct, as Sigmund Freud termed it "basic urges".

And right here lies the REAL problem when adolescents access incorrect information in their transitional and transformative years. So, let us now examine and bust the most common MYTHS around the idea of sexuality education!



MYTH 1: Sexuality education is culturally inappropriate.

FACT: Culture is a set of beliefs, norms, habits, practices, and customs evolving with time. Sexuality education will increase the awareness, attitude, behaviour, and practices of individuals related to sexual and reproductive health. In no way is Sexuality education detrimental to the overall well-being and health of an individual.

MYTH 2: Sexuality education will teach children to have sex at an early age.

FACT: Sexuality education does not teach the child to have sex at an early age but equips them to be aware and have sound knowledge about the biological and social attributes of a healthy sexual life for the future. This includes not only the physical act of intercourse but also gender identity, mutual consent, puberty and awareness about sexual abuse, birth control measures, and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS and STDs.

In India, as per the National Family Health Survey (2015-16), about 27% of all women between 20-24 years were married before 18 years, with 8% of women aged between 15-19 years getting pregnant, even before their bodies are fully developed. This shows that these young girls have no reproductive autonomy, and they probably faced gender-based violence apart from early, life-threatening, unintended pregnancies because of a lack of Sexuality education.

MYTH 3: Sex is an adult topic, so sexual education will pollute the young minds.

FACT: In India, about 53% of children are subjected to sexual abuse between the age group of 5- 12 years. Most often, these vulnerable children do not even realize that they are being abused and assaulted. The shame and social stigma surrounding sexual issues often prevent victims from speaking up. Therefore, there is an immediate need for sex education to teach children about good touch and bad touch, among other topics, so that they can speak up when abused, harassed, or assaulted.

MYTH 4: Children will grow up as homosexuals.

TRUTH: Homosexuality is absolutely normal and natural. Sexual education rather will help the child to be aware of concepts such as gender identity and gender dysphoria. Often children suffer from emotional and psychological issues like depression and anxiety when they are not accepted for who they are by society. Thus, the need for sexual education is the need of the hour as it's crucial and vital in today's day and time.

MYTH 5: Sexual education is only for girls.

TRUTH: Sexual education is for one and all, irrespective of any gender. Its aim is to empower and creates awareness with the right information.

Now, here comes the need for "Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)"!!

But what is it? Let's find out!



According to UNESCO, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is a comprehensive, curriculum-based teaching and learning about the different aspects of sexuality like- cognitive, emotional, physical, and social. It aims to empower and equip children and teenagers with age-appropriate, scientifically accurate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes towards having respectful social and sexual relationships, at the same time ensuring that awareness is generated around the protection of rights throughout their lives. Thus, CSE is a rights-based, gender transformative approach.

CSE plays a crucial role in addressing the well-being and overall health of children and adolescents, such as creating awareness about menstrual awareness, good hygiene practices, etc.

It provides the platform to present sexuality with a positive approach and also emphasizes instilling values like inclusion, respect, equality, non-discrimination, empathy, responsibility, and reciprocity with a focus on sex, sexuality, body image, relationships, and puberty.

About the author

Subhashree Pattanayak, is a final year student of Master of Education at The West Bengal University of Teachers' Training Education, Planning and Administration (WBUTTEPA). Her research interests include sustainability in education, inclusive practices in education, teacher development, and educational policies of the Global South.

So, who can be facilitators of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)? ...

Caregivers, parents, and teachers act as role models in a child's life and ought to be the sources of authentic and credible information. Hence, they should be the facilitators for the successful transition and navigation of children from childhood to adolescence by equipping them through Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). Both teachers and parents should provide safe spaces for open dialogue free from biases, prejudices, and stigmas for CSE to be facilitated both in formal and informal settings sustainably.

Although at present in India, there are few national programs like Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karykram (RKSK) under Ayushman Bharat, an initiative launched by the Government of India and several others that aims to provide age-appropriate information on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), but a lot needs to be done to ensure the proper implementation of the programs at the grass-root levels.

In the current context, it, therefore, becomes imperative that we break the age-old norm of silence around sex education by sensitizing children, young individuals, and the gatekeepers with the correct information by ensuring universal access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). It is time that we stop considering sex to be a taboo in society.

Deepa Mehta's 'Fire' : A celebration of sexuality much ahead of its time
- By Ahmad Hasson

The context

'Fire' is a movie by Deepa Mehta representing a dusky narrative, depicting the miserable lives of two women due to the oppression they face in their households, making it a loose representation of several Indian households. The narrative of the movie undeniably revolves around patriarchy and women being oppressed by their partners. Along with this, the movie gives a very strong message, normalising homosexuality with the story of the female protagonists who found love and solace in each other after being abandoned by their husbands. Quoting from the scenes of the movie – "Radha, the female protagonist, being infertile could not procreate and consequently, her partner started visiting a priest to practice celibacy, this had been the course for 13 years". This can be owed to the fact that women are perceived as breeding livestock and those who cannot breed do not deserve the love of their partners. A similar narrative has also been carried forward by the story of Sita the junior female protagonist.

The plot of the movie mimics the lack of an emotion-driven relationship between both the couples. Over the years, the lack of participation of women in the political hemisphere has been observed and it is safe to say that what happens inside the walls of one's house is what replicates itself in the outer hemisphere.

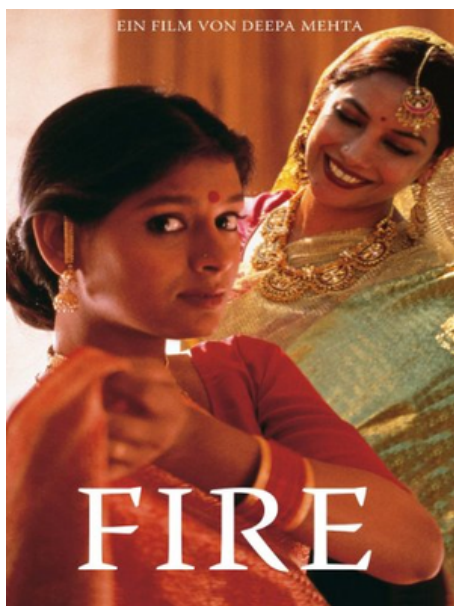


Women have been tied to traditions and customs which have kept them confined to the household work, childbearing and rearing, giving them the position of nothing more than an entity serving their husbands. The history of homosexuality in India has come a long way and has incurred huge development, when Deepa Mehta's 'Fire' screened in 1998 it attracted various protests where Shiv Sena activists vandalised the posters of the movie, whereas contrastingly in 2018 The Supreme Court decriminalised Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code which deals with homosexuality.

The Shiv Sena protests in 1998 led to the issuance of absurd statements like – “If women’s physical needs are fulfilled through lesbian acts, the institution of marriage will collapse and the reproduction of human beings will stop.” The movie through its screenplay sparked a debate on the status of sexuality and homosexuality where both the right and left wing had differing or contrasting opinions.

The taboo of sexuality

Despite all this, expressing sexuality is still a taboo in many societies across the world, and the Indian society and households are still not open to this conversation leading to familial problems which often are not even exposed outside the realm of the family.



The release of the film even triggered a debate on the violation of human rights within the institution of marriage and in households in general. Through its story line, the movie clearly depicted how the functioning of Indian households violate the “Right to live with human dignity” of different communities, especially women. They are denied to live their life on their own terms, denied affection from their partners due to a mere fact that they can not procreate and are left to burn in flames if made an attempt to realise and show their sexuality. In the narrative of the movie, physical violence upon the wives by their husbands is also witnessed which compromises their right to live with dignity. With due respect to the above, it is also to be noted that “‘The World Human Rights Conference’ in Vienna first recognised gender – based violence as a violation of human rights violation in 1993. The same was declared by ‘United Nations Declaration’ in 1993.” Furthermore, in the narrative of the movie the women are also denied the ‘Right to equality; as gender discrimination clearly enshrines upon them. Procreation of children is commonly considered to be the sole purpose of these housewives who often face various forms of violence for not being able to give birth to male child.

The social uproar

'Fire' screened in the late 1990's gives out a very strong message – A human should have total autonomy on something as personal as their sexuality. Being in love, Sita and Radha are fascinated in the movie, they constantly try to find time to spend with each other while hiding their relationship from their families, and being unsure of how correct their actions were. "This form of love is new to them, as Radha tells Sita – "this isn't familiar to me, this awareness of needs and desires." However, this is the only part about the movie which is unsettling, the notion that these women get to explore their sexualities as a consequence of the unhappiness arising from their failed marriages. The movie also portrays how women are denied control over their sexualities, and in case they decide to explore their sexualities, they are shunned from the society and are subjected to personal attacks and name calling.

The movie very beautifully and aptly pointed out the notions of Homosexuality and lesbianism. The Indian society does not explain the relation of lesbianism and having autonomus control on ones sexuality, it is a new concept and is not considered normal because traditional Indian households have never been vocal neither have most of the members of families had conversations about their desires and sexuality.

The movie depicts a harsh reality of gender discrimination based on sexual desires in the Indian society. While the slightest expression of sexual desires from the female protagonists were regarded as dishonourable, the male protagonist, Jatin had the liberty to seek sexual satisfaction outside marriage. The movie gives out a very boisterous message, one's sexuality is their own, when a man finds it easy to seek salvation outside his unhappy marriage, a woman too can break the norms and traditions. Two females can seek companionship and love each other and so can two men.

Parting words

Although homosexuality is a very important concept 'Fire' deals with, the movie essentially is an example of how dangerous traditions and cultures are, advancing the notion that regardless the gender, everyone in society is controlled by the web of traditions and cultures, women being the most oppressed, the fact can not be denied that these traditions even oppress the oppressor which is highlighted by the plot where Jatin argues with his brother on him being married to Sita against his will, just for the sake of carrying forward the family's lineage.

About the author



Ahmad Hasson is a fourth year PhD researcher at University of Sussex Law School. Ahmad's interest lies in gender and sexuality studies concerning South East Asia. Ahmed's research is on the Swara practices of Pashtun women in Pakistan. Ahmad is a prolific columnist in a number of notable dailies in Pakistan.

The Transness Of Intimacies And Desires: Can You Love Me Like This Now?

- By Raghavi & Ragi

"They say nothing lasts forever but they're just scared it will last longer than they can love it"

— Ocean Vuong, **On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous**

From the click-clack opening sound of tiffin boxes during a recess spent alone in first grade, to the bubbles bursting in the shower as we try to scrub ourselves out of our skin – we don't realize how lonely we are till we start craving the closure whose possibility was erased before it could be interpreted.

Our existence juxtaposes to reveal a silhouette of voids when forcefully confronted with flirtations by those closest to us. Our isolation feeds off the whispers of classmates gushing about first loves, first touches, first kisses.

Our longing follows the journey of a peachy crush bruised by a breakup, patched up by a band-aid, then split open as an indefinite parting of ways. Our friends make promises to never trust anyone in search of love again, while we hold the shards of trust that were broken before it could form. There's common ground in everything we longed for but forever seem to lack. Sylvia framed it for all of us: "Am I living half alive?"

The conversation around sexuality and intimacy within the queer community rarely transcends beyond homonormativity. Gender nonconformity and transness are reduced through the chism of medicalization. Transgender and intersex folks are restricted to their identities, bodies, and appearances and every form of academic and artistic discussion or expression does the same.



The conversation around sexuality and intimacy within the queer community rarely transcends beyond homonormativity. Gender nonconformity and transness are reduced through the chiasm of medicalization. Transgender and intersex folks are restricted to their identities, bodies, and appearances and every form of academic and artistic discussion or expression does the same.

We reluctantly enter adolescence which is made unbearable without the language to self-determine who we are. It's like trying to decipher the traces of words to put together in the fragment of a phrase, knowing that the wholesomeness of it will reach you as an aftertaste. It's how we grapple with what's left of Sappho through the mathematics of redacted words. We try to trace our ancestors, hoping to build our stolen pasts out of remnants left behind.

"Your absence has gone through me / Like thread through a needle. / Everything I do is stitched with its color." W.S. Merwin writes in Separation.

For some of us, our bodies become recurring nightmares, stripped from access to puberty blockers that create the possibility to preserve our autonomy. The imposition of a cis-heteronormative cage polices how our attraction and identity intertwine and disentangle from each other through different dances of existence and acceptance.

"Who do I love or desire?" opens a floodgate of hounding questions.

"How do I desire myself or do I love my undesired self?" the mirror reflects an ill-fitting body

"Where should I go this time?" the restroom offers no relief.

Our bodies become controversies before they materialize. Our skin becomes a scratch card as a euphemism for the language of erasure: we understand ourselves through who we aren't, never who we can become in love.

The world spins to send us off in a dizzy hypnotized by loneliness. There's no window to crack, only four walls closing in – desire, undesire, dilemma, and vulnerability.

"I watched life and wanted to be part of it but found it painfully difficult," Anais Nin writes.

We use the facade of our faces to plaster smiles that are always on the verge of peeling off from the edges. We're always quick to fix it, coaxing layer upon layer. But it inevitably becomes too heavy to hold, and we struggle to derive more strength before it comes crashing down.

"Why hold on to just one life till it is filthy and threadbare?" a translation of Rumi reads.



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"Why hold on to just one life till it is filthy and threadbare?" a translation of Rumi reads.

Unwrapping the much-awaited gift of language is synonymous with performing a striptease that treats you to hollowness. Our sexuality and gender identity refuse to reconcile, and embracing our transness means embracing the tightening grip of dysphoria. As the naivety departs, loneliness becomes thicker.

The so-called reclamation power through terminology becomes another coping mechanism rooted in powerlessness. The thirst to gain control comes from dehydrated remnants that can't be restored. The mundanity of routines and rituals, the daily oxymorons of reaching for power while being dismissed by it — how far can intimacy go before we lose it?

Loneliness blows two hits: the lack of intimacy and the absence of companionship. Both have a distinct taste but inflict the same wound: we fit into some form of desirability but remain undesirable for purpose — a conflict between the truth we come to realize and the confusion created by how we're perceived.

"What does it mean to be lonely? How do we love, if we are not intimately engaged with other human beings? How do we connect with other people if we don't find speaking particularly easy? Is sex a cure for loneliness, and if it is, what happens if our body or sexuality is considered deviant or damaged if we are ill or unblessed with beauty? and is technology helping you with these things? does it draw us closer together, or trap us behind screens?" Olivia Lang writes.

The concept of intimacy deceives itself through the denial of desire: there is nothing more sterilized than the singularity of forcing our attraction through the gender essentialism spiritualized by cis-normative heteropatriarchy. There is nothing more sterilized than using cishet as a catchphrase because exhaustion supersedes any attempt to breathe life into the multitudes we are capable of loving through.

The search for intimacy leads to apps where we are gatekept by signboards that clearly read "no trans or sissy". The desire makes us do the undesirable.

The road to intimacy is fraught with objectification, sexualization, and fetishization. We fill our cracks with love that doesn't ask for more. We are almost enough without needing to worry about how I can't offer more. The everydayness anxiety of one moment, feels the gnaw of unraveling, as it attempts to weave itself into the next.



"There were people I wanted so much before I had them that the entire experience of having them was grief for my old hunger," Sarah Manguso writes in 300 Arguments.

As trans folks, we have the ability to make pleasure and dysphoria dance together – an act that snowballs into dissociation. We are not even the disposables that Vqueeram asked to fall in love with, we are just a checkbox on the list of fantasies.

For those of us who survive despite killing ourselves, we feed off the remnants of guilt garnished by narratives of medicalization. We can't exist till the next surgery, and any taste of euphoria is marked by the greed for craving more.

We don't know how to weave the term sexuality into our lives. The closest we can come to understand it is through Susan Sontag's textualization of Taste in Notes on 'Camp':

"Taste has no system and no proofs. But there is something like a logic of taste: the consistent sensibility which underlies and gives rise to a certain taste. A sensibility is almost, but not quite, ineffable. Any sensibility which can be crammed into the mould of a system, or handled with the rough tools of proof, is no longer a sensibility at all. It has hardened into an idea..."

We are ineffably in love with everybody but afraid of the aftertaste: to be crammed into the mould of a system that hardens us into a fetishized idea. Not twink enough for cisgender gay men. Too flamboyant for cis-het women. Cis-het men calculate their sexuality before it's too late.

The nonbinary platoncity of existing relationships is too precious to risk for love, let alone the seeming sparsity of other gender nonconformists. We need to find each other to survive the violence that we internalize towards ourselves, and love isn't worth the risk of the loss that's already always the architect of our lives.

"Who will love you?" is among the first concerns of those who love me, when they really mean: "How will I love you like this now?"

About the authors



Ragi Gupta (they/them) is the Head of Special Projects at Pixstory. Their work explores gender, media and mental health through poetry and collaborative storytelling. Connect with them on Twitter @RagiGupta_



Raghavi is Final year student at Campus Law Centre, University of Delhi. They take pride in having 361 books and aspire to be a lawyer by day and drag queen by night. Dance is their weakness followed by good food, music, theatre, books and people, in no particular order.

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Poetry

Fluidity

- By Sanjana Choudhary

Love, I say
Isn't behind the veil of gender.

I am man
I am woman
I am everything but a box,
A division, an identity,
A limitation, an entity.

I come in different colours
Of spectrums, of rainbows;
I come in reds of protests,
I come in greens of peace,
I come in blues, blues of agony.

I am vibrant, I am multiple;
I am nothing and I am everything.
I am nothing of what you say I am,
I am everything of what you don't.

I am petals, and I am thorns;
I walk the walk of freedom,
I speak the language of love
I am infinitesimal,
I am eternal,
I am
Myself.

About the author



Sanjana Choudhary is a 19-year-old Delhi-based aspiring Journalist-Poet. She covers socio-cultural and political issues through the lens of poetics. She's currently pursuing Journalism & Media Studies from University of Delhi, India.



Newsletter

We are pleased to announce that we will be launching our flagship annual journal "**Journal for Human Rights Research**" in January, 2023.

It is also our great pleasure to welcome **Mr. Wayne Ramwell, Senior Tutor at University of Manchester Law School** as the Editor in Chief while **Mr. Sebestein LeFrance (Crown Counsel & Prosecutor)** & Visiting Faculty in several reputed universities across the world, has joined as a Consulting Editor for JHRR.

If you have any query regarding JHRR please contact at editorinchief.jhrr@outlook.com.



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