

SOLOSEXUAL
PORTRAIT OF A MASTURBATOR



JASON ARMSTRONG

FOREWORD BY JON PRESSICK

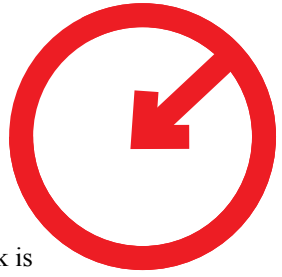
PRAISE FOR *SOLOSEXUAL*

“I have to give a hand to Armstrong, for his candid, no holds barred approach to the world of bating. While we are still a culture focused so much on sex of the penetrative kind, it’s refreshing to hear the stories of a man who loves masturbation more than any other sex act. From attending a Healthy Friction Weekend to the Bate Brotherhood, this book is full of juicy stories of the solo sex kind. I had no idea about how much I could still learn about masturbation. “

–Jamye Waxman, Author, *Getting Off: A Woman’s Guide to Masturbation*

“Serving as proof that masturbation does not, in fact, make one blind, *Solosexual* is raw and powerful. It fills a void in the writing about sexuality in a raunchy and unapologetic way.”

–Taylor J. Mace



*S*n *Solosexual: Portrait of a Masturbator*, author Jason Armstrong takes you into a world of men for whom masturbation is more than a quick wank to relieve stress or a substitute for so-called “real sex.” For some men, masturbation is the best sex of their lives and they have created a community to celebrate it. In the first book to ever explore this world, the concept of solosexuality is explored through Jason Armstrong’s personal lens. *Solosexual* is an unabashed memoir, a stirring manifesto and an investigation into living a life in which masturbation is one’s primary sexual outlet.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Armstrong is the writer of the blog entitled *Hunting for Sex: Cautionary Tales from the Quest* (voted by Kinkly.com as one of the top 100 Sexblogging Superheroes of 2013). He has been published by *DNA Magazine* (Australia) and on *DailyXtra* (Canada), and has an essay included in the recently released *Best Sex Writing of the Year* by Cleis Press (US).



ISBN: 978-0-9950032-0-0

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A MASTURBATOR**

JASON ARMSTRONG

**FOREWORD BY
JON PRESSICK**

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Published by Jason Armstrong
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Editing and design by Jon Pressick

Paperback ISBN: 978-0-9950032-0-0
E-book ISBN: 978-0-9950032-1-7

Some names and places have been changed to protect the identities of those in this book.

To all the men who bravely shared their sexual journeys with me over the years.

To my bate mentor, who first explained to me what the word “solosexual” meant (find him on xtube.com as wetyoudown or on BateWorld.com as bigsquirt).

And finally, to the man who first told me to write it all down.



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FOREWORD

These are fascinating times in the worlds of sex and sexuality. We are in a new era of learning about each other and our sexual needs and desires, recognizing our differences and understanding that our sexual identities are special and exciting.

And unique.

Like every grain of sand on the beach.

Like every snowflake that falls from the sky.

Unlike every cliché that has been used to describe sexuality.

As our next sexual awakening opens more eyes to the vast realities of the human condition, we are seeing more and more that sex is not as simple as many have wanted to believe—been forced to believe—for generations upon generations. Sex is not a prescribed doctrine that fits in a neat little box. Sex is not written clearly in a book, in a

faith, in an education. Sex is not static—never has been, never will be.

Sex is dynamic.

Sex is organic.

Sex is a force to which we all have a relation. Be it good, bad or indifferent, we all grow into a sexual being of some sort.

And that's a key phrase in our new age: "of some sort."

As we learn more about and hear from people who are outliers in the sexual landscape, we start to see commonalities in their differences. Sure, having a particularly strong fetish will make you different from those around you who have "normal" sex. But having that strong fetish puts you in league with those others who also share that fetish and other fetishes. And as word gets out, as more people talk, and film and television and books relate more and more about the wide variety of sexual interests that had heretofore been hush hush and kept under covers, you will learn that you're not so different, after all.

So, why are we still so surprised by differing sexualities?

This may be a golden age for sexual exploration and understanding, but that gold is still bright and shiny, fresh out of the ground. We're mining something good, but we've just cracked the surface. There are still many more riches to be found (that are far more valuable than money).

So we dig. We scour. And sometimes, we catch one glimpse of something delicate, refreshing and pure.

I first met Jason Armstrong in early 2013. But I didn't go looking for this pot of gold, he found me. He found me through my blog and we hit it off. I mean, we both have sex blogs, so we've got definite mutual interests. After we

connected, I found myself entranced by his work on his blog *Hunting for Sex: Cautionary Tales from the Quest*. Because his writing is different, so very different than the work that I do, than the other sex bloggers I know...than anyone.

Honestly, I had no idea his world of masturbation—bating—exists. I had no idea of this culture, this way of life. Sure, I know people who like masturbating. I like masturbating! But this is different.

This is solosexuality.

A relatively new term in the sexual landscape, solosexuality as a concept is one that I can truly envision taking hold. We've been force-fed to believe in marriage, in coupling, in never being alone so much that we've forgotten something so primal, so instinctual—the enjoyment of self.

As you'll read in Jason's poignant and passionate words, solosexuality is seemingly contradictory: complex and nuanced, while at the same time simple. He will show you the world through his eyes, through his mirror. You'll see the reflection of a solosexual—and the journey it took to get this man to this place.

To this understanding.

Jon Pressick
Toronto



PROLOGUE

The biting January wind pushes me into the back alley where two men are going through an unmarked door. This isn't the first time I've found my way down a passage like this. You know it's the right door when you observe other men striding toward it with purpose, walking as if they aren't nervous. As if men like us go through doors like these every day.

Leaving the cold behind, I enter the space where Dominic greets me. He looks as sexy as he did the first time I attended one of his events. Our beards meet as he kisses me and takes my twenty dollar bill. He promises me more of what was offered last time. Above him hangs a sign that reminds us of the rules laid out in the email invitation: No deodorants or cologne please! I don't need to be told that. Some men do.

To the left are the coat racks where I strip off my winter clothes and replace them with the leather jock and ballcap, army boots, and black rubber wristband with two yellow stripes that signal my penchant for watersports—to anyone who is interested. I graciously smile and nod to the two folks from the local safe sex organization. The rational part of my brain is glad they are here with all their condoms and lubes. The out-for-a-good-time part of my brain wishes they'd go away, feeling as if my mother is watching to make sure I don't do anything dangerous. They remind me of the world beyond this space. And so I take a good, hard swig of the Jack Daniels and Coke I poured into an water bottle (I have two more ready in my backpack). There's also a half tab of a certain blue pill to help me if the outside world tries to keep me from fully engaging.

The safe sex boys smile their cherubic smiles as I go to the main space. The lights are dimmer, but it takes me all of three seconds to scope out the joint. I see BDSM equipment that I don't know the names for. Five other men, leaning against said equipment, preen in their jock straps and leather harnesses. I'm not attracted to any of them. Oh wait, maybe one. I make eye contact with the one guy who seems cute but his eyes show no interest. Does that count as a rejection? But I've only just arrived! The night is young, I remind myself. I sidle up to a section of the wall behind an empty sling and lean, sipping my booze, bathed in the red glow from a bulb above me. I feel ridiculous. I feel sleazy. I feel a sense of déjà vu.

I also feel too sober so I sip my drink constantly, as if somebody was going to yell out "Last Call!" Over time,

more men arrive. I start on my second Jack and Coke. I start to feel brazen. Dominic is working the joint, his partner is DJing, and more men continue to arrive in from the cold. I can smell them when they pass by, looking me over—as I do them. One sits on a couch, alone, jacking his cock. But he appears self-conscious, as if seeking approval. I nod at him as I pass by without lingering. Instead, I walk around a partition and see a man being fisted. Both fister and fistee are nondescript but they are being watched by a hot couple who are pawing at each other. I reach to stroke the back of one of them, but my touch elicits no response. The two are clearly only into each other. Get a room, I think.

On my way to retrieve my third and final drink, I pass by The Slave. He is standing against the wall in a chastity device, clothed only in the sneakers on his feet. A sign hanging from his neck states that to play with The Slave, one would need permission from Dominic. The Slave watches me read the sign but says nothing, making furtive eye contact with me. I locate Dominic and he escorts me back, instructing The Slave that I have permission.

The Slave nods and shyly smiles at me. His big, smooth, muscular body is at odds with his submissive demeanor. Dominic leaves The Slave in my hands and we...talk. I have a distinct need to know that a sex partner is attracted to me in order to have fun. If I played with The Slave, would he be doing it out of duty rather than pleasure? Would duty be his pleasure?

Curiosity bites me and I interview the poor soul. What does it mean to be a slave, I ask him. Like a leather-wearing Barbara Walters, I ask him what his Master demands of

him. His Master demands sex, for himself and his friends. That I expected. But his Master also demands roofing. I beg your pardon? "I'm good at roofing, and so when my Master has a friend whose roof is in need of repair, I have to do it." I don't have a good response for this. Disoriented by the Jack Daniels and The Slave's answer, I feel my carriage turning into a pumpkin—soon. I'm just about to tell The Slave that he should really be paid for his roofing skills when Dominic intercepts us both.

The Slave and I are taken to a separate space and Dominic slips on a condom. The Slave bends obediently and Dominic enters him doggy style. I position myself under The Slave to lick his balls, my eye on Dominic's cock going in and out of The Slave's hole. I stand, and The Slave takes my dick into his mouth, filled at both ends. The Slave doesn't moan, doesn't writhe—is he having fun? Should I care?

Dominic pulls out, takes the condom off and approaches me. "Take my piss," he tells me and I kneel obediently—I am now the willing slave. His penis in my mouth, Dominic unleashes a stream of piss and I swallow every drop. The Slave is watching, standing at attention.

With his bladder empty, Dominic returns to his hosting duties. He and The Slave are, to me, the hottest men in the room, and for all intents and purposes, our play has been realized. Now is the denouement to the orgy for me. And yet, I need more.

But not here.

I hurriedly put on my clothes. I say goodbye to no one and leave the heat for the slap of cold winter wind as I exit back into the alley. The images of Dominic's cock going in

and out of The Slave's ass enflame me and I am bulging. With the Jack and Coke in hand, I keep swigging away as I stagger to the subway. But it is closed, it's that late. So I walk home, with purpose. My night is not over—not by a long shot.

Getting home, I get down to business. On goes the porn, off come my clothes, out comes the small pill bottle that I'd filled all week with cum loads. I thought I'd play with my pearly liquid at the orgy, but instead, I will play with all the saved sperm here, alone. The moment I remove the cap from the bottle is cataclysmic. As I take a whiff of the semen, the smell of bleach and manhood sends a horny spike right into my brain. I pour the jizz on my face and it dribbles into my beard, drips onto my hairy chest and travels down to my bush. I turn to my left to see myself beautifully debased in the mirror. My hand slaps my own face, smearing the sperm and I breathe in the scent. I am home, literally and figuratively.

I want an instant and sustained erection so I take the half tab of Viagra that I hadn't used at the event tonight. I turn on the heavy metal, light a cigarette and groove naked in the mirror, reveling in the slut that I'd been tonight, if only briefly. I haven't touched my cock since getting home and I prepare. I focus on it and when I feel ready, I grab it and birds sing and demons roar. I feel supreme and have everything I need to edge myself into oblivion. In a hypnotic state, I rub my hand around my crotch over and over and over again, watching this in the mirror, my primal self rising to the moment. It's a communion with the earth, with my cock, my brain, my cock, the universe, my cock, my male brothers, my cock, my soul, my cock, my infinity. I

think of the experiences at the orgy and the memory of the night feels more powerful than the actual experience.

I zone out and enjoy this state of abandon for as long as my cock and the booze lets me until I fall asleep. In the morning, I wake up in a wet bed, a bed I'd pissed in. No matter. I have a mattress cover for piss play. I feel no shame. I had a bacchanalian night wherein I went to the moon. Back on Earth, I change the sheets and put on the coffee I need to counteract this wooziness. I am slightly hung over, but okay. Waiting for the water to boil, I press my dick up against the kitchen counter and reflect on my trip to the batehole, that place where communion with cock is immediate and earth shattering.

I analyze the night's fun up and down and sideways: Why was the memory of the orgy more meaningful than the real-time experience of it? Was this a lost weekend—or did I find something? If I was alone while bating, how is it that I felt connected to everything on God's green Earth? How is it possible that something so raunchy and primal as masturbation could also feel so transcendent? Should I be concerned that alcohol had been integral to the experience (could I have gone that deep into the bate without it, and did it matter)? The masturbation had felt so good, so freeing. I peeked down the rabbit hole and saw how easy it would be to become addicted to the batehole.

Walking to work later, I pass men on the street and I search their faces for some sign, a sign that they have been where I had gone just hours before. But with our work faces on, we are all inscrutable. I can't tell which men I pass are thinking the same thing as me: The next time I can be alone to give in to the demands of my cock.



DISCOVERING BATE CULTURE

It was the spring of 2013 and the Black Eagle was hosting the event Trade. The bar's backroom was being renovated and so ownership got special permission from the city to allow for sex to happen any and everywhere in the bar. I went up the steps to the second floor, turned into the entrance and the first thing I saw was a buddy of mine giving head to a happy customer, right there, next to the line-up of men waiting to be served drinks from the hirsute bartender. Later, when my friend was freed of the cock-sucking task, I went over and gave him a big bear hug and a kiss on the lips. "Damn, I can taste cock on your lips!" I told him, to which he whooped "Right on!" and we hugged again.

I was to meet another buddy there that night, Ken, and he showed up shortly after I did. The bar and its adjacent patio

were packed to the rafters. In the dark space, men danced, even though there was no dancefloor, and released their cocks from their pants. At one point, while chatting with Ken, a handsome stranger undid my fly and kindly blew me for a bit while I chugged my pint. It was a heady mix of sexually potent stimulation—the loud music, the smell of sweat and leather, the laughter, the cigarette smoke on the patio. I was horny, slightly overwhelmed (so many men, so little time!) and getting buzzed from my beer.

But I stayed for only an hour and a half and then went home. I felt bad leaving so early as Ken must have felt he'd been ditched. Or maybe not—he had arrived with another friend in tow and knew half the room. But I had to go home. I had to be alone. To masturbate.

This book is about one gay man's journey into the world of solosexuality (a term you will soon come to be well acquainted with). It is a treatise on the art of masturbation. It reflects the feeling that masturbation is an end in and of itself and not just a substitute for the "real thing". Taken further: Masturbation as a way of life and the conduit through which you connect to you inner divinity *and* your inner pig. Or shared, mutual masturbation as a way of connecting to others and their essence, their most private moments, their raunch, their transcendence.

The transcendence through masturbation speaks to the life force that springs from our sexuality, that puts us in touch with ourselves and with deeper, sometimes remote parts of our psyche. Think of it as the key that unlocks the door to self-acceptance and self-love. Think of a masturbation session as your opportunity to shut out the noise of the world, switch gears and enter different planes

of existence by tapping into the unique wellspring of your sexuality, desires and fantasies.

At a certain point in my sexual development, I found that long, deep, intense masturbation sessions had become integral to my mental health, to the point that it very nearly usurped my need for all other types of sexual play. As it became my preferred mode of sexual expression, I came to the realization that sometimes, during typical penetrative-style sex with a partner, I was left wanting and feeling as if something was missing. Often I would long for the so-called “regular” sex to finish and my partner to leave so that I could complete the experience alone, jacking to the memory of what had just occurred. Masturbation would take me to sexual heights beyond those I experienced during that partnered, penetrative sex.

I can out-masturbate anyone, anytime, anywhere. My jack-off sessions are so fulfilling that I often joke that another person in the room would just be in my way. And I need minimum three hours or else I won't bother. During sex with myself, I have no inhibitions and no qualms about what someone will think of me. I can be a total freak and completely unselfconscious. I can dance in the mirror for hours with my hands down my pants. I can stare at myself, in one hand a Jack and Coke, the other a cigarette, and call myself a fuckin' cum-lickin' whore.

There is a narcissistic element to this kind of self-love, but it makes up for all the times I doubted myself or felt inferior (or...does it stem from that?). And it's not a substitute for the “real thing”. This is real and always feels like the first time. It's a date with myself, so I turn on the music, dim the lighting, and set up any sex toys I might want to play

with. To me, it's as valid as any other date I've ever been on—except I never get stood up this way.

While we are becoming more adept as a society at discussing sexuality, the topic of masturbation still has a patina of taboo about it. In these pages, I will explain how masturbation is not a distant runner-up in the search for meaningful sexual experience. Consider this book a manifesto in which masturbation is proclaimed as a valid first choice in the buffet of sexual experience. This is a testament to self-pleasure but it's also a reflection on the obstacles faced in the pursuit of that pleasure. It's a cautionary tale to the addictive power of such pleasure. Like any good masturbation session, we will run the gamut together from base raunch to transcendent bliss.

Masturbation. My world—welcome to it.



Before we get in too deep, you should watch me masturbate. Go ahead, put this book down and head on over to Xtube.com. My screen name there is *Wildhorse100*. The first video I ever posted of myself jacking off was called “Blame it on the Jack Daniels”. It is a five minute take on a five hour “edging” session. In those five minutes, you get to see me grooving to Rob Zombie playing in the background. I piss, drink it, spray piss from a bottle all over my face, pits and hair, drink some saved cum, pour what's left on my face and say my favorite word over and over—“FUCK!” All while jacking my meat. “Edging” is repeatedly bringing yourself close to orgasm but then stopping at the last minute. You let the excitement abate... and then start over again. And again. And again.

I posted the video in February of 2012. A mere few

days later, at work, it hit me in a fundamental way that I had just made public a very kinky video for the world to see. I stopped breathing. I imagined “Blame it on the Jack Daniels” finding its way onto the computer screens of my boss and coworkers at my office job. I saw my future livelihood collapse like a house of cards. Unable to focus, I feigned sickness and ran like a racehorse to the subway to get home to take that fucking video down. I couldn’t do it fast enough. When I’d deleted the video, my fears didn’t evaporate. What if someone had copied the video and it ended up on other porn sites? We are told time and again that the Internet is uncontrollable, that what we put online lives on in perpetuity.

In my panic, questions raced through my head. Why had I posted it in the first place? Was it an act of pure narcissism, or was there a deeper motivation at play? If I wanted so badly to post a video, why oh why did I feel the need to show my face? Why the compulsion to be so open, so kinky, so uninhibited? What was I trying to prove and to whom?

The video was gone—at least I hoped that I’d wiped out every trace of it. Later, in May of 2012, I started my blog *Hunting for Sex: Cautionary Tales from the Quest*. I needed to find meaning in the sexual experiences I’d had with men, but so often my discussions of sex with friends were either dished about with false bravado, or elicited judgement. I wanted the blog to be a safe place where we men could talk about our sexual journeys openly, without shame, a place where we could talk about what sex means to us, how we grow or are pained by it, how we negotiate it, and the joys and the sorrows of hunting for sex.

I laboriously emailed the “friends” I’d accumulated on Xtube one by one about my blog, and it got some notice. Slowly, I began to get responses from readers who shared with me the deepest parts of their sexual soul. I believed a blog to be the perfect platform because I didn’t want my writing to live as a monologue, but rather to have it start a dialogue. And it worked. The stories that these men bravely shared with me made concrete something I had only posited: That our sexual lives and journeys are fundamental to our core. Sex wasn’t peripheral—it was central for many people.

But we live in a world that is so confused about sex. Sex is everywhere—in marketing, in films, in music—and yet we are told to not be too obsessed with it. Porn is watched by millions, yet we know next to nothing of the truth of the lives of the performers, other than what the film companies and the religious right feed us. Men of the cloth condemn homosexuality while secretly having gay sex, high on meth. Of course, when found out, they recant and go to rehab, while their stoic wives grin and bear it. We rarely *really* talk about sex rationally and openly. We fear it too much and pay lip service to its celebration.

When considering my blog in this world, could I write so openly about sex and expect my readers to do the same if even I was shamed by my sexuality and its expression? And if I really wanted the dialogue to grow, how on earth would I market the blog?

It all came back to my video. In my heart of hearts, I knew that the best, most efficient way to market my blog would be to have at least one good video up on Xtube.

Did I have the balls? And like a true gay man, I ended up looking to Madonna for inspiration.

“Poor is the man whose pleasures depend on the permission of another.” Madonna sings that line in her seminal song “Justify My Love.” Not only does she sing the lyric but it shows up in print in the final frame of the accompanying video.

I’ve got to hand it to Madonna. While she seems like a tough person who would chew me up for breakfast, she took quite a risk with “Justify My Love” and then with her album *Erotica* and her coffee-table book *Sex*. She was an established star who dared to alienate, well, everybody, with her in-your-face bold sexual fantasies.

From what I’ve heard, she was so raked over the coals for it that she apparently said that it was the single time in her storied career when she thought she should just throw in the towel and get out of the limelight. Note that it was a woman, not a man, who had the balls to showcase sex and fantasy to this degree in the mainstream. Go onto YouTube and type in the words “Madonna *Erotica* uncensored”, and you will see the uncensored video to the song “*Erotica*.” She holds nothing back. Lesbians lick her tits. She gets ridden like a horse in leather. She pours hot wax onto one leather dude and flogs another man (or was that a woman?). She goes full tilt into BDSM. And at times in the video, she is funny and irreverent, revealing that *erotica* can be hot and also humorous and finally, fun.

Exactly whose permission did I seek to post my own video? Alanis Morissette frighteningly sings a line in one of her songs that goes “You will learn to lose everything.” That line ricocheted in my head as I went back to the

computer and re-uploaded my video. But I also knew that I needed to amputate what wasn't working for me, and what wasn't working for me was silence. I had to trust that providence would provide me with a path. As scared as I was, I wondered what joys might be in store if I followed my truth. If I believed in the importance of this kind of frank dialogue, I had to put my money where my mouth was.

Many of you found this book by way of the video. I did not ask anyone's permission to post that video but my own. I like having that video up there. Now you know what it took to upload it.



There is no way in hell that I could write a book about male masturbation without putting a spotlight on the website BateWorld.com. It is an emporium dedicated to all aspects of male masturbation. I discovered BateWorld through a reader of my blog who became much more than that—he became a confidant, a mentor, a teacher. Regardless of my penchant for masturbation, regardless of how much I wrote about it on a blog ostensibly about sex with others, I fell into the trap of thinking that masturbation wasn't really sex. If we talk about sex at all, our society is more apt to talk about partnered, penetrative sex. Masturbation gets short shrift, as if it's the ugly cousin hidden in the basement that no one values. How could I make sense of my epic masturbatory adventures that are so profound that it would not at all be hyperbole to call them transcendent?

So when I looked up BateWorld, the curtains parted and the trumpets sounded — I found a place where my sexual delight joined a host of other like-minded men. I spent

hours upon hours discovering that this community of men, straight, bi and gay, had created a culture unto their own, with their own lingo, with subcategories of interests related to the “bate”.

I learned terms. Masturbation was “bating”. I was a bator (masturbator). Other men edged too, and like me, sometimes took “batecations”—vacations of perhaps a weekend or more to do nothing but turn the phone off and bate. There were baters who used tantric methods of arousal, eschewing drugs and liquor. Then there were those like me that loved to throw back some booze and smoke.

The link that binds all of these disparate men together is the exalted position on which they place the bate. The men on BateWorld see masturbation as the way in which they celebrate their manhood, the way in which they connect to the Self, to the life force that is created through male sexuality. And on this site, there is a genuine respect for that in others. Commonly, the baters will describe themselves as a brotherhood. They may bate alone; they may bate with others. Masturbation becomes the conduit to this transcendent place—not penetrative sex. BateWorld, in fact, prohibits pictures or videos of penetrative sex. It is the adulation of all things masturbation.

This brotherhood of baters have made an art of masturbation—we’re not talking generally about the quick wank in the shower before work in the morning. These men ideally have a “masturbatorium”, akin to a man cave, where all the accoutrements of a good bate are collected. The focal point is often—you guessed it—the computer. Porn is one type of “bate fuel”. On a wonderfully satirical

tumblr blog devoted to bating, there is a simple image of a stick-figure man sitting at a computer, with the words underneath reading “Assume the Position!” Settling into your bate chair in front of a computer is how so many bators start the almighty bate.

Wading through the hundreds of amateur videos of BateWorld members jacking off, I came across what seemed to be the epitome of what a true bator is. This particular one is of a man masturbating, with a partner off-screen coaching and goading him on to get deeper and deeper into the bate. He appears lost in the power of his PENIS (all caps indeed), both getting lost but also finding something primal and basic in his core. He can't seem to get enough of his cock, and the unseen partner asks “What are you? Huh? Tell me what you fuckin are...” to which the bator, in the throes of ecstasy, replies “I'm a bator, man, I'm a fuckin bator. I'm a chronic, addicted compulsive bator...I'm a monkey bator...I love my cock, I love my cock so much.” The bator starts to goon. Gooning is that moment in the bate where you lose all sense of time and place, knowing nothing except that you have a cock and that it needs to be worshipped and exalted. You don't even need the stimulation of porn, you don't need to look at yourself bating in the mirror. You're all but drooling on yourself, your face contorting. You begin to “cock-babble” (“Fuckin PENIS, FUCKIN PENIS! I love my penis, I need my cum, I'm a fuckin.....”) until all the sound that comes out of you is indeed babble and moaning, a speaking in tongues in this sexual ecstatic state that mirrors religious ecstasy.

The scene of this monkey bator, as he called himself,

ends abruptly as Bateworld limits videos to five minutes in length. But as I sat at my computer, assuming the position, as it were, I marveled at what I'd just seen. I saw my own sexuality and its needs mirrored in him as he ascended (descended?) into a ritualistic celebration of male masturbation. And I realized: I'm a bator. I paid the sixty dollars it took to join the site and created a profile, announcing both to the men on the site and most importantly, to myself, that I was an enthusiastic bator. A message from another member appeared on my profile shortly after... "Welcome home."



A SHORT HISTORY OF MASTURBATION

Around 300 years ago, a new sin was invented. Touching yourself formally became off-limits. As odd as it seems, masturbation as a concept is a relatively modern idea. Throughout most of Antiquity, masturbation is barely mentioned. If it is, it is brief, fairly benign, with no apparent effect on pre-eighteenth century societies. It was not part of consciousness. Rather, the writings of Antiquity were concerned with fornication, adultery, homosexuality, incest. Masturbation, not so much.

However, evidence points to the year 1712, or thereabouts, when a London tabloid journal printed a tract written by an anonymous doctor entitled *Onania; or, The Heinous Sin of Self Pollution, and all its Frightful Consequences, in both SEXES Considered, with Spiritual and Physical Advice to those who have already injured*

themselves by this abominable practice. And seasonable Admonition to the Youth of the nation of Both SEXES...—a mouthful (handfull?) indeed. Onania was a new term at the time and referenced the story of Onan in the Old Testament who apparently spilled his seed and was punished by God. Scholars haggle over what really happened, one theory being that Onan pulled out before ejaculating into the widow of his dead brother—coitus interruptus—and the sin being the disruption of the family bloodline.

The anonymous writer of *Onania* (scholars would haggle too over who really wrote the piece) would claim that he only had moral reasons for speaking out against “self-pollution”. How many people, he reasoned, might be damaging their souls without realizing they were doing anything wrong? But it wasn’t just the soul that was in peril—so was the body. An enterprising physician who had the funds to market “cures” for masturbation got on the band wagon. These funds were funnelled into ads in the tabloid press noting the dangers of this secret sin, but for which there were cures available—at a price.

The only way to control a vice is to name it, and it was so named—Onania. The use of the word “masturbation” appears in English literature as early as the first half of the 17th century, but it wasn’t until *Onania* that fear of masturbation grew like wildfire. Ads for cures for masturbation revealed the illnesses that could beset unsuspecting self-polluters: spinal tuberculosis, epilepsy, pimples, and insanity to name but a few. It stands to reason then that people exhibiting these medical conditions were viewed as suspected masturbators—why else would they show traits of these illnesses? Cartoons began to appear

of what a person who succumbed to self-pollution would eventually come to look like: hunched over, wasted, decrepit.

The physical ramifications of masturbation were only part of the problem. As the modern world was dawning, as society became more intricate in its interdependencies, anything as private and secret as masturbation was seen not just as morally wrong, but counterproductive to the culture of the society being formed. Masturbation, it was argued, contributed nothing to society. Even prostitution was preferable, as it held up capitalistic aspirations. If other areas of human sexuality had been brought under control by the church, and by society's norms and mores, it was high time that masturbation was addressed. A few brave individuals attempted to publicly refute the idea that masturbation was morally and physically dangerous, but their efforts were in vain. This newly-named danger to self and to society, first mentioned in a tabloid rag, would in only fifty years be written about in scathing terms by physicians for medical dictionaries and encyclopedias of the day.

For the next two hundred years, popular writers and philosophers contributed to the zeitgeist through fiction and non-fiction that attempted to dissuade readers from masturbating. These same writings sometimes, inadvertently, had the opposite effect as they spurred curiosity. As reading grew in popularity among the general population, books took a hit in some circles for being what we would call today "bate fuel". Novels were lambasted and considered often scurrilous aphrodisiacs that could lead to only one thing. (Could they ever have imagined on-line porn?)

As I researched the conceptual origins of my favourite activity, I was startled by how well these early writers understood masturbation. Using different language, they understood the bathhouse. They understood the near-delirious state that some self-polluters achieved. They knew that the power of the imagination often trumped the real-life stimulation that could be found with a partner. *Onania* was an eighty-eight page document that trumpeted the alarm about the potentially excessive nature of masturbation, where nothing stood in the way of masturbating for hours on end in an unquenchable thirst. Is this not edging being described? A French medical dictionary from 1826 likens self abuse to alcoholism, as a potential addiction in and of itself.

For Sigmund Freud, masturbation was a clear focus of his studies on sexuality. The dawn of the twentieth century saw medicine finally, in fits and starts, begin to consider masturbation as physiologically benign. But Freud left an important stamp on the subject, positing that masturbation might be a normal part of adolescence but should it continue into adulthood, it would be indicative of a person who had failed at growing up, failed at becoming the person society meant for him or her to be. Thus masturbation remained an ethical quagmire, if not a physiological one, for decades into the twentieth century.

As I read through the history of masturbation, I wondered then about *Onania*, the first written piece in history to describe in sometimes lascivious detail all that was wrong with masturbation: Was the author writing from experience? Like the physicians hawking so-called cures, did he see a money-making opportunity? Could he

ever have imagined that his *Onania*, and the many, many editions that followed would send shock waves not just among the working poor who made up his readership, but eventually among the cognoscenti as well? And what would the people of the early 1700s make of the sexual revolution of the 1960s, when masturbation began to be considered more than benign but even healthy? *Onania* created for us an activity that was subsequently controlled through guilt, shame, commerce, medicine, philosophy, religion and cultural mores. From the secret, solitary vice of 1712, we fast forward to today and the Internet, where on some sites one can create a profile and charge viewers for the pleasure of watching one engage in an act fraught with three hundred years' worth of historical drama.



HOW A BATOR BATES

I was talking on the phone with my friend Dave, telling him that I had just registered for a Healthy Friction weekend. I explained that I was going to Key West, Florida to meet up with a bunch of masturbators at an upscale hotel. Dave asked what we were going to do there, and I answered “We’re gonna masturbate together!” to which he joked, “Well, that shouldn’t take long.”

I laughed with him, but realized that my friend didn’t understand the half of it. He no doubt sees masturbation as a last resort, something you do quickly to relieve tension because a lover isn’t around. I don’t think Dave had a clue how a man could possibly masturbate for three, four, five, six hours at a stretch. What in tarnation can a man do with his cock for that length of time?

Then my editor emailed me. He had edited *Solosexual*

and wrote me that the book was missing a chapter—a chapter where I explained how I bate, what I actually *do*. Could I explain it in a way that people who aren't Bators (Bators with a capital B) could understand the appeal? He reminded me that this book wasn't aimed solely at tried-and-true bators, but also for those who aren't (at least not yet), those who are curious and those who enjoy reading about the sexual proclivities of others.

Good sex is fun sex. And all day long at work, I feel like I can handle any problem, any crisis, because I hold a secret: As soon as my workday is done, I get to have more fun than the law should allow. All day long, my cock, hidden in work pants, is a sleeping tiger, ready to be unleashed the minute I unlock the door to my apartment. I live in a basement studio apartment that is so small that it's really just a big man cave, or as us bators call it, a masturbatorium. When I get home and hastily lock the door behind me, I turn around and there's my computer and to the left of that, a huge mirror. I see them and it's as if they whisper to me "Where you been at all day? Let's get this party started!" I fire up the computer, and the first thing I do is open YouTube so I can turn on a Godsmack song, and for about a year now, that first song I play is always "Cryin' Like a Bitch" because it features UFC fighters and the lead singer and the drummer are shirtless. Hard rock being played by sweaty musicians. Enough said.

Speaking of shirtless—I have a collection of shirts that have snaps instead of buttons. This is a feature of great importance. As the music begins, I can look in the mirror and have a pseudo Marlon Brando moment. In *A Streetcar Named Desire*, he rips his shirt open and yells

“Stellaaaaaaaaa!” I too rip open my shirt (ok, it’s snaps, not a true rip, but never mind) and say to myself à la Jack Nicholson in *The Shining*, “I’m Home” (a little crazy, but not homicidal like good ol’ Jack).

Cue a run to the kitchen to pour a whiskey, then back to my computer to light a cigarette. It’s time to open all the web pages that I need for the night. Log into Xtube. Log into BateWorld. Open up some dirty porn tumblrs. Open my email.

Part of the ritual of preparing for a night of bating is that I must perform what my bate mentor (yes, I have a bate mentor, to whom this book, in part, is dedicated) delicately calls my ablutions. In plain speak: I get in the tub and wash my ass. But this is done crouched somewhat uncomfortably below the faucet, not with the shower head, because god forbid I should wash my pits before a bate! I want rank pits, manly-smelling pits, I want pheromones! But I want a clean ass. Then I slide a pair of black bikini briefs over that clean ass, and put on socks and work boots and a ballcap. Dressed for success!

Getting prepared for a night of bating is like a religious rite—the scene must be set just so. I turn off the overhead lights, preferring a lamp that glows softly. I like to place the ashtray beside my computer and then the cigarette pack and lighter next to it, and finally my tumbler of whiskey and water. On the other side of the computer is the lube and a little notebook in which I keep track of what webpages I left off at on the various tumblr porn sites I enjoy. Who wants to see the same pictures twice? Near the lube is a washcloth for when I overdo it with the lube and the keys on my computers are shining.

Now I think I'm ready. I light another cigarette, have a sip of whiskey, pray that the phone doesn't ring tonight. And if it does, that it's a telemarketer and not my mother. I click "play" to get Godsmack singing. Hold it! Hold it! Wait for the opening guitar riff and bam! Hand to cock contact! Lions roar, a flock of doves soar overhead, rockets whoosh through the sky! This is the moment I waited all day for and it's here.

So now what? Well, if it's a work night, I'm watching the clock like a hawk. I want my fun but I have my responsibilities. Basically, I give myself the first half hour to stroke—not just my cock but all of my body in the mirror while Godsmack tunes play in rotation. Remember Robert De Niro in *Taxi Driver*, looking in the mirror and saying "You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me?" and whipping out a pistol? Well, I'm talking to the mirror too, and whipping out my own gun. But my mirror talk is more "You fuckin dirty whore. You fuckin dirty fuck".

I could just kiss myself, and hell, sometimes I do, planting my face on the mirror and going for it. My mind is racing, and sometimes non-sexual thoughts enter the picture. If you could read my mind at this moment, it might be something like this: *Fuck, my pits smell so good/ Dick is already hard, yes!/ Gotta check my messages on BateWorld/More whiskey!/What am I going to eat after the bate is over? What's in the fridge?/ Fuck, I can't wait to expose my bate at Healthy Friction/ Fuck, my place is a pigsty, mental note to check rates with Molly Maid/ Is my internet running slow? Oh god, please no/ Mental note to include stream of consciousness during bate in the new chapter your editor wants you to write about how*

you bate/Oh goody! A message on BateWorld, let's see who it is/.

I love messaging with other bators on BateWorld or Xtube, sending messages back and forth as we bate, connected in our journey inward and turning it outward. Questions I will often ask men is “How are you bating tonight?”, or, “What stage are you at in the bate?” There are stages, and like snowflakes, no two bators are completely alike. There are, however, common themes. It's like striking gold when you find a bator who shares a fetish of yours. A person's fetishes are often in a hierarchy, with certain fetishes being more powerful than others, and that hierarchy can change over time, sometimes overnight. So if I'm focused on, say, my fetish of men who don't shave or trim their pubes but leave it gloriously natural, then I might post a comment about this on the rolling comments section. If someone is thinking the same thoughts as me, we might be a great pair for tonight's bate. I get into trouble, though, when the person at the other end wants to Instant Message or Skype. I prefer email—in the time between messages I can work on my cock in the mirror, or look at porn, or wander through all the other notices on BateWorld and Xtube. I might lose a buddy who is singularly looking to Skype. And that's okay. I get it.

Speaking of porn, if it's early in the bate, I haven't even tuned into it yet—but I will! At a certain point, something goes “click” in my head and I know it's time to ramp up the bate a notch with some dirty tumblr pictures. Just pictures at first. The video porn will come soon enough. But pictures work for me as my imagination does all sorts of tricks when looking at a hot guy on screen. I fall into

a state of worship. Worshipping myself, Worshipping the men on screen, Worshipping the men I'm emailing with on BateWorld, I'm giving thanks for being a man. I'm revelling in my body. Little things catch my attention and turn me on. I never noticed how beautiful the piss slit is before. Isn't it gorgeous? And I own one! How lucky can you get? I hesitate to say such a thing, sitting as I do from the vantage point of my privileged status as a cis man. I know that men have often, throughout history, wielded the cock as a weapon to hurt others. So if I am going to exclaim praises of cock, my greatest wish is that the word "cock" in this book be easily substituted for any genitalia. Whether cis or trans, let us all love our parts as much as we can, for the love they give us back is tenfold. Lady Gaga told us to love ourselves because we were born this way, baby, and she is right.

Clothes do make the man and sometimes I have bates where a fashion show in the mirror is in order. My look of choice is porno white trash: Ripped tanks, frayed ball caps, jeans with holes cut in them in strategic places (and the pockets cut out for easy access), sweat pants worn so thin you can see my cock through them. Jock straps. Clever, complicated underwear picked up in Amsterdam. As I write this chapter, I'm just in socks, underwear with the word "ADDICT" emblazoned on the waistband, and an open shirt (with snaps, natch). Incidentally, I get asked if I masturbate while writing, and the answer is no. Completely different parts of the brain are in use. But who says I can't at least dress like trash while writing?

As a bate progresses, the harder fetishes come into play. I love piss play during a bate and my "thing" lately has

been to set up a bowl at the foot of the mirror and piss into it, all the while watching myself. When the bowl gets half-way filled, I put it in a tub of warm water for the length of about five Godsmack songs and presto! It's warm enough to dip my ball cap in and then right back on my head, the piss splashing me and dripping down to the tarp and sheets I've placed under me. The amount of laundry I go through washing those sheets! I should buy stocks with a company like Tide.

If you had told my teenaged self that I'd one day be into piss, not only would I have laughed in your face, I would have likely thrown up. My, how tastes change. On BateWorld, you get a sense of what makes other baters tick by the groups that have formed. There is a group for baters who like to 420 while they bate, just as there's a group for baters that use no stimulants or depressants at all. There are groups for big cock lovers, small cock lovers, hairy men lovers, smooth men lovers. Married baters on the downlow. Baters who are exhibitionists. Baters with a fetish for used condoms ("Let's exchange them!"). Baters who like to philosophize about the phallus, baters who are fans of the Grateful Dead (perhaps I'll start a group for fans of Godsmack?), baters who are narcissists. You can find Christian baters, Jewish baters and Mormon baters. Oh! There's even a group for baters like me who always wear a ballcap during the bate! There's a group for baters who are also gamers and love to play video games while bating. Baters who like to bate with food. Interracial bate bonding. Baters who want to connect with others who bate in the back seats of taxi cabs. A group for self suckers! This list goes on and on...and on.

With all this talk of BateWorld, you might assume that I work for the site and am shilling for it. I wish I worked for the site, but alas, no, I don't. BateWorld is simply the nucleus of my bate life. Some bators might prefer a site like Chaturbate, where camming live together is the draw.

And so here I am, messaging men on BateWorld, stroking my cock, teasing myself with short video clips of porn, and I wonder what I would do if I ever lost the ability to do this, this thing that is akin to worship for me? Where would I go to find this joy? If you are at all like me, you've spent much of your life wishing you were some place other than where you really were—attending to the mundane necessities of survival, cleaning the bathroom (unless you call Molly Maid!), going to family reunions. But when I'm bating, I'm right where I want to be. I'm home.

If it's a work night, and the clock strikes 10 p.m., I start to search for the porn that I know is going to send me over the edge into orgasmic bliss. I've probably already said goodbye to my friends on BateWorld, telling them that "it's time to get down to business". They know what I mean. It's time to rally all my fantasies, my sexual desire, to shoot a wad. On a weekend, if I have no obligations, I might keep going for as long as possible (my record is fourteen continuous hours—beat that! Pun intended). Each bate is a unique experience—some bates are better than others. But each time I masturbate, I approach it as if it's the last time I'll ever get to bate, like it's the end of the world, like there will be no tomorrow.

And then I shoot sperm. I may eat it, if the desire is still present. Or maybe I save it in a little jar to play with

another time, putting it in the freezer next to my Lean Cuisines. Speaking of which, I'm now hungry for food. I get up from my chair and give my head a shake and laugh a bit, remarking on the journey I went on tonight, a journey where lust was my compass, connected to men in far flung parts of the world going deep into themselves too. What is this power that is between my legs? I fear it, respect it, revel in it, rejoice in it, marvel at it. And tomorrow, I'm sure as hell going to do it again! But now, I clean up some of my mess, head into the kitchen to make a sandwich and take it back to the computer. I close the porn sites, I close BateWorld, I close Xtube, but I keep YouTube open. Shoving a sandwich in your mouth after a bate is made so much better by watching clips of "The Golden Girls". Blanche enters the kitchen in one scene and says "I'm a cheap, tawdry slut". It hits me that I was my own slut tonight. It was selfish. It was meditative. It was gloriously filthy. It was fulfilling.

Tomorrow's bate can't come soon enough.



SOLOSEXUALITY

Definitions of “Solosexual” as found online in the Urban Dictionary:

SOLOSEXUAL: Someone who masturbates a lot, but has absolutely no desire whatsoever to ever have sex with someone else.

SOLOSEXUAL (NOUN): One who would rather masturbate versus having sex with another.

SOLOSEXUAL (ADJECTIVE OR NOUN): One who prefers masturbation over other forms of sex.

Years ago, I saw a movie at a Gay and Lesbian film festival in Germany featuring a married woman who appeared to have it all: a doting husband, adorable children, a successful career. But underneath there was a simmering dissatisfaction. It isn't until she finds herself kissing another

woman for the first time that a light bulb goes on, and she realizes what is missing. I, in my infinite ignorance, left the theatre thinking “How could she not have previously known she was a lesbian?” I just didn’t get it.

While I knew I loved to jack off, I looked for sex with others constantly. And the sex was often disappointing, yet I could never put my finger on what was wrong. I would hook up with a guy, but the moment a cock was in the mouth, or in someone’s ass, I would think “I could have lived without this”. When I discovered BateWorld, my love for masturbation went from being a nebulous awareness to a clear realization of its rightful place in my sexual expression. It wasn’t until I had a language and context for my natural inclinations that I could understand my true nature. I simply did not realize, before exploring BateWorld, that masturbation could represent my true sexual identity. Men of my generation, men in their forties, will remember a time when homosexuality was the love that dare not speak its name. Today’s generation of youth know homosexuality as, to paraphrase Bette Midler, the love that now won’t shut up. Representations of homosexuality in the West are now fairly ubiquitous. Slowly, this notion of solosexuality as a variant of one’s orientation is also coming to light. And so many years later, I understand the woman in the film I mentioned who kissed a girl, and liked it. My own light bulb was turning on, but gradually.

Shortly after discovering BateWorld, I was invited by a buddy to a leather-themed orgy. Just as my light bulb was turning on with regard to solosexuality, I was agreeing to a night of sucking and fucking multiple men. My friend

Keith is sexy and we'd not yet slept together, so I thought going to an orgy with him would heighten the experience of being with him for the first time. Keith picked me up at my place and we walked the short distance to the home of the hosts of the orgy, with backpacks slung over our shoulders full of our leather gear. One of the hosts greeted us at the door wearing only jeans, his defined chest exposed. Keith introduced me and the host was beyond gracious, welcoming us in and leading us to the kitchen for a beer. In the kitchen were three other men: The host's partner and two other guests, already bedecked in leather attire. They were kind and smiling—but I wasn't attracted to them. One was a bit younger, the other grandfatherly with eyes the size of golf balls. I sipped my beer, already calculating how I might negotiate myself through the night. I wanted Keith and the host I'd met at the door, but orgies are democratic, especially when in someone's home: one can't turn down someone without seeming inconsiderate, aloof, or downright rude.

The host's partner pulled a Tupperware container out of the fridge that contained many varieties of poppers. The host said he was going to get into his leather now that we were all there and right there in the kitchen, he started to shuck his jeans in exchange for the jock strap and chaps he had at his side. Keith and I followed suit and that's when the energy charged. As I changed into my leather outfit, I felt eyes watching me, and there were casual touches exchanged amongst us. The older gentleman with the big eyes touched me and I returned the touch by grabbing his crotch. When I did, my own eyes widened. "Buddy, your nuts are huge!" I blurted out. His balls were double the

size of a normal package. He told me he'd gone to Mexico to have a procedure that permanently enlarged them.

I looked over to see Keith blowing the host, and I felt on the outside looking in—they were the only two I really wanted to play with, but Mr. Big Eyes, Big Balls was getting frisky with me. I kept drinking my beer, sips turning into gulps. In no time, the beer can was empty. The host's partner didn't miss a beat and offered me another along with a hit of poppers.

The poppers should have brought the party and intensity into sharp relief, but instead I floated away, far from the men. I know my way around an orgy, but this time I felt as if I was wearing an old sweater that no longer fit. I believed salvation from this feeling of dissonance would be found in a beer can, and I downed them, one after another. The party moved to the bedroom, all of us in a puppy pile. I remember getting to the bedroom. I don't remember fucking Keith, but I apparently did. The next thing I remember is somebody waking me up and the younger leather dude offering to walk me home.

I woke up the next day, feeling humiliated to the core. I texted Keith and apologised for drinking so much that I passed out on everybody. He said he'd done worse at orgies and his good humour took the sting away a bit, but suffice it to say I was never invited back.

But here's where it gets curious: The next time I bated, I used the *memory* of the orgy to fuel my fantasies. As I got deeper and deeper into the bate, I relished, fucking *relished* the thought that I'd (apparently) fucked my buddy, taken cock into my mouth, had been as slutty as I wanted to be. I was enjoying the orgy now, alone, with me

and my cock and my whiskey and my mirror and my hard rock music playing. What I struggled to enjoy at the orgy had become bate fuel for me now.

More and more, sex with others was turning into foreplay for masturbation. Many times, too many times, I selfishly withheld my orgasm during sex. I would be as giving and generous to my partner (plural, if at an orgy, especially one I didn't fall asleep at) and ensure that (t) he(y) came, but I withheld my cum so that when I was alone, I could continue the fun. One or two hours of sex invariably led to five or six or eight hours of masturbation.

The memory of a sexual adventure not only served as bate fuel, but my mind could also magically turn a negative into a positive. Perhaps in the real-time sexual experience I had not liked the smell of my partner's dick. During the bate that would follow, however, I'd look in the mirror and proclaim "You fuckin' good slut, you sucked that stinkin' dick".

My mirror from which I watched myself bate seemed to be supplanting the need to seek out men in the flesh. I reveled in being my own sex object, but it must be made clear that being narcissistic and conceited are two very different animals. My apparent narcissism was in stark contrast to my insecurities about my looks. I do not consider myself any more or less good looking than your Average Joe. However, during bate, I paradoxically feel aware of my shortcomings yet overwhelmed by feelings of self-love in spite of them. During bate, I am looking at myself through my eyes, while with a partner, I judge myself through the presumed idea of what the partner's eyes are seeing, a view that, in my mind, nearly always seems wanting.

On an instinctual level, I knew that when I bated, I soared. Being alone, I could be as nasty as I wanted to be, with no one to interrupt my private tide of pleasure. In fact, the ebb and flow of my bates were full of surprises, my lust taking me down one dark path, only to be shifted by porn on the computer that took me in an entirely different direction or intensity. Did men in the flesh stand a chance compared to this internal world I was reveling in?

While truly gratified with masturbation, I couldn't help but wonder if a part of my growing embrace of solosexuality was also a reaction to the possibility of being rejected by a man. I vividly remember a Saturday afternoon wherein I spent hours in masturbatory bliss, and I finished by cumming just as the streets below my 14th floor apartment began teeming with revelers ready for a night in the Village. I took my somewhat inebriated self down to the street to stop at a pizza parlour for some sustenance to take back to the apartment, looking, I'm sure, like a hot mess. Carrying two slices of pizza home, I passed an utterly beautiful man on the street. He was fresh-faced, with a tight body and a tighter t-shirt showing it off. He was obviously heading out to be with people, to maybe meet a lover, to be social. Momentarily, I felt alone, bereft. My knee-jerk reaction was to want to join him, to make love to him, perhaps to even be him. There was, of course, always the possibility that he wouldn't want me, and feeling as dishevelled as I was, I hoped that he wouldn't see me see him. Was this just my ego talking? Why did I, all of sudden, want his approbation? If I wanted him, maybe I wasn't so solosexual after all? If I was going to refer to myself as solosexual, was it "cheating" that I

absolutely loved trading wonderfully perverse and dirty emails with other bators on BateWorld as I jacked myself into a frenzy? Some men on BateWorld seemed to imply that a true solosexual didn't even need porn to fuel the bate—their own cock and self was bate fuel enough.

But then I considered the beautiful man I'd just seen. I recognized on some fundamental level that all I really needed was to appreciate his beauty. If he had stopped, looked at me, and said "I must come home with you and make love all night", would I really have wanted that? I might want him for an hour, tops, then wish him to leave so I could enter my beloved solo self-pleasure. It felt selfish to ask that of any man other than a professional that I'd pay for that hour of their time. I loved men and didn't want to lose my connection with them, but if I was solosexual, what form would that connection take?



While the Internet did not invent the practice of edging nor the idea of solosexuality, it revolutionized the ability to edge and to consider the possibility of being a solosexual. If porn is to be a bator's primary batefuel, the gasoline that gets the motor running so to speak, we have to wonder what it was like pre-Internet, when magazines, and later VHS tapes, were the only options. How many magazines can a horny man go through? And we of a certain age remember watching those rented porn tapes, where maybe only one scene out of five really worked for us.

But the web gave us limitless amounts of porn, and if something didn't strike your fancy, a new image or scene is just a click away. We men, hunters by nature,

find pleasure in the search for that “right” image or that “right” scene, that will fuel our fantasies. And we can go on and on and on.

Add to the mix the ability to cam and to instant message (or “fone-bone”) with men around the world and is it any wonder that men in love with their dicks might want to stay home all day and jack it?

As masturbation took centre stage in my life, I purposely let my “real” world get smaller and let my bate world enlarge. Friends would invite me to parties and half the time I would decline. If I did go, I was often the life of the party while there but I was also likely the first to leave to go home, strip down, turn on the porn and check to see if I had any hot emails awaiting me on any of the sex sites that I was a member of.

Being alone, finally and blessedly, I start a night of edging by stripping and dancing in front of my mirror—just mildly drunk from the party I’d been at, if I’d been at one at all. I turn on the porn, often partnered, penetrative-style porn. While the images evoke waves of horniness, while I fantasize about stepping through the laptop screen and engaging with the performers, the truth is that I don’t need to. The images spur my fantasies, the fantasies engorge my cock and a cycle of edging is ridden up and down and all around.

By the fifth hour of drinking and watching porn, I cannot lie: I might be wasted and hunched over the computer, looking outwardly like a sad sack of a man beating it like it owes me money, edging it really close and then stopping and then edging some more. While I’m feeling that I’m great and all-powerful, becoming one with my cock

until my whole body feels like one huge sex organ, to an outsider I probably look like a mess. But no matter. That's what it might look like from the outside, but inside, I'm travelling to heaven, hell and back again in one glorious loop until my cock is worn out. Appearances be damned.

As opposed to my experience of partnered sex where a hard cock is a must, during an edging session of many hours I am conversely grateful for the periods of flaccidity. The thinking is that if I get and stay hard, it will only be a short while until I come. But edging implies that the hardness of the cock will wax and wane, prolonging the bate session until you decide it's "time to get down to business" and orgasm. Or not. Some men I know engage in "cum denial", preferring to keep the sexual energy of the bate alive after the bate session is over. For me, not coming was often more due to my cock losing energy, the heat of my desire finally diminishing, the need for food or sleep taking over.

For an edger, it's the journey, not the destination. At that fifth, sixth, maybe seventh hour of edging, I look in the mirror and see a naked man jacking his dick frantically reflected back at me. I've come to dearly love this sight, the image of me making love to myself with no inhibitions, no concern about my appearance. That man in the mirror has given himself over to the delicious power of his own sexuality. Selfishly, he has concerned himself only with his own sensations, partnering with himself on a trip no travel agent can compete with for pure thrills. I have become my own lover.

Like the woman in the movie who discovered her lesbianism later in life, I too was discovering things about

my sexuality later, as I neared my forties. I didn't feel necessarily bound to the label of solosexuality, however. I recognized the ever-changing nature of how we express ourselves sexually and a part of me kept open to the idea of partnered sex, or to having a bate buddy.

The notion of eternal love with another man is not easily given up. Like many men who watched the film *Brokeback Mountain*, I was intensely moved by the powerful connection between the characters Ennis and Jack. I sat through the movie alone for seven showings many years ago. Like many men who watched the film, I fell in love with Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist. One night, I had a dream of Ennis and Jack, their disembodied faces looking at me. Slowly, their faces began to merge into one face, and when the merge was complete, it was not an Ennis/Jack hybrid staring back at me. Instead, it was my own face staring back at me. I somehow embodied the passion I saw within Ennis and Jack. Their story somehow brought me right back to myself.

That dream image of my face had looked just as surprised as I felt upon awakening.



BATE BROTHERHOOD

I've been on a ton of hook-up sites, looking to get laid. I've chatted with hundreds, if not thousands of men over the years looking for the same thing. The chats often felt like a cat-and-mouse game, trying to snare someone before a competitor got to them first. It can feel competitive, working to get a man and get into his pants.

On BateWorld, I discovered something completely unexpected. When you're not trying to get into a man's pants, but instead are supporting and encouraging him to get into his own pants, a camaraderie develops. On BateWorld, it's not for nothing that words like "brotherhood" and "community" are used ubiquitously by members of the site. The focus is not so much on nailing a guy, but on celebrating each other's masculinity and the all-mighty power of the cock. Therefore, straight men can engage gay

men, because the focus is not on hooking up, but on the vital experience of masturbation. And this brotherhood is inclusive. I have yet to see a profile on BateWorld like I've seen on numerous hook-up sites where the writer proclaims haughtily "No fats or fems" or "No Asians". The focus is on manhood and masturbation, and the object is not someone else but you yourself. The men on BateWorld celebrate that, making it revolutionary on multiple fronts.

First, the men are willing to embrace the taboo around masturbation and proclaim it as the main course. It is not a snack until the real meal comes. Secondly, all men are embraced, whether you are black or white, hairy or smooth, older or younger, heavy or skinny. Men are embraced for understanding the power of male sexuality. Unabashedly, bators bring their reverence for the bate to the table, celebrating that power on a fundamental level with others who know the same secret. That secret is that the world doesn't—anywhere in our culture—teach that masturbation can be an art form. Romantic comedies teach us that romantic love with another person is the goal. Culturally we are aware that masturbation exists, but the subject is couched in jokes when discussed, if discussed at all.

Still, it's also folly to believe that bators live in some kind of utopia where everyone is going to become fast bate friends. I've initiated conversations with other bators, and there is almost always a response, a response saying "hey brother, good to know you. Bate on!" Sometimes those conversations keep going and the image of the person and the things he writes become batefuel. In this case, you've scored double—you have a buddy who gets you, and you have the sexual excitement due to your mutual attraction.

I've conversely had men who didn't respond past the initial "Hey brother, good to know you. Bate on!" It's still a sex site, and brotherhood or not, people have their sexual likes and dislikes. I have been just as guilty of letting a conversation sputter to a stop when I wasn't engaged.

When bating, I both lose and find myself. And I couldn't help but wonder: Now that I've discovered a place where bators rule, could I find another bator to lose/find myself with in real time?

I got a message from a bator named Steve who lives in my city. I told him that I had never bated with a bud (we've all masturbated during sex with others, but remember, I'm talking Bating with a capital B and all that that implies—edging, gooning, penis chanting, penis worship, a complete focus on masturbating with a buddy). Steve's messages were revealing. He talked to me about the ways two buddies can get to that transcendent place together.

One way is by mirroring and echoing each other. This means that if we are crouched in front of each other, and he grunts, I grunt back. As he put it so well, if he fixates on my penis, worshipping it with his eyes, I do the same to him. If he spits in my beard, I spit right back. If he calls me a fuckin' bator pig, I tell him he's a fuckin' bator pig. He was speaking to the idea that it's difficult, if not embarrassing, to be headed deep into cock bliss if the other bator is not passing the ball back to you, so to speak. He suggested that two of the best ways to break down inhibitions were potentially to cam first, and when together, to quite simply have a drink or two to let our guards down.

As a solosexual himself, Steve explained that mutual gooning is something of a paradox:

“Gooning is achieved through hours of porn and masturbation, an act that is almost by definition solitary. It is the domain of the solosexual. To share that experience with another seems almost a contradiction in terms. Almost—but not quite. The heightened masturbatory experiences that men have achieved as solosexuals are largely possible because of the strange combination of privacy and social interaction that the Internet permits. It is hard to imagine men masturbating daily for three, four or five hours at a stretch without online porn, cam and chat to fuel their descent into the batohole. Solosexuals rely on online sociality to enrich their self-pleasure, which is to say that in some way, the solosexual’s act of solitary self-pleasure is always already sociable. And because solosexuality is sociable even as it is solitary, it is possible to achieve and to share something like mutual gooning: a fully self-absorbed uninhibited bato state in the presence of another in the same state.” He ended his message with this final thought: “On a few occasions I think that I’ve gotten close to something like that with another. I can’t think of any more satisfying experience. Penetrative sex of course can be excruciatingly good, but at some level

it is still always the performance of certain social roles: someone is penetrated or someone penetrates. But that state of pure pleasure face-to-face with another bate pig, sweating, grunting, huffing poppers and soaked in each other's hot piss is a completely primal pleasure, the closest, I think, that two bodies can come to sharing the same pleasure."

Steve and I set up a time to meet. As the date approached, our messages to each other built to a crescendo. He matched me as a pig step for step. We had everything in common that I could have hoped to have for with a fellow bator pig. We wanted nothing less than to smell each other's pits in our beards, to huff poppers and worship dick together for hours, tying our dicks together so that we could feel each other's every throb and pulse. We wanted to bond as men, filling the air with our combined manscent, inhaling each other, marking each other's territory with piss exchange. Chain smoking our way through it and swapping the smoke, spitting into each other's mouths. Ending in a heap of sweat, spit, cum and piss on our matted, hairy bodies.

I wanted this so much. I was terrified of it. Craving it. Scared of it. Longing to swap the energy, letting it build exponentially, of two men who were proud baters, until we reached the level of gooning together, ape-bating with tongues hanging out, lost in each other's testosterone.

The day of our date arrived. An hour before, he texted me to say he'd been called into work, he had to cancel, he would touch base later. But he did not touch base afterwards as promised. It was over before it began.



Steve had shared an interesting truism: Sometimes it's easier to bate with a man whom you are only somewhat attracted to rather than with someone you are extremely attracted to. Your inhibitions are lowered because the stakes are lowered. There was one man on BateWorld who also lived in my city that I was crazy about—he had a long full beard that I instinctively couldn't wait to blow my load in. And after some messaging, we moved on to texting. This led to snapping up-to-date photos of ourselves and sending them over the phone. He commented that my beard looked shorter than in my profile pictures, and that too ended things before they got started.

I was beginning to feel that the drama of trying to click with a bator, one that was on the same page as me, was conversely making me more solosexual than ever. Would I ever experience bating with a buddy? Then I made the most extraordinary discovery. Across North America are “Jacks” clubs, private parties where men meet to jack off together. One apparently existed here in my city. I quickly wrote a feverish email to the organizer who responded back immediately only to tell that he'd given up on organizing them. He said they were a lot of work to organize and their success was unpredictable. He asked if I wanted to bate one-on-one, and I asked for a picture, but the picture he sent was headless. I found another man in my city who organized impromptu bate parties at his house, but he too had no face pictures on his BateWorld profile. Without seeing the person's face, I just don't feel roped in enough to make the effort.

I didn't realize it at the time, but a whole year would have to pass until I met that elusive bate buddy.



BATE BROTHERHOOD

INTERLUDE

On the subway. Heading home from work. All day at the office, I've been sexting surreptitiously in between phone calls and meetings. The subject of these sexts, of course, was tonight's bate. I'm chatting with three bate buds that I've met online. It's 5:13 p.m. now. Rush hour. The subway is packed and the people around me look exhausted, either staring at the floor or at their phones. I'm on my phone too, because a bator from Washington D.C. is texting. His messages always end in multiple exclamation marks. So often do mine, come to think of it.

Washington D.C.: "Brother!!! Get your ass home! I'm home, just made hand to dick contact!! I AM SUCH A FUCKIN CHRONIC BATOR!!!"

I glance up. A young woman is looking at me, but shies away as our eyes meet. Does she know? Does she know

I'm not just playing games on some app? With my gym bag on my lap, nobody should be able to tell that my crotch is bulging in my work pants. What about the cute guy two people over? He too is engrossed in his phone, his fingers dancing away on it. Is he sexting too? Do I make that assumption simply because he's cute? The guy next to him, less attractive, at least to me, is also on his phone, fingers flying. Is there an epidemic of sexting going on? Who on this train is heading home for some sexual adventure, and who is just going to watch TV? Why do I assume that the women on their phones aren't sexting too? If they are sexting, is it about edging all night? Is edging solely the domain of men?

My stop arrives and I speedwalk home. I hear the trill of my phone and pull it out of my pocket. It's a bud in Sacramento.

Sacramento: "Are you worshipping the Holy Phallic man? Need your seed on my face, fucker, while I bate the Beast."

All day, with texts like these coming in, I've kept a portion of my brain on my cock. To the external world, I appear to be working, laughing with co-workers and complaining with them about the photocopier that keeps jamming. But in my pocket, my phone has been vibrating semi-regularly with the sexy cock thoughts of bator buddies. An internal world, alive with horny anticipation of tonight's bate, bubbled under my professional exterior and soon I will be home where I will get rid of my pants, get some metal pounding through the speakers, pour a drink and light a cig.

Getting to the door of my apartment, I fumble with the keys, knowing that this door opens into a Technicolor

world wherein I leave behind the black and white monotony of work life. There is no time to untie my work shoes, I just yank them off, and I hurry over to fire up my computer. The phone trills again—another incoming text. But I need a moment to prepare.

I open up YouTube to get the band Godsmack blaring through my speakers. I wonder if Sully Erna, the lead singer of the group, would be amused or horrified that his group's music is often the soundtrack to my bates. I scurry to the bathroom to wash my hands (who knows what germs I've collected on the subway). Then I'm back at the computer to "Assume the Position." And as drummer Tommy Stewart bears down for the first hit of the drums, I bear down for the first grab of my crotch. (I'm still wearing my briefs. I take even the shucking of clothes slowly during a bate.)

Yeeeesss! The first cataclysmic crotch grab is the equivalent of a bong hit. The effect is instantaneous. All is right with the world now that I've grabbed myself after waiting all day for it. If I could bottle this sensation and sell it, well, I probably wouldn't be a millionaire because any man who has a cock can readily have this experience.

Another text comes in.

But this one isn't from my bator buds. Oh god, it's from my supervisor, Della, at work. My horniness takes a nose dive. Respectfully, she never usually texts me on my off hours.

Della: "Hi Jason! Sheila's sick and can't open tomorrow. Can you do the 8-4 shift instead of 9-5?"

If I say yes, I've effectively lost an hour of bate. I'll have to wake up an hour earlier than normal and so

should try to get to bed an hour earlier. How can I be so anal about bedtime, what kind of bate addict am I? I'm suppose I'm the kind who is grateful to have a job that allows me to bate at all. If I were unemployed, I might get to bate more, but who can bate when you're homeless and hungry? Plus, I really like Sheila, even if calling in sick on a Friday is suspect.

Me: "No prob, Della. See you tomorrow."

Wait a few seconds before re-connecting with dick.

Della: "Thx Jason! Have a good night!"

If she only knew.

Switch gears—back to dick, mind off of Sheila and Della and the professional mask I wear at work. That all comes tumbling down, leaving just the primal animal that still exists in us humans who are perfectly politically correct in our workaday lives. I have to respond back to Mr. Sacramento.

Me: "Gonna shoot my sperm on your face man. HAIL PHALLUS!"

Double check in a momentary panic that you didn't send that message to Della! Nope. All is good.

In the Godsmack concert I'm watching, drummer Tommy Stewart has, by this point, taken off the tank top that he started out in. Every time he beats down hard on the drums, the camera catches his lat muscles flex. Sully Erna still has a black shirt on, but I've bated enough to this concert to know the shirt comes off with the next song.

Sacramento: "Wanna fill you with my 666 toxic seed man while you bate in front of my buddies. Let them open your hole first. Do you get me buddy? Are you with me?"

Mr. Sacramento is intense. I'm not complaining. Not much. I don't really enjoy bating on cam, and once or twice, he'd been insistent that we cam, but he hasn't brought it up recently. I think he knows that this—texting, emailing with him—is my limit. For now.

But I need to let my third virtual bate buddy, Mr. London, know I'm home and on dick.

Me: "Brother. Finally on dick. Are you worshipping the Phallus?"

Sully Erna has his shirt off now.

Washington DC: "On Chaturbate brother!!! I love exposing my cockbabbling masturbation to men, showing them how I become one with my dong, showing them that my big stinky hairy dong is my true lover!!! I have such big dick pride!!!"

Mr. Washington D.C. claims to cum six to seven times a day. Doesn't he have a job? I haven't asked the particulars. Even if I didn't have a job to go to, I couldn't cum that much. Or is it all talk? I've watched him on Chaturbate though, the site where you can bate on cam for the world and even make money doing it. He truly is, I can attest, a world class bator, staying hard for an eternity (Viagra?) and gooning like mad. We've gone boned while he's been on Chaturbate, him with one hand on his dick and the other holding the phone to his ear, listening to my encouragement. And he's not joking—he does have a big dick. Whether it's stinky, as he so eloquently puts it, I have no idea.

Washington D.C.: "I want you between my hairy legs, up close, the hairs of my HAIRY HAIRY thighs grazing your face as you watch me goon on my BIG HAIRY

MEATY DONG!!! I was meant to expose my dong to you and other bators!!!”

Sully Erna is dripping sweat on stage. I'm drinking whiskey and playing with my crotch. I pull my semi-hard dick out of my briefs and wave it at Sully.

If he only knew.

Incoming text. It's from Mr. London.

London: “Praise be to Penis, that overcums all obligations, that unites men in the sanctity and degradation of male lust.”

Just what I needed to hear. Mr. London has a way with words such that he raises my experience of bating to something spiritual, something magical, while still being able to get into the filthy gutter of my mind.

Me: “I am your bate slut brother, available to realize your every slutty impulse and fantasy. Deep in drunken whiskey haze, I am Penis brother.”

London: “Brother, I feel us hurtling toward a cataclysm of bate, a descent into penis, a total ecstasy that deprives us of all sense of time and space and self, reduces and thrusts us into our essence as bate animals.”

Me: “I'm a slave to my cock. To my sexuality. You understand. I'm a bate whore. Want to get retarded on dick. Constant stroking. Point of no return, total batetard.”

London: “Total stoopid bate tards. Blessed on dongs, edging penis to porn and whiskey and smoke.”

Me: “Make love to ourselves, show each other what bate whores we are, serving penis all day and night.”

London: “Fuck, I am with you brother, two ripe satyrs in bate heat. Brother, raging to bate rape you, you're my fuckin bate meat, I worship at the altar of your Penis.”

Me: “Brother, I am so bonded in bate with you. This is the fuckin life. Naked and ripe with manscent, piss, smoke, whiskey and porn.”

Mr. Washington D.C. makes a reappearance.

Washington D.C.: “I just spurted out another load... that makes 7 today!!!”

This virtual bonding with other bators has me rock hard. But as I get higher on whiskey, as the Godsmack concert ends, as I move on to porn, I know I won't be able to text much longer. The whiskey will make spelling difficult. Mr. London is so good—he understands that at a certain point the texting will stop as we each start to enter the batehole where complete focus on cock will be required.

I need these men, these animals, for the validation it gives me. The solitary become social: Masturbating is no longer the lonely endeavor it once might have been. I've never met these men. I probably never will. I wonder what their masks look like, what faces do they wear out in the world. Are they meek and unassuming, or does this primal energy inhabit their public persona? Are we all going to fall so deep into a batehole one night that we won't be able to return to the surface? Can we strike a balance? Do we really want balance? Do we not wish we could live in that primal space always? I know this much is true: I always crave to get in that primal space in my head. I never crave to get out of it.



SEXUALITY AS CASUALTY OF ILLNESS

As a child, I was the best little boy in the world—perfection was the only option. I wept when I didn't score 100% on a test in elementary school. When I practiced the piano and hit an incorrect key, I just couldn't carry on. I would start at the beginning again until it was right all the way through. While the other kids slept through Sunday School, I sat in rapt attention with hands folded suppliantly on the table as the teacher told us about God and His almighty power.

I already knew I needed God's salvation because I felt I wasn't normal—I wasn't like the other boys. I didn't have the word at the age of six or seven, but I knew I was gay—I was secretly the bad seed. I knew I was damaged and in need of fixing. I needed to be an easy child to raise, so that there would be mercy if my secret ever got out. Appealing to God's mercy wasn't about latching onto peace and

acceptance, it was about the control of judgement and fear—and seemed the only way to deliverance. Embracing religion was my attempt to embrace control. I would will myself to be clean in God’s eyes. And when I felt dirty, or had a so-called “bad thought”, I would wash it away at the sink, scrubbing my hands until they were raw.

Salvation lay in the sink. I could turn on the hot water and lather my hands with too much soap, just like Lady MacBeth washing away that damned spot. On my hands lay all my shame and forbidden desire and the soap would cleanse more than my hands. I thought I was cleansing my spirit. Ten minutes of washing would pass before I could rinse the suds off, turn off the water, and dry them with a spotless towel. Ten minutes later, my hands could be cracked, even bleeding. My stigmata for the Lord. Ten minutes later, they needed washing again.

My parents commented on my hand-washing. They noticed the chapped hands, and in their confused but well-meaning way tried to tell me that I didn’t need to wash so thoroughly. Of course, I knew this. I knew what I was doing was odd. I hated being trapped at the sink. I knew my hands were clean but when I stopped washing, all my fear and anxiety about not being a good boy came flooding in and I simply didn’t have the tools to cope with those emotions. I felt ashamed at my lack of control at the sink, and used as much hand lotion as possible to heal the remnants of skin that remained to hide my compulsions from my parents. My compulsions were driven by the need to be perfect, but the compulsions were imperfections. There was no winning against the sink. I gave it this power to absolve me and it demanded more and more. I would look at myself in the mirror and see a

frightened child in a battle for his soul. But like God, the sink was silent on how to extricate myself from my fears.

If what I sought was control, I was about to meet a force that would battle my need for control—puberty. At age twelve or thirteen, I discovered my cock, or it discovered me. Waves of horniness and curiosity washed over me, and I washed ever more heartily. But the feelings were not to be denied. I craved to hear my parents close the front door as they went out on a Saturday night, leaving me hours to get acquainted with my changing body. I wanted to touch my cock when it was stiff, but surely that's wrong, right? So I would touch it only through a washcloth in the shower, never letting the skin of my hand touch the skin of my penis.

At the library, I devoured books on male sexuality, secretly sitting in a corner, my hard-on at attention in my pants the whole time. I read about this thing called masturbation, how all men do it, and how they do it. I became brazen, and when alone for any length of time at home, would explore my naked self. I didn't fantasize, but rather immersed myself into the waves of physical pleasure washing over me, for hours at a time. Although I wouldn't learn the term "edging" for two decades, I already had the basics down.

It was only a matter of time, though, until my fears about my sexuality and my fear of God smashed each other in the face. All that edging led to the inevitable—precum. I remember a towel wrapped around my hard-on one night, and when I removed the towel, I saw a slick string of clear slime coming from my piss slit reaching to the towel. In my mind, all hell broke loose. What had I done to myself?

Worse yet, what might this do to my parents? AIDS was a new term entering the cultural consciousness, and I knew little about it except that gay men were getting it through sexual contact with each other and it was deadly. In my adolescent brain, I surmised that this liquid coming out of my cock and getting onto the towel could kill my parents. Yes, my parents would use this towel, get AIDS and die and *it would be all my fault*. I panicked and rushed the towel down to the laundry room to wash it in the machine. When the cycle was over, my fears still did not abate and I threw the towel out. To top off all this madness, when my parents came home, I confessed my “sin” and told them everything, the whole story. To their credit, they dealt with me as gently as they could. They must have been so confused by this strange child in front of them, but seeing my distress brought out their compassion for which I’m eternally grateful. The only thing they admonished me about was throwing out a perfectly good towel. And you know what? Once I “confessed my sin”, I felt better. Absolved.

Until the next time.

Perhaps my parents could absolve me, could assure me. Instead of my parents bringing up the birds and the bees, I did. At school, in a sexual education seminar, I’d been given a booklet that had a small paragraph on masturbation. Apparently it was normal. So I took a deep breath and handed my father the booklet open to the page on masturbation. “Is this really ok, or is it a sin?” I whispered to him. My dad assured me that it was ok. His reassurance didn’t take though. I didn’t believe him. But it didn’t stop me. I would edge and edge. I wondered if I could just

edge forever and not let fear stop the edging session. So one Saturday afternoon, alone at home, I started an edge with no intention to stop until I... got tired? Got bored? What would in fact stop this, I wondered? The waves of sexual pleasure grew and grew and I felt as if I was on a roller coaster ride with no end. I didn't realize there would be an end. I remember humping my mattress for all it was worth, going higher and higher, feeling invincible and never wanting to come down, until something completely unexpected happened. I came. There was a quick feeling of pain, as ejaculate rushed out of my body for the first time in my life, and in stunned silence, I looked down and saw that I'd expelled a whitish fluid in my underwear. It filled me with dread, though I had a sense that this was probably a normal result of all that mattress-humping. Would the wonders of my body never cease? On the one hand, I marveled at this unexpected conclusion, and on the other hand, pure panic. I had to clean up. My sexual elation gone after coming, I was left with a feeling that I'd been extra bad. I had to wash the experience away.

Running parallel to this discovery of my sexuality was the development of an assortment of fears surrounding my need to control it. Enter magical thinking. When I had a sexual thought, I would feel guilty of sin, and would engage in rituals to absolve myself. I would click my tongue, or tap the table in sequences of three or five, because those were "good" or "holy" numbers. I was intensely afraid of doing anything sexually immoral, and of course, when you forbid yourself to think of something, it becomes all you end up thinking about. I would see a nun, and think *What if I raped her? That would be the*

worst thing, because a nun is the epitome of holiness. Do I want to rape a nun? No. That's ludicrous. But why did the thought enter my mind? I must really want to... and this obsessive thinking would go around and around until I was lost in rituals to "cleanse" my mind and spirit.

It was as simple as watching the Oprah Winfrey Show at age fourteen to learn that my fears, my obsessions, my compulsions, pointed to a clinical diagnosis. The episode featured a woman who'd written a book called *The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Washing* (how apropos). I rushed to the bookstore and found a copy in the Psychology section. In this book, I saw myself reflected. I read about the earliest known documentation of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). In monasteries of yore, monks had written of other monks who were seemingly too apt to flagellate themselves for their sins. While self-flagellation was part and parcel of their search for absolution, some monks took it too far, even after being told to use restraint. Just like those monks, I was flagellating myself for "sins" that didn't even exist. Religion, sex, and my own biological predisposition to OCD had created a perfect storm. OCD attacks sparked fears beyond those where sex and religion got tangled in an unholy pairing. OCD can brilliantly turn almost any benign or happy moment into something cataclysmic...

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: It's driving to a party that you are expected at by 7 p.m. You hit a bump in the road, and like lightening, the thought hits you that you've hit a person, who now lay bleeding on the road. You know you haven't. OCD is odd, because you know your fear is irrational, but it spirals out of control anyway

until you have turned the car around and gone to look for “the body”. There is no body, you know that, but the sweat starts accumulating on your brow as you circle the block again and again, knowing that it’s almost seven and you don’t want to be rudely late. At 6:59 p.m., you force yourself to stop circling the damn block and get yourself to the party. You’re completely shaken, but when you ring your friend’s doorbell, you will yourself to look normal, slap the happy grin on your face that you’re known for, and apologize for getting held up in traffic.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: You are on a plane going to Japan with your sister as part of a dance troupe that she’s organized. She turns to you, smiles wide and says “Isn’t it incredible good fortune that a brother and a sister should be able to experience an adventure like this together? We are so lucky.” Instead of feeling the same joy, the weight of the moment spurs a thought in your head that says “But what if I’ve done something to truly hurt my sister somehow, and I just can’t remember what it was? What if she then stops loving me? What if what if what if?” OCD fears always start as “what if” questions, and years later, in cognitive-behavioral therapy, you will learn that FEAR stands for False Evidence Appearing Real. But you haven’t been to therapy yet, so you don’t understand your fear. You will smile back at your sister, then turn away and clamp your hand over your mouth, wishing you could enjoy the moment, but instead want to cry. But tears do not come, because OCD freezes your emotions so that all you can feel is terror.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: You are in the first year of a two-year program at a performing arts conservatory

in New York City. An actor must, simply must, be in the moment on stage, but for all your talent, you are distracted by counting in your head. You count to three, or five (your magic numbers) over and over again to quell some intangible anxiety. You know you need to focus on your acting partner, but you're in the grip of OCD and it won't let go. It's getting worse, and you know it. You feel a nervous breakdown approaching. In spite of what you had previously thought, a nervous breakdown doesn't just happen. It builds, and you know you only have so much time left before you completely fall apart at the seams. You call your parents for a plane ticket back to Canada, you take a leave of absence from school, and finally, you seek treatment.

Yes, this book is about masturbation, and shortly you will see how it enters the picture again. I had sought treatment for OCD as a teenager, but knowledge about how to treat OCD effectively was hit and miss, and the talk therapy I had did nothing to get to the heart of the problem. In my mid-twenties, I left school in New York and sought treatment again, and new treatments were available. They would require me to be an out-patient at the hospital.

My father, God bless him, would get up before dawn to drive me to the hospital where I would get into a bed and be attached to an IV drip. In the drip was medication that was to be my savior, given intravenously to absolutely flood the body. It would knock me out, I'd sleep all day at the hospital, feeling lonely and scared, and then get on a bus home, sometimes losing consciousness for a minute or two. During this time, I would pass out at home

and more than once be rushed to emergency because I couldn't come to and my parents were freaked right out. So was I. But I kept going. I wanted to conquer OCD. The tipping point came down to my cock.

After a week or so as an out-patient, I noticed that my erections were gone. No action there. It was dead. Lying in the hospital bed, with the IV in my arm, my psychiatrist paid a visit and I told him my problem. "Didn't we discuss that impotence might be a side effect of the drug?" I did not recall this at all. He said there were drugs we could try to counter the impotence, but I was bereft. When he left, my hand instinctively moved to my crotch and I felt a fundamental piece of me had been stolen by OCD, by the psychiatrist and his blasé attitude—and by God Himself. What made things worse was that the OCD didn't appear to be improving.

I faced a paradox: My OCD fears were largely rolled up tight with the irrational fear that I would sexually lose control and hurt somebody with it, shame myself, and be branded an immoral criminal—heavy flagellation at every turn. At the same time, while still a sexual neophyte in my mid-twenties, I knew on a fundamental level that my sexuality was precious and central, not just peripheral, to who I was.

After about two weeks of impotence and deliberation, I discontinued the IV treatments.

Instead, I enrolled in a group session of cognitive-behavioral therapy. Here I met other OCD sufferers. We marveled how we all had the same illness, but that it manifested in different ways. One man, whom I'll call Bill, had an intense fear of germs. His thinking was that

if he touched a toilet with his hand, he would get infected with a disease, pass it to his wife and children and they would die and it would be *all his fault* (note the common thread of feeling responsible for doom). He, of course, would live, and therefore have to live with unending guilt about killing his family. Keep in mind that OCD people know that these thoughts are irrational. He knew that his fears were unfounded. But that didn't matter: the fear was palpable.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy forces you to face your greatest fears. And so in a show of support, we who did not have the common OCD fear of germs, marched down to the bathroom with Bill and supported what he had to do. What he had to do was touch the toilet all over, then touch his face, not wash his hands, let the anxiety be until it faded as it thankfully does, until he could habituate himself to the fear, let it be there and not use rituals to counter the terror.

We all took turns touching the toilet, as if to say *See? It's ok*. We rallied for Bill. With shaking hands and sweat on his brow, Bill tentatively touched the toilet. Our therapist reminded him to breathe. He touched the toilet again and without prompting, touched his face. If memory serves, he may even have smiled a bit at his own courage. We cheered him on, we fellow sufferers being his watchmen. He had succeeded in facing a fear. But what Bill knew, what we all knew, was that this was a laboratory test. Therapy was a safety zone buffering us from the nights alone, when Bill would be at home, using the bathroom, without any of us there to cheer him on, and he would do intense inner battle over whether he was clean enough

to approach his baby in the crib and gently stroke her cheek without believing that such a benign act could be tantamount to murder.

My own therapy consisted of making tapes to listen to in a constant loop. In the tapes, I “confessed” to committing atrocious sexual crimes such as raping a nun. I would record it in lurid detail. Oh god, what if somebody found these tapes and thought them true confessions? I would lay on my bed and listen over and over about how awful I was until they became mere words, or until I even fell asleep. I was habituating myself to my worst version of self, and the world was not collapsing around me. My thoughts were just that: thoughts. They didn’t have to define me or have any meaning at all. I was learning that any thought could enter my mind at any time but didn’t necessarily reflect what I knew to be true about myself. With OCD, you can’t see the forest for the trees. With cognitive-behavioral therapy, you learn that one tree does not a forest make.

Years later, sitting with my family doctor, we discussed new OCD medications that might augment the progress I’d made with therapy alone, and he creatively suggested a combination of two drugs that he’d heard had had some success. Within one or two weeks of taking the medication, I felt so good that I didn’t seem to have to rely on the therapy techniques I’d learned—the intensity and duration of any OCD attack was lessened to such an extent that it was almost negligible.

Almost negligible. At the time of this writing, I am doing great with my OCD, but there is no cure—one can only manage it. Bating is my main form of sexual expression, and each time I start a bate session, I have a moment

where I have to stare my OCD in the face. Paradoxically, I get afraid that I will lose myself in the bate so completely, fall into the “bathole” as it were, that I will do something completely out of character—of a sexual nature. *What if I’m so lost in bate ecstasy that I pick up the phone and call my boss and start cock-babbling?* This sounds funny and comical, but for a person with OCD it can be paralyzing. I’ve had bates where I, again paradoxically, am enjoying the bate so much that OCD can’t seem to resist butting in and turning it sour. A thought, a concern, as small as a pebble on a beach, and as irrational as all hell, will grow into a boulder in my brain. *Batus Interruptus*, you might say—I have to stop the bate, and sometimes put my head in my hands and let the anxiety wash over, through and then out of me. But I always go back to the bate. I will not, simply will not allow OCD to rob me of my sexuality.

Being sexual with another in the room with me (or many others in the room with me!) takes me out of my head. I’m less inclined to get lost in OCD. It’s a paradox for someone like myself who is identifying more and more as a solosexual, one who is happy being sexual while alone. When I’ve had sex with others, I somehow feel protected from OCD, largely and simply because my attention is not focused solely inward, but outward. In some ways, bating alone, I’m freer to be as uninhibited as all get out, but OCD can interfere. When being sexual with another, I might feel more inhibited but also fortified against the onslaught of magical thinking. Quite the *Catch-22*.

What’s key here is to make clear that while my bating sounds obsessive, it is done by choice, in much the same way a person might practice the piano for hours at a

stretch, for pleasure. OCD rituals and obsessions are the furthest you can get from “choice,” and it never brings pleasure. If you are one of the lucky few who has not had to experience the work required to reclaim your sexuality from falling through your fingertips, I envy you. This chapter is dedicated to those who have had forces, either within or without, that threatened to steal the fundamental right to self-love, the fundamental right to feel sexual bliss, free of guilt or shame. So many of us are disabled by something. For some of us, it is visible to others. But for many, it’s invisible. It’s the disease that is eating us from the inside. It’s the mental anguish that we mask so as to appear normal. This chapter has one purpose—to let you know you’re not alone. To find solace in the shared experience of having one’s sexuality be a casualty of something such as an illness.

That little boy, once so terrified of his own sexuality, is now writing a book about masturbation. With my history, how could I do anything but?



SELF LOVE INTERLUDE

Self love. Not always easy. Let's walk through it together.

Tonight, your eyes lock with a handsome stranger at the bar. He is the kind of guy you don't just want to fuck, but to make love to. You smile, and he smiles. You knew him in a past life, you just know it. You know what he would look like in bed as you bring him coffee in the morning. You know that you could weather anything in life with a man like that by your side. But the dance between you is interrupted by a lesser mortal who moves in on your prey for the kill. And your handsome stranger responds to this intruder, rendering you, all of a sudden, invisible. You know you're supposed to take it like a man and move on, but this time, you can't. Your want for that handsome stranger was so profound, almost painful, like a kick to

the stomach. Any other man tonight would be a meagre substitute. The only thing to do is go home.

And so now, your horniness is mixed with loneliness, and you curse your luck. You're going to reclaim your sexuality tonight if it kills you. You grab a pill bottle from the fridge that is filled with saved cum. Playing with your saved loads never fails to get you off and tonight, you need to pull out the big guns. It's an extreme fetish, but after watching enough of xtube.com, you realize that you're not the first one to come up with the idea of saving his own loads to play with later. In fact, now when you see vanilla porn you wonder what repression the performers might be suffering from.

You turn on some music to get you in the mood, set the lighting, and pour yourself a whiskey. Are you drinking that whiskey because you're sexually numb without it? Or perhaps you feel too much without it. You want to masturbate, to take back your power, but you take a look in the mirror and all you see are flaws. These are the flaws that make you look down in shame when a cute guy on the subway looks your way. These are the parts of your face and body that make you pull back from men out of fear. Is he looking at me because he's interested, or because he thinks I'm hideous?

If you think like that, I'd like to tell you a secret. Keep reading.

Back when I lived near the Rockies, I knew a gay guy with the most perfectly imperfect nose. Think Barbra Streisand's nose on regular looking dude. I was acutely aware that some men might find his nose a flaw but I fetishized his nose. If it had been "perfect", I don't think I

would have looked twice. So the guy on the subway might just be fetishizing your so-called imperfections. I know this for a fact, since I do it all the time. It bears repeating: Your “imperfection” might be another’s fetish. Think about this when you beat yourself up for your seeming imperfections.

You leave the mirror behind and turn on some porn—thinking that’ll help get you there. You know you’re not alone, jerking off at 2:30 in the morning, because when you click on a porn link, you get an error message saying that the website is too busy. So you’re alone, but not alone.

And who are you? Are you just a regular Joe whom you think no one notices? Tonight, you can be a stripper, adored by legions of men. Or are you, in your real life, a stripper? Tonight you had to dance for men who categorized you and bartered for your attention. Now, back at home, your sexuality is yours again.

The porn you are watching taunts you, reminding you that you are alone at 2:30 in the morning, feeling rejected. You tell yourself “you cannot, will not reject yourself”. You touch your cock, hold the shaft tight while cupping your balls, and you immediately release them. The power of your sexuality feels too strong. You fear that it could overwhelm you. Are you walking the dog, or is the dog walking you? But your sense of self-preservation kicks in and you promise yourself to try to masturbate to completion. You cannot, will not, go to bed defeated and curl up into a little ball and give up on yourself. You take that pill bottle of saved cum and pour it in your beard, on your hairy chest, watching it drip and slide down your torso towards your bush. You fight to enjoy it, when a little

thought, a worry, a fear, threatens to derail you. For some reason, you can't give in to the pleasure, and you begin to wonder if you don't, on some level, believe you deserve it.

You look at the pill bottle, empty now except for the residue of cum inside of it. What kind of pills did it originally hold? Anti-depressants—because the world is sometimes too fucking much? Were they life-saving pills to protect you from an illness that threatens to take away more than just your sexuality?

You jack your cock, and amazingly it starts to respond and harden. You eventually do cum. It's not the best orgasm, but you celebrate it nevertheless, because tonight, you really had to fight for that orgasm, fight to reclaim your sexuality. And tomorrow, you will fight for world peace, fight to get on a crowded subway, fight to be heard in a world so loud your ears ring. You will celebrate the times that your sexuality isn't a fight, when grace enters and you cum effortlessly without your head getting in the way.

Self love: worth fighting for.



STEVE

Vignette One

I was so excited to meet him and he had seemed so excited to meet me during our talks online. But when he entered my apartment, I could tell he was disappointed. Yet he stayed. He suggested we get down to fucking, but only because he could feel his energy waning due to the tokes he had taken. I entered him. He played the pig and licked my cock and balls greedily. We both came. In repose, I reached out to lay a hand on his leg, to connect. He said he had to go, “boy am I ever sleepy”. I felt alone before he was even out the door.

Vignette Two

We met at an orgy, but before it was even over, we left to be alone at my place. A gorgeous Latino with a heart as

big as the sky. We dated, and he was clearly falling for me: "No more orgies, no more Manhunt. Just you and me." I froze. I couldn't breathe. I became remote and because he is a sensitive man, he felt it. He tried to stir me from sleep one Saturday morning. "Jason, let's grab a coffee." Five more minutes, I mumbled. A half an hour later, he tried again. "Jason, it's a beautiful day, let's make something of it." I mumbled God knows what. I didn't hear him leave, and never spoke with him again. He must have felt so alone before he was even out the door.

Vignette Three

We'd already had a few sexy dates, but tonight at his place, we planned that he'd fuck me. I was inexperienced and not prepared. When the smell hit us, shame enveloped me, complete and absolute. I remembered that Dan Savage had written something to the effect that if you make a mess while being fucked, don't expect to see the guy ever again. The man who fucked the shit out of me tried to play it cool, and so did I. Did you know you can act cool while hoping for the ceiling to cave in on you? Later he called me a cab and we waited for it in his driveway. I felt so unsexy, so alone as the car pulled up. And moments later I watched him not watch me as the cab carried me away.



About three months ago, I thought I had *Solosexual* in the bag. I love masturbation, I love considering myself solosexual, I have no compunctions about the whole thing. If I am solosexual, and if a major tenet of solosexuality is about self-love, then ergo, I must be good at the whole self-love thing, right?

Wrong.

All I had to do was reread my own sex blog to see that when involved with men, my ability to lose connection with myself was as easy as tearing wet paper. During masturbation, the connection to self was immediate, total and extraordinarily gratifying. Still, I loved men, and as much as I reveled in masturbation and my solosexuality, I wondered if I would be limited to that realm of sexual outlet. I didn't want my blessed solosexuality to be an unintended result of rejection or the fear of it but a conscious choice to embrace.

Was I a solosexual hypocrite? Did I still believe, on some level, that I would be made so-called normal by a man with whom I'd connect and have partnered, penetrative sex with? Or was solosexuality my new normal? Would my experiences with men that left me wanting drive me further into solosexuality not of my own volition, but as an excuse for not getting tangled up with another man? Was I trying to put a round peg into a square hole and misrepresenting myself to men as a fucker rather than the bator I really am at heart?

This student needed help from a teacher—and I got it from a bator.



When I worked as an actor in the theatre during my twenties, the feeling I had in the pit of my stomach before hitting the stage was dread. I would sometimes ask another actor before a performance if he or she was nervous and I'd be shocked when he or she said, "No, I'm not nervous, I'm excited!" Didn't they fear audience disapproval like I did? And no matter how well I performed, no matter

how much approbation I got from an audience, I never felt safe. It would be years before I learned to focus only on what was happening on stage and let go of the notion of “being liked by an audience”. As long as I’d done my job of making myself seen and heard all the way to the back row, whether they liked my work or not was not in my control.

When I stopped acting, as my twenties came to an end, sex and hook-ups took centre stage to fill the creative void. Unfortunately for me, I unwittingly saw hook-ups as performances, or put even more correctly, as auditions. Every man or woman who’s ever created an online dating or hook-up profile knows the fear of being judged against the pictures of themselves online. The pictures we post online are fretted over—one must get the lighting right, the body posed just so, and ideally the pic is taken when you are in the best shape of your life. Lord have mercy on those who use Photoshop.

I’ve run the gamut of being told by hook-ups that I “look even better in person!” to others who couldn’t hide their disappointment in me and ended things before they began. I’d be a damn liar if I didn’t also admit to reacting in kind to the men I met about their “in person” looks compared with their “online” looks.

It’s not just looks being judged when two strangers meet, it’s the whole package: the masculinity, the energy, the ability to converse, the ability to live up to fantasy. Any rational person would have told me to ditch the hook-ups and get a boyfriend. But what to do when you are not the marrying kind but are still a sexually adventurous being? It was like my years in the theatre: just because I

felt dread hitting the stage as an actor didn't mean that I didn't love acting. I wanted to find a way to make sexy encounters better.

So when I began to film my Xtube videos, I thought they would be the panacea for my nerves upon meeting someone new. I figured that by directing a potential hook-up to my vids, he would see me move and talk and therefore have a truer idea of what he was getting. I thought I'd be more relaxed meeting the men, as if I'd already "auditioned" and could now relax and be myself.

My videos attract a lot of attention. I receive emails from men and they rave about me, proffering superlatives about me. Some of these men want to meet me. Or is it that they want to meet the "me" in the video? Is the "me" in the video and the "me" in real life one and the same person? A new fear was born: Could I live up to the wild, free-spirited self that I presented to the online world? Or was it all as fake as professional porn? Could I be as free and unselfconscious with a man as I was alone and bating to a camera lens?

The answer was—no. When meeting men, I second-guessed my every move. I was psyching myself out, and suffering from ROCD—Relationship Obsessive Compulsive Disorder wherein I displayed a bottomless need for approbation from my sex partner of the moment. The slightest slight left me splayed emotionally. If fucking was on the agenda with a man, I couldn't top. I'd be soft and mortified by my unresponsive cock. In my twenties and thirties, I was an exuberant top and now I could only bottom, in my last-ditch effort to please men. And fucking me must have been like fucking a cadaver.

I felt dead to the experience, my limp member making me feel like a sexual also-ran. A man would cum in me and then be all business about cleaning up and I'd dress myself while wearing a stupid grin that meant to convey satisfaction but really hid a deep desire for the floor under me to cave in. Going home in the cab, I'd bang my head against the window, nearly imperceptibly so as not to alarm the driver. I wanted to dislodge the embarrassment of not being able to perform. But therein lay the problem, this idea that I had to perform.

I spoke to my doctor. I told him I thought my OCD medication was impeding my hard-ons. He handed me a prescription for Viagra and I gripped that prescription hard in my hand, like a drowning swimmer gripping a life vest. And it helped. I could maintain an erection long enough to feel I'd served my purpose for other men. But the psychic dissonance of trying to be Mr. Superdick was draining me. I was back to being the best little boy in the world, trying so hard to please. I was burning out on men. Even the energy of the men in porn taunted me. The problem with porn is that you don't get to see if the porn performers grapple with doubts about their prowess, their maleness, their worthiness. With regard to my relation to men, I felt like an injured athlete who needed rehabilitation. I needed...I needed...I needed to start by finding out what I needed.

And only when the student is ready, will the teacher come.



His message came out of the blue. I logged onto BateWorld and there was a message from Steve sitting in

my inbox. Steve was the bator who lived in my city that I'd communicated with a year previously, the bator who wrote so eloquently about the bate but cancelled our date only hours before we were to meet for that first time.

It started simply enough with Steve checking in to see how I was, if I remembered him, if I was still dedicated to a lifestyle of bating. We began to share every night's bate, each of us in our own home but connected virtually. He was given to theorizing about male sexuality and the bate in a rapturous way. His waxing on the subject was filled with a sense of worship and awe and fear and respect. As he had the year before, before our first planned but aborted meeting, he was teaching me about the bate and consequently, about myself. Steve regarded himself as solosexual and his nightly ritualistic bates with me, another solosexual, were the essence of the French phrase *mise en abyme*. Without a direct English translation, *mise en abyme* connotes an endless reflection, as when two mirrors face each other, the images in each going on for infinity. Our separate yet shared bates validated our acceptance of a bate lifestyle, a lifestyle I had always lived but only now a vocabulary for.

Mise en abyme has an alternate meaning—"placed into abyss". Each night, during our bates, Steve and I would urge each other ever higher and ever lower into the abyss of cock lust. One minute our dialogue would be lofty and rapturous as we exalted in touching the divine. In the next, we would be in the gutter of porn-induced filth and blasphemy, wallowing in pig lust.

It was startling to share this journey with someone else in such detail. I couldn't get over the power of male

sexuality and more so, the emotional and spiritual journey it could take me on. Steve deepened the experience simply by sharing it, our fantasies and communication styles so in sync.

We both reveled in the idea of a shared, real-time “batecation” where we would hide away together and bate for as long as two days and the night in between. But I was nervous. I opened right up to Steve and stated that during a bate of length, I was as likely to be flaccid as I was hard. Steve told me that soft or hard, through the normal progression of bating, the important thing is to simply enjoy. He told me his hard-ons waxed and waned too. In fact, as time went on, Steve would bring up the notion that constant hard-ons didn’t matter, nor were they realistic. He would bring this up without my prompting, often enough that I actually started to believe him.

With a long weekend coming up, it seemed a perfect opportunity for a batecation. Steve and I planned out this event, making lists of accoutrements we would need for a piggy two-day bate: saved cum, a piss spray bottle, and my computer, so that we could watch porn alongside each other.

I woke up on Good Friday to ready myself to go to Steve’s. The fact that it was the Easter long weekend was not lost on us. What we were doing this weekend seemed blasphemous on the surface, but this was our version of worship. We were unapologetically giving thanks for the journey we were about to embark on. At the same time, admittedly, there was an element of the erotic in how forbidden it felt to be so sexual on a holy weekend. It felt Dionysian in scope, Steve and I two satyrs about to

worship. Somehow, in some incomprehensible way, I was merging my light and my dark with Steve as my guide and partner, my catcher in the rye. And so I packed what was needed for a weekend of bate bliss (including food that was already prepared) and set off in a cab for Steve's place.

Riding in the cab, watching the lazy traffic move about me, I pondered the teaching moment that Steve had offered a few days before. He'd spoken of a concept in philosophy of *amour de soi* (love of self). *Amour de soi* speaks to the kind of love that we might imagine animals have for themselves, the love an individual had for him or herself pre-society, before we started making comparisons with others. A self-love that didn't seek to build itself at the expense of others. Though endless Oprah shows have tried to teach us to that we are worthy inherently, it wasn't until another bator wrapped the concept in such a philosophical framework that my mind cracked open and I was able to grasp it.

Now, arriving at Steve's apartment building, I would attempt to put the theory of self-love, this *amour de soi*, into practice. Steve met me in his lobby and helped me pile into the elevator with all that I had brought, including a mattress cover for his bed to make real a fantasy we'd conjured up. Steve pictured the two of us crawling into a sleeping bag together to hump and frot madly, working up a sweat together, creating a manscent in the bag that would ferment for his pleasure long after I was gone. I had suggested we place the sleeping bag on his bed but protect the mattress with a mattress cover that I owned for piss play so that we might piss freely and make a truly righteous mess.

Once the elevator door closed, we immediately pushed our bodies against each other and frantically kissed, hands groping over clothes. The elevator doors opened again and we pulled it together to get to his apartment. Once inside, a frenzy ensued. Clothes were yanked off and we began bating. We poured drinks and bated. We pressed chest hair to chest hair, bush to bush, and bated. We called each other filthy, wonderful names—“bate whore” comes to mind—and bated. We spat on each other, and bated. No matter what we did, we were bating, the bate our focus, our cocks a nucleus of raw energy tumbling forth.

At a certain point, we broke from bating just long enough to attempt something new for both of us. I set my computer up next to his at the dining room table. This let us watch our preferred porn side by side, or to watch what the other was engrossed in. And at any time, we could use each other for any lustful purpose. I could grab Steve and feel up his pit hair while looking at pit porn. I could watch men bate on videos and turn to see a living example right beside me. We could stop and kiss, play for a while, then turn back to porn. It was a heady mix of both a private solosexual bate to porn and a real-time bate with a bud. The best of both worlds.

Steve knew of my penchant for saving cum to play with later, something new to him. He had saved loads, as had I, and we reverently stopped everything to anoint ourselves with it, first with our individual cum and then a mix of both of our cum poured together. It was a holy ritual as we covered our beards and staches—particularly our staches, from which we could inhale the scent of cum. We even anointed our third eye, a nod to the spiritual element of this communion between us.

And I was hard. Without Viagra. I hadn't yet thought to take a pill. I was turned on by Steve's hot focus on me and our shared experience, his focus on me as a whole and in parts. I returned the attention and it was as if our third eyes were lasering into each other, anticipating our every move and utterance. Steve's connection with me stirred me.

We paced our drinking, but at some point we fell asleep in his sweat-and-piss soaked sleeping bag. I had already cum (all over his dining room table) but had remained horny and bate-focused until we lost steam and decided to nap. But our full intention was to wake in a whiskey haze in the middle of the night to stumble drunkenly back to the computers on the dining room table to continue this by-choice obsessive bate. And this bacchanalian plan worked out. The middle-of-the-night bate was divinely messy.

After sleeping again, we woke Saturday morning, and no, we didn't stop. This was a batecation and miraculously neither of us had petered out. But my cock was less responsive and with good reason. I thought of the quarters of Viagra I'd tucked in my backpack that I'd brought to Steve's. With a boldness that my trust in Steve had engendered, I told him that I was going to take one. He'd never tried Viagra...could he try one too? he asked. And so, together, two bators, not afraid to be flaccid, nevertheless smiled at each other and downed a quarter of Viagra and bated arm around arm. You will never see a scene like this in a Hollywood romantic comedy. But for Steve and me, it worked just fine.



With Steve's teachings, I felt like Dorothy learning that I always had the power to go home but wouldn't have

believed it until the time was right. After all those years of hook-ups, searching for myself. Only now, as my book about masturbation neared completion did I feel that I understood my own writing on the subject and embraced the joys of solosexuality. To quote the title of comedienne Margaret Cho's memoir, I'm the one that I want. For now.



ADDICTION

In my twenties, I was completely enthralled with the theatre and performing. I spent every free moment I had rehearsing or training for the stage. It was my passion. My parents called it an obsession. But was it an addiction?

When you hear an athlete on television telling us that he devotes everything to his sport and cuts out anything that gets in the way, we applaud him. He has a passion. When your friend plans to spend all weekend watching four seasons of *Breaking Bad* in succession, we don't fault him. Instead we agree that *Breaking Bad* is a great show and worthy of that kind of devotion. And on Monday you ask him how he liked his TV marathon and he waxes poetic about a weekend well spent.

There might even be, at work on Monday morning, that brazen Marketing gal Sheila who proudly dishes that she

spent all weekend making love to her husband, and the office momentarily whoops and cheers (“Oh that Sheila, she’s fun and wild, ain’t she?”)

Can you just imagine me piping up and saying, “Well I too focused on one activity all weekend, to the exclusion of all else, just like Sheila!” Here I give her a little conspiratorial wink. “What did you do Jason?” someone asks, to which I gleefully reply “ I masturbated as much as I could!”

I don’t think even Sheila would high-five me.

But why not? Is one man’s passion another man’s addiction, and is it based on the type of activity engaged in? Is the high the athlete gets while in the game somehow different than the high I receive while bating? Where is that rule written? But I had to ask myself: If I wasn’t an addict by virtue of the type of activity engaged in, was I an addict nevertheless? What constitutes a masturbation addiction?

Reading about masturbation addiction on the web, I learned the supposedly tell-tale signs of a masturbation addiction: Continuing to masturbate after it ceases to be gratifying; masturbation leading to legal or personal consequences; interference with one’s routine; performed excessively; taking up a lot of time; putting oneself at risk for physical harm; having trouble establishing emotional closeness in a relationship; experiencing recurring and intense sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges or behavior; those fantasies or behaviors causing distress or impairing functioning; using masturbation as an escape; continuing to masturbate despite consequences at work or in relationships; wanting to stop masturbating, but unable...

If I have a masturbation addiction, do I also have a pornography and alcohol addiction? Because I'll be straight up with you: Porn, whiskey and my cock go together like the three little pigs. Leave one out, and it doesn't seem worth it to try. And I don't just mean that I can't bate without booze. I also mean that I don't care to drink without being sexual. If I can't be sexual, there is no desire to drink. But when all three converge, Nirvana isn't far behind.

Remember the joke that goes "A slut is someone who has sex more often than you do"? It made me wonder: Just what is excessive masturbation? As one man put it on a poll on BateWorld, I think the addiction meme is tired, because the so-called signs of addiction are in many cases conscious choices I have made to give myself the gift of masturbation. If I choose to spend my time masturbating, is that different from any other hobby engaged in for a long length of time?

I have called into work sick to bate—rarely, but on the odd occasion. I have bated until my dick swelled up like a leg of ham. The first time this happened, I rushed to the sex clinic thinking I'd contracted an STI. The nurse looked balefully at me and my swollen member and told me to use more lube.

Did I have trouble establishing intimate relationships? Who doesn't! Add to the mix that I'm identifying these days as solosexual and is it any wonder that relationships of an intimate nature aren't my strong suit? Do my fantasies or urges cause me distress? Not now, not after working through the Judeo-Christian guilt that so many of us in our culture grew up with. But there was a time when any feeling of arousal had me in a tailspin of shame.

I found two saving graces which lead me to believe that I'm not an addict. I tend to not be able to masturbate unless my life is in order with regard to work and personal responsibilities. The other caution against becoming completely addicted is the gift of orgasm. Orgasm happens, and the whole show comes to a halt and I am able to think again of doing my taxes or getting to the bank before 5, rather than continuing to bate without joy or purpose.

But orgasm for me has always been something of a double-edged sword. All too often, after cumming, I would feel momentarily bereft and a crushing loneliness would befall me. Yet, I felt this had less to do with the solitary nature of masturbation than with residual shame about sexuality that I couldn't quite shake off. This feeling of loneliness and shame would hit me after sex with a trick too. Was sex in a culturally-sanctioned, monogamous relationship the only place where this feeling wouldn't envelope me? Even there, I had to check myself: I'd been in monogamous relationships, and they were not necessarily the panacea I would have wished for either. I remember one lover that I loved too desperately, he loving me not enough, and the pain after making love with him was devastating because I stopped loving myself. I was mirroring his lack of affection for me. If masturbation was indeed about loving myself, who or what was to blame for my sadness after cumming?

Only as I got older and dealt with the unnecessary, but nevertheless deep-seated shame about being a sexual being, about being a masturbator, did I stop feeling this sadness after cumming. Instead, I began to recognize the

gift of masturbating, the solitary aspect of it that allows me to go deep. Combined with that is a sense of community with other solosexuals who paradoxically need each other and to be alone at the same time. These realizations came in tandem during a period of time wherein I met regularly with a piss buddy with whom I was openly intimate and vulnerable, and felt good cumming with *and* talking with. But most of all, I learned to be my own best friend, respect the notion of solosexuality and enjoy going within.

Ironically, I went on a website that purported to teach one how to end a masturbation addiction and it went so far as to say that masturbation was selfish—selfish!—because of the wasted energy that could have gone outward toward another person. But what of the energy that we send within when bating? It made me furious on behalf of all the men who are even more solosexual-identified than me, those for whom sex with others doesn't do a thing for them. Their power, their joy, their journey was being negated, diminished, ridiculed. But I knew, oh how I knew, the joyful journey that those men went on. I could negate that journey within myself no longer. I started to see my orgasms as a blessing, a benediction of the journey I'd just been on. If only I'd known these secrets during those years when I felt disconnect when I came. If only then I had the information to help me think outside the box.

There are those who do not celebrate this time spent masturbating and there are indeed men for whom it's out of control and impeding a healthy life. I want to edge for hours. There are those, however, who *don't* want to, but do—and it's messing them up royally. There is a sense of

losing control, of not being in the driver's seat. The desire to achieve non-sexual accomplishments rams up against the all-powerful need to bate and a terrible dissonance is created.

Maybe I'm kidding myself: I say I want to edge for hours, I purport to be in the driver's seat, but I would be lying if I said that after working all day and fulfilling familial obligations, if I have free time, it's spent bating—and not writing. Many a night I found myself with alone-time at home, but instead of working on this book, I bated. I rationalized it as research, but it was also avoidance. I knew my cock wouldn't disappoint me, but facing a blank page could. I often knew I should work out (looking at my firm body in the mirror during a bate was part of the fun), but often that took a backseat to bating too. These examples are child's play when you consider the men whose addiction to masturbation has grown so intense and tangled that work is missed over and over again, if they can work at all. An obligation like Mother's Day dinner gets cancelled due to the bate. One addict wrote tellingly that his addiction to masturbation “killed who he was, killed who he could have been”. The question of who he wanted to be and how masturbation became his vehicle to avoid that future is beyond the scope of my book. The point I wish to make is that if an addiction to masturbation is hurting you, I hear you. No amount of my talk about transcendent-bate-this and joyful-bate-that will take away from the real quagmire that some men find themselves in with regard to their sexual habits.

There is a trend happening out there called “No Fapping”, fapping being another word for masturbating. On YouTube,

I watched numerous testimonials made by men who are on a mission to NOT masturbate for as long as they can, or at least until they achieve certain life goals. The idea is that masturbating takes away the energy and focus required to achieve certain long-range goals like bodybuilding, starting a business, or getting the girl. Supposedly, if you masturbate, you're wasting your precious sexual energy on yourself when you should be out hunting chicks. One "No Fapper" claimed that by no longer masturbating he became an alpha male, goal-oriented, driven, successful, and a chick magnet. (He did not claim that no fapping had made him humble). These men must have been so desperate to get laid that after a week of this I'm sure they would have shagged anything with a vagina. Granted, these men are not solosexuals, so I imagine their definitions of "good sex" will vary from mine.

The other end of the spectrum is found in conversations I've had on BateWorld and in the profiles I've read there.

Some bators (yours truly included) have begun to fetishize the supposed addiction to the bate. I've had conversations where I'm goaded to become "more addicted"—and I eat it up. When I'm already horny as hell and my body feels like one big dripping cock, that's exactly what I want to hear in that state. A common refrain on profiles, even in the lyrics of the music that some bators have ingeniously created, is this mantra: "I'm a compulsive, chronic, addicted masturbator."

I'll tell you a secret. When I would assume the position, open up BateWorld and start a bate sesh (session, keep up with the lingo), I would check to see who was online and I would gravitate to any profile name that had the

word “Addict” or “Chronic” in it, because I knew this person was serious about the bate. Whereas someone else might write to me and say something friendly like “I have a few hours to myself buddy, are you bating too?”, someone purporting to be an addict would launch into “FUCKIN BEAT THAT DICK MAN, LET’S WALLOW IN ADDICTION TO COCK!” In these moments, sweeter words were never spoke.

Because I’m not bating now, but rather in a public place typing these words, I’m being objective, perhaps comedic about these cyber conversations. But trust me, when in the moment, it’s no game. It’s more real than reality. Sports are games, but the players are dead serious. The desire to fall over the edge into cock, into the bate, into masculinity, into male sexual energy is a force that vibrates and goads and beckons. Men have written to me saying they want to help me get more and more addicted to my dick, and I’ve written back with a yes and a please.

The face of Helen of Troy launched a thousand ships. Mermaids lured sailors onto the rocks. What about the power of dick?



POSSESSION INTERLUDE

There are those times when you're so horny, you don't know how you'll make it through the day. So you throw yourself into work at the office. Your cock is in reach, right there under your pants, but there is no way to touch it, not with Sheila the Marketing gal telling you about her recent vacation to the Bahamas, not with emails coming in faster than you can answer them, not in your cubicle in an open concept office. But your cock is there, waiting, whispering in your ear "Just you wait until I get you home." It's only 10 a.m., and home seems so far away.

When you finally do get there, you lock the door and take that first holy grab of your crotch. Sometimes it's anticlimactic. Some days, you're not aware of being overly horny. You finally get home and take that first holy grab of your crotch and you are flush with hot desire. Then

there are days where the anticipatory build up works just like foreplay should, and the rush at that first holy grab at the crotch is but the peak of an edge you have been building all day. Now you are free to ravage yourself, to drop your workaday mask and see what's behind it. Will it frighten you? Will it exalt you? Will you fear and respect its power?

The mad, rushing hope that the hands of the clock will move quickly at work is now supplanted by a desire for time to slow. Ritualistically, you unbuckle your belt, tantalized by the notion that underneath is a cock—your cock. You own one. How lucky. How lucky, or how unfortunate, depending on how this possession makes you feel. Objectively, as if reeling back and taking stock, you wonder at the power of this piece of meat between your legs, and you wonder at the important place it has for you in your life. You know that biologically, humans get horny so that they'll mate and procreate, but this is ridiculous. Nobody can procreate this much. Imagine if we were like those animals that only desire to mate during a short window of time in the spring. In His infinite wisdom, why did God deign that we should be propelled by our sexuality so constantly? That working and eating would be required only to support the desire to get erect? About what mysteries is this intense desire supposed to teach us?

You've unbuckled your belt, undone a bit of the zipper, and you see a part of you that is unfit to show in public—or so we are taught. Your pubes. Why the hair there, and why does it elicit such heat in my brain? Why do I need to see it, and balk when I see a man who's shaved it away? It's as if a part of his manhood has been cut off. Manhood,

mine and others, is the name of the game. As a gay man, I may question my manhood daily, contending with the homophobia that derides our claim to masculinity, but here, now, those voices are silenced. Instead I'm tuning into a core self. My vision of myself loving the male form, even my own, feels at this moment like the most masculine thing I can think of. Straight men dreaming of women in pink lingerie is what boggles my mind now. But these thoughts need not be sorted out. Not now. No, now I pull the zipper all the way down and take a deep breath.

Your possession endows your actions with methodical precision: You position the full length mirror just so; you turn on the music that gets you in the mood; you pour yourself a whiskey. Now that you've grabbed your crotch once, you can slow down, even answer a few sexy emails from men around the world. You will open a porn site or three, but you don't need it just yet. You dress yourself in clothes that make you feel hot, slutty, pornographic. You sniff your pits to see just how ripe you've gotten throughout the day. The manscent will kick you in the balls, and again, you stop, this time almost completely. You wonder in amazement "what was God thinking when He created pheromones?" How cunning! How clever!

You will pose, you will preen in the mirror. You will not be completely free from self-judgement, and yet, mercifully, you will not be as hard on yourself as you might be otherwise. Caressing your balls, you will feel comforted, as if giving yourself a hug. As if loving yourself. You will smile in the mirror and think "it's you and me babe" and you'll feel that somehow everything in life will be ok. You'll feel this way because the neurotransmitters of

pleasure in your brain are kicking into gear. Is this a false serenity? Am I using masturbation as an escape? Yes, and so be it. If I stopped this and watched TV, it would be the same difference. But no episode of Modern Family ever made me feel this hot.

You move out briefly to the balcony, to light a cigarette. One hand holds the cigarette while the other hand absentmindedly cups and caresses your crotch. You reach with that caressing hand for the hair that resides between the balls and the hole—a place the sun don't shine, an erogenous zone that you have hardly ever even seen with your own eyes. Other men have probably seen it more often than you have. Men have hair there. You are a man. Damn, you feel lucky. You could do this for hours, stand and smoke and caress your crotch. And so you will....

Then, a switch in your brain goes off, and you know it's time to ramp it up to a new level. Is it the whiskey, the tumblr sites full of pictures of the most gorgeous men that propel you? Is it the image of yourself naked and sweaty in the mirror, is it your own scent, is it the music that takes you higher? You are feeling excitedly frantic. It's not enough to caress your cock, you grasp at it, as you would a lover who is trying to evade you. A hand disappears through your legs to your ass and you grab what flesh you can insistently and then that hand moves roughly up to your face to taste and smell.

You're losing it. You're purposely allowing the cock to dictate what the rest of you does. One hand is beating the cock hard, while the other hand is grabbing onto the pit hair under the jacking arm for dear life, as if you might tip over. You're not quite human any longer, but a monkey

again. You are so delirious with cock that you will hump a wall. If you feel at all alone right now, it's because it's hard to imagine another man going as deep into his cock as you are now. You've seen videos of men jacking off, but they seem so conscious of what they're doing, playing to the camera, still holding on to a sense of decorum. There is no decorum in what you're doing right now. You're both amazed and frightened how deep you've gone into cock, into worship of the cock, dedication to the cock, allegiance to the cock, ownership by the cock. A nuclear bomb would go off, Armageddon would begin and you'd be looking in the mirror, sweat pouring down your face and chest, jacking it. And in a contorted face, laughing quietly but maniacally, saying to yourself "I'm a bator...", saying it to all the men who've ever jerked their cocks throughout history. And to think some people watch TV in their spare time. Imagine!

Your balls are tightening—and it alarms you. You wanted another two hours of this—at least!—but your body is way beyond you. It's getting ready to cum. You could stop immediately, stop the edge, stop! But you can't this time, you want to see what happens when you push harder, faster:

All day has lead to this moment, the moment of no return, the moment when our seed flies. And when it does, we are drained. So drained. We can't imagine ever doing this again. The passion drains away and the world rushes back. Where did we go, brother? Why must we come back? What is this feeling now? Is there shame? Is there pride? Why should we feel confused about what this post-orgasm feeling is saying to us?

But then our eye catches a glimpse again of the picture on the computer screen. The man on the screen is beautiful—unknowable, but beautiful. He looks back at us, and his eyes are a benediction for the worship we've engaged in, were consumed by, were possessed by. The mountains and the seas are rich with beauty, but so is man. And we are men. Therefore, we must be beautiful, right? We'll allow that we may not look like that model on our computer screens, but we are made beautiful by passion. I could look at my orgasm as une petite mort, a moment of melancholy. Or I could look at it as a miracle. The choice is mine, isn't it?



RELIGIOUS ECSTASY VS. SEXUAL ECSTASY

John and I were neighbours, but we grew up like brothers. My sister, ten years my senior, was off being a teenager while I was just a toddler, and John, an only child, was my exact age. Like me, he grew up in a religious household, and it was in his house that I found two books of note on the bookshelf. One was called *Sex Within Marriage*. We two boys giggled ferociously at the line drawings of couples in various positions. But subconsciously, the title of the book, “Sex Within Marriage” sent me a message that sex should only occur while married to a monogamous partner. I don’t remember the title of the second, but it was a book on sexual morality. In it, I read that masturbation was an affront to God. John and I, during sleep-overs, would discuss sex and its mysteries and we innocently, but tentatively, both declared that TV’s Bionic Man was

attractive. Wouldn't it be great to be the Bionic Woman and be the Bionic Man's wife? Yet, we remained reticent, even then, with regard to these innocent conversations, as a part of our brain was already washed with the idea that there was something religiously wrong for speaking such feelings aloud.

Unlike my church, where the congregation was seemingly morose and half asleep, John's parents frequented a church where people waved their arms during the hymns. I had heard of another church in town where people spoke in tongues and had fits of ecstasy. When I was diagnosed with OCD at the age of 16, I heard about a healer of the arm-waving variety coming to town who was renowned for her powers. With great joy, and a deep hope, I got on the city bus to go to the downtown hall where the healer was to help us—the ill and troubled. I told no one where I was going—it all seemed too fantastical.

I entered the hall and sat alone in the back. The woman healer was introduced and took the microphone to give a rousing sermon about the power of the Lord. I feared her. But with regard to my illness, I was afraid of it too and was grasping at straws. I prayed that she was the real deal and that I would be healed tonight, heading home on the bus free from my OCD.

After the sermon, a line-up formed at the front of the hall. A man in a wheelchair was first, and the healer, speaking into the microphone, proclaimed that God loved him and wanted him to be well. We all clapped enthusiastically and held our collective breath. She placed her left hand on his head, and commanded him to stand.

He did. He stood. Right there. She yelled praises to the

Lord, and those of us who hadn't yet joined the line to be healed did so immediately.

As I waited my turn, I saw supposed miracle after miracle. Not only would I be healed, my faith in the Lord would be confirmed. My turn was next. I shook with fear.

When the healer beheld me, a sixteen year old with frost-tipped hair and fabulous clothes, she uncharacteristically took the microphone away from her mouth, and said *sotto voce* "Why are you here?" I stammered and said "To be healed from my illness". She looked at me with narrowed eyes and said "Are you sure you want to be healed?" I was aghast and simply nodded 'yes'. She put the microphone back to her lips and implored the Lord to heal me. That over, I moved aside for the next person.

I felt nothing. I sat through the rest of the event and waited. I needed a moment alone with the healer to know if my illness would improve. When she had spoken her last words of the night, she regally walked up the aisle where I intercepted her. I shyly asked her when my illness would abate. She replied that she had prayed for me, but that I would need a girlfriend in order to get to heaven. Then she continued on her way.

I couldn't understand what having a girlfriend had to do with a medical issue. And then I realized—she recognized me as a fag. She thought I was there to have the gay washed away. That had been the last thing on my mind. I left the hall bereft.

I still have OCD. And she did not wash the gay away.



Two or three years later, my family and I moved a thousand miles away, to a city near the Rockies. I came out to my

parents. It was stormy at first, then we healed and to my delight, discovered that nothing fundamental had changed in our relationship—they loved me dearly. Shortly after coming out, Dad even joked that I was gay because we always drank “homo” (homogenized) milk.

From this distance, I wrote to John and came out to him and dared to ask if he too was gay. He wrote back a stern letter. He claimed to have “shared my troubles”, but urged me to follow his example and choose God over a life of sin. Thus began our divide, and my search to see if God lived in my so-called “sin.”



Sex, whether solo or with others, can be transcendent. It's not for nothing that people often bellow “Oh God!” at the height of climax. Sex, like religion, is ritualistic—I have a litany of things I do to both prepare for and enjoy the sexual experience. At its most profound moments, I have felt that sex unlocked the door to the unknown and unknowable, a place where I am real and realized. In this place, I touch the sky and celebrate the Divine gift of sex, and I worship it.

I have friends on Facebook who eschew sex, turning instead to their religion with a fervor I recognize. They post things like “Wow! What an amazing worship today! May God be praised! I bow down to His Divine Greatness.” John recently texted me a series of twenty-three texts in a row, a sermon, while he was at the heights of a worship session at the church he attends. To be blunt, his texts sounded like what's going through my head as I edge my cock. He sounded as I do in the throes of burning ecstasy, when a higher consciousness is being broached.

John came out to this church in an online testimony. But he was not coming out as a proud gay man. Rather, he was seeking support from his congregation as he resisted the evil influences of, not just gay sex, but sex in general. He talked of his deep despair about his homosexual feelings, his feeling that sex ultimately leads to a disconnect from God, about going to North Carolina to be with an Exodus* group, where they could pray the gay away. John sent me YouTube clips from these ecclesiastical worship sessions at Exodus. He did not seem to think that sending me either his sermons or the YouTube videos as insulting or inappropriate. Rather, he said his love for me was so bountiful that he just had to share the glory that could be mine. My sister, ever the wise-cracker, suggested that I write back that I will check out the videos just as soon as I orgasm.

We all need something to worship, don't we? We all need to feel ecstasy. I can't help but think that John's connection to his god leads to a disconnect with himself, since he appears to have waded through hell and back dealing with his homosexual feelings. Does God really want us to forsake the gift he gave us? Would God not see that we are worshipping Him and His gifts when we are on our knees worshipping a man's penis? Is God so jealous a god that he can't grant us variety in the ways we worship and achieve ecstatic bliss?

I understand if people find their ecstasy in religion rather than sex, but both are possible and documented.

***Exodus International** was an ex-gay religious organization that sought to help eradicate homosexual desires. The organization is itself now eradicated and for the most part, has ceased operations.

Sexual ecstasy itself has a long tradition. Often, you'll find that sexual ecstasy is paralleled with religious ecstasy, where both are one. These teachings come from the ancients. Tantric Sex is a term we hear bandied about, told that it leads to ecstatic consciousness. Our society in the 21st century has come a long way technologically, but have we lost much along the way regarding our ability to experience the Divine? Have our cultural norms become so narrowed that the experience of the Divine is allowed only through certain approved channels?

Is the idea of worship during a bate session necessarily so sacrilegious? For some bators, the idea of "worship" being a part of the bate will create a dissonance at odds with their religious backgrounds. On the other hand, for those with no religious affiliation, it will be a moot point. For these men, the idea of worship in and of itself is not a part of their psychological make-up. But for many men, it is through their cocks that they find God.

In the theatre world, it was not odd for us to refer to the theatre as a temple. In our devotion to the power of theatre, we felt ourselves acolytes, messengers through whom characters would be channelled. True theatre people felt that a life in the theatre was a calling to something bigger than themselves, something divine, with a rich history and purpose. Acting itself can be broken down into processes and techniques, but actors are also aware that these techniques are there to provide the foundation from which the work takes on a mystical element. I never once felt that my devotion to the god of theatre was in opposition to the god of religion. Rather, I saw them as one and the same. And losing oneself in a character, sharing that ecstasy with an acting partner (and

then with an audience) felt like worship. As an actor, you know you've nailed a scene when it ends and you can't quite remember the details of it because you were so profoundly in the moment. Instead, what you feel is bliss, knowing that for a while you were touching the sky.

The question I had to ask of myself was: Why should it be any different when masturbating?

I know men on BateWorld who have created literal shrines to their cocks that they pay homage to while masturbating. They've taken masturbation into the realm of phallic worship and will consecrate items such as dildos or pictures of naked men with their seed. These are the same men that, when deep into their cocks, deep into their bates, will goon and engage in cock-babble. Cock-babble is that litany of verbal expression wherein you might find yourself saying "I love my fuckin PENIS, I worship my PENIS, I'm a fuckin' bator, I'm a fuckin' gooner", until all you can do is moan, your face contorting as waves of cock bliss spread at full-throttle speed through to your core. It can feel like an out-of-body experience and that cock-babble becomes a bator's version of speaking in tongues.

Going to that place always filled me with a sense of inherent contradictions. Was it possible that lust, one of the seven deadly sins, could in fact be my redemption? Was God in the room when I was consumed by the lustful demands of my cock and the batefuel that egged me on? Was I somehow bridging the elements of so-called "light" and "dark" that seemed to cohabitate within me?

The great Quebecois writer, singer and storyteller Fred Pellerin wrote "Le temps des faites," a story about an apple tree in the centre of a small town. Early in the

tree's growth, the trunk had split into two directions, and when grown, half of the tree produced the most delicious apples ever tasted, while the other half of the tree produced poisonous apples that killed you if eaten. It was clear to the townsfolk that something had to be done to prevent people from confusing the two halves and eating a poisonous apple. So naturally, one day they took a chain saw to the tree and cut down the half that seemed "bad". The job completed, they went into the church that sat in the shade of the tree. In the midst of worship, the congregation was shocked to hear a loud crash upon the roof of the church. Rushing outside to see what had caused the ghastly noise, they discovered that the "good" half of the tree had collapsed, unable to support itself without the twin half that had been destroyed. Upon reading the story, I couldn't help but wonder if it wasn't vital in some way that we merge our so-called light and dark halves, recognizing that both serve a purpose and feed the other half.

In the theatre, where all of us actors ached for communion with the theatre gods, it was vital (and fun) to play the bad guy, or to play deeply flawed characters. One did not have to play a saint in order to know the ecstatic joy of creating a character, no matter how dark that role appeared.

Of course, not all actors take the job so seriously, nor do they approach acting as an almost religious experience. Many are there just to have fun. Some might be content to "play the role" while others want to be consumed by it, to inhabit it. The same might be said about bators: Some will see bating as a way to have fun, while for others it

takes on mystical elements in which primal lust fuses with something cosmic.

Is it any wonder that after learning that I was capable of achieving ecstatic consciousness through my sexuality that I ceased going to the movies as much? That the idea of playing a board game with friends on a Friday night lost its appeal? Is it any wonder that all I want to do is to bate, which is to say I want to do my version of worship. Is it any wonder that while I am no longer traditionally religious, I now say a silent thank you to God or the universe when I see a beautiful man, or make that first crotch grab at the start of a new bate session?



On Xtube.com, there are some members who identify as Satanists, using the numbers 666 in their profile names. Putting aside an examination of the creeds of Satanism and its different forms, is it possible that our culture tends to view the devil as being the force behind sex and its related desires? Is it that we believe only the devil gives permission to enjoy sexuality in all its glorious filth? What if we shifted the paradigm and said that sexuality can be filthily divine, regardless of the binary of good/evil?

Many nights, in the throes of a hot bate session, I have chatted with men online where the conversation steered into a role play that evoked images of the devil: “I want to fill you with my unholy seed man, force you to take poppers, the devil’s liquid, man, fuck!” After I’d cum, I’d often have this knee-jerk reaction to go back to being the best little boy in the world who only wanted for world peace, sunshine and lollipops. Had I touched the face of God during that bate session, or was I a devil, a demon,

captive to the will of my cock? Like that apple tree that had two halves, did I too encompass elements of light and dark? Were both necessary to my mental health? Was it, in the end, much different than playing the bad guy in a play on stage? Could it be that ecstasy comes not from reaching up to God, or down to the devil, but simply by going within your own universe and mucking around in the contradictions that live there? Why should John and his ilk insist that their ecstasy has to negate mine?

What it comes down to is not being afraid to have fantasies. If I wanted to fantasize about being fucked royally by the devil himself, so be it. Conversely, if I looked at a man on the street and was struck by his God-given beauty, so be it as well. What I'm learning is that transcendence is not always a lofty thing, but can be found in the grit and grime of horny men.



COMING OUT AS A SEXUAL BEING

Coming out...again.

At around the age of twenty, I came out as a gay man. Though trembling and vulnerable, I saw other people doing it and their self-actualization inspired me. And now, some twenty years later, I'm coming out again, on two fronts: As a solosexual, and furthermore, as a sexual being.

When I came out as gay, people had a grasp of what that meant—the notion of homosexuality was, at that time, being discussed on talk shows, in the papers. It was in our consciousness. But telling a lover, as I did recently, that I couldn't really carry on with penetrative sex because I am solosexual required much explaining. Solosexuality is a subject not yet in our vernacular. Luckily, those I've been intimate with (lately) are smart, sensitive men and they

wished me bliss on my sexual journey. And perhaps our sexual journeys will cross yet again.

But I wondered about the men who are solosexual yet don't fully understand it, and find themselves getting into relationships that don't work. I wonder of the married men, gay, bi, or straight, who have partners who feel them pulling away into a world of masturbation—and are hurt, lonely, confused. Some men I know have found great balance between solitary bate time and the needs of their partners. Some bators are in relationships where the sex petered out years ago. Rather than having an affair with another person, one might say the bator is having an affair with himself. Regardless of the situation a solosexual finds himself in, he (and his partner, if he has one) can only address something that has a name. This book is my small attempt to nourish the notion of solosexuality further into the discourse of sexuality in general.

You see, the notion *is* getting out there. On BateWorld, I've run across a few young men who are already identifying this way, years ahead of the curve. Articles are being written about solosexuality. BateWorld and Chaturbate exist. Toni Morrison is credited with saying, "If there's a book you really want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it." Reading my own book at the tender age of twenty would have made clear to me that which has taken me twenty years to figure out. Beyond being gay, and beyond solosexuality, there is yet another coming out. At age forty, I'm coming out all over again, this time as a sexual being, and not just to a few fuck buds at the bar, but to anyone who might see my x-rated videos or read my blog or this book.

When Philip Roth wrote *Portnoy's Complaint* in 1969, the critics lauded him as brave for the detailed accounts

of his protagonist's masturbation habits. All these years later, I think his book is still just as brave. But I got to wondering—is my writing brave? Or incredibly stupid? My story is not couched in fiction, it is entirely real. Is writing *Solosexual* folly or is it courageous?

I looked to Celine Dion for the answer.

Celine Dion's performances are, on the one hand, deeply moving and full of feeling. At the same time, seen through another lens, they could be viewed as overwrought, hyper-emotional and a tad ridiculous. Madonna disses Celine but admits that her father loves the Québécoise chanteuse. Could it be that *Solosexual* is going to be perceived as ridiculous by most, but meaningful for others? Why write a book like this at all?

Being gay is almost passé—everyone has watched Will & Grace by now and Ellen Degeneres has legions of fans. In some parts of the world, we can marry. But I couldn't help but notice that we gays are aping heterosexual mores. Alternatively, I feel a certain connection to the gay sexual outlaws of the 70s who tried to create a sexual landscape that was open and theatrical and decadent and creative. If AIDS hadn't ground it to a halt, would there have been a trickle-down effect into straight culture where living outside the sexual box was okay? Instead, AIDS was ushered in with Reagan and the 80's me-culture. And so here we are, in the new millennium—and my gay friends are getting married and moving to the suburbs.

Ah, but if it were all that clear cut. Some of those suburban gay couples are still sexual outlaws, swinging with other couples and more, but nobody knows it, and the mendacity kills me. If I want to put the "sex" back in "homosexual", it's only because I don't see why we must keep dim a light that glows brightly and should be revered

rather than obscured. I'm not suggesting we fuck in the streets. But I am suggesting that I would like to write openly about sexuality—without unnecessary judgement. To carry on a dialogue that is frank, unabashed and unapologetic. I'm suggesting a paradigm shift to a way of thinking about sexuality that doesn't involve shame, bravado, fear or embarrassment. This is my utopia, wherein we can heal and grow as sexual beings and live in a culture where sex is not the boogeyman, and where the therapist's couch would not be the only place to discuss our light and our dark with regard to our sexual desires.



On my blog, I don't post a face photo. Jason Armstrong isn't my real name. I don't make my living as a writer but as an office worker. One reader berated me as a phony and a hypocrite for not posting a photo showing my face, reminding me that being gay isn't about sex anyway. I wondered at that—Is being gay not even a little bit about sex? What I tried to explain to him, to no avail, was that I'm openly gay everywhere I go—at work and with family. I show my face pictures on other gay dating websites. But I did not—still do not—have the balls to come out fully as a sexual gay man, which would mean using my own name and throwing my face photo on the blog and on this book. Is that the path that providence has in store for me? Will that be the continuation of posting those Xtube videos and then actually leaving them there? Will I ever completely own it? And beyond today, are there daring sexual adventures still to be had and things to learn from them? Will we talk about them, openly, about the pleasure and the pain those experiences elicit and everything in between? Will sexuality ever be allowed to have a place at the table along with other pleasures?

Again and again, I've grappled with the idea that some men will not want me to write about something which, for them, is a private matter. Some won't want me to share with the world this tender piece of paradise that is masturbation and the creative force that it can be. My hope is that this book is instead a liberating force, perhaps a way for men to recognize something hidden within themselves that is freeing. I simply want to share a good thing.

Selfishly, I do not want this book to be an end point, but rather the starting point for dialogue among men—heartfelt dialogue, raunchy dialogue, unabashed dialogue. I want men to embrace themselves and by doing so, hopefully, embrace each other. For all my talk of solosexuality, at the root of it is still the need for connection. That connection will be on one's own terms, but the desire for communion is innate—communion with the self and with others in order to mirror the self.

A ship may be safe in the harbour, but that's not what ships were built for. Would you like to sail with me into unchartered waters?

