

Chapter 1 : Sex in history (edition) | Open Library

*Sex in History [Reay Tannahill, Reay] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. SEX IN HISTORY chronicles the pleasures- and perils- of the flesh from the time of mankind's distant ancestors to the modern day; from a sexual act which was bried.*

It still provides an informed, often wry, and certainly intelligent review of the history of sexuality. It is a first point of call for anyone new to the subject, looking to understand how we became what we are both as a culture and as individuals at least in the West. Her judgement is excellent, given the facts at her disposal. I strongly approve her refusal to take at face value any late imposition of theory on how minds worked in the past. We can know nothing of past thoughts. Similarly, she is not sentimental. On the contrary, if there is a message of this book, it is that increased state power and empire tend - whether from Constantine or any of the other thugs who get to the top - to increase interference in the life choices of persons. This alone must encourage a slight prejudice towards anarchy and against super-states and a very strong prejudice towards democracy and secularism. Tannahill has also written an equally informative book on the role of food in history as well as a book on cannibalism so that, from this one author, you can be well primed on the nutritional and emotional drivers behind our history. The book ends with the AIDS epidemic of the s and it does not include either the latest research into many of the stories she tells here nor does it tell the story of the last two decades. Since , the character of sexual liberation has changed yet again and entered a new world of interactive net-based communications. If there is a criticism, it is that Tannahill takes perhaps at too much face value the mythic narrative of patriarchy, forgetting that male power is rarely a matter of black and white but has depended on women choosing to accept the situation and then manage it from within. The greatest enemy of both the free woman and the free man appears, so often throughout history and as demonstrated by Tannahill repeatedly, not so much the male as the authoritarian and conservative female to whom the powerful male will bend for the quiet life. Liberation is damned hard work! Respectability, generally based on poor science and the desire to exclude the other and preserve privilege, has so often been cover for racist protectionism - as British wives came to Imperial India to enforce. Anglo-Saxon feminists promoted birth control not for the right reasons, to give women more control over their lives, but as a war on migrant, black or working class population growth. It is rare nowadays to find a book that creates an inner anger but this one does, an anger less at the patriarchs though these should cause disdain enough than at the war on their sisters by middle class respectable women. The imposition by these harridans of prohibitionist morality created the illusion of the good society but it drove exploitation and villainy underground, institutionalising not merely hypocrisy across the West but, eventually, organised criminality in the US. Any good done was at the cost of a massive perversion of the human condition, encouraging an apartheid, quite conscious in some circles by the end of the nineteenth century, between men and women, a conspiracy of sexual silence and of exploitation at the expense of the less propertied, the uprooted and, bluntly, the more sexually aware. Of course, the Catholic Church itself has to be the most disturbing organisation short of the Nazi Party ever to have interfered in human sexual relations. It is the death instinct institutionalised - a movement of self-reinforcing power that has managed not merely to last two thousand years but will undoubtedly be mounting missions to Mars in another two thousands. The really bad thing with the Catholic Church is that it has set up a moral standard that drives sex so far underground as a taboo unlike the spiritual traditions of Tantra or Tao or even the pragmatic reformism of solid European Protestantism that vile acts are tolerated - as if not saying is not doing. It is embedded within a culture of silence and hypocrisy. It is the same with the denial of condom use in Africa which is directly related to the mass murder of potentially millions. There are many good priests and catholics but the religion certainly has its dark side. It is a cheap shot to say that the Church had its own brothel during its Avignon period yet, while enforcing sexual continence on the masses, there is evidence enough and it is only commonsense given the human condition that some churchmen were far from celibate and often exploitative. The justification has often been that the office and the man should be regarded separately - an attitude often translated to the modern corporate officer - but the difference here is that the office made claims

affecting others while keeping back relevant information about its own conduct. Not that Protestants were that much better when they started out - Luther saw sex as sinful - but the difference is that they recognised it as a reality instead of living in a fantasy of pure spiritual aspiration that asked for our world to be made more miserable. The book is not only about Western attitudes - it covers East and South Asia and is generous about the Americas before and after the Spanish Conquest, as well as telling a reasonable tale of Muslim sexual mores and their translation into that peculiar revolution amongst the Frankish upper classes, courtly love. The dialectic between Christian miserabilism which has its Roman intellectual antecedents and a courtly apartheid culture which objectified both men and women into stereotypes seems to be the story of a culture that, like Rome before it, was the most successful on the planet to date and yet doomed to destruction as soon as it could no longer expand to fill every vacuum. The point of the courtly love model which was a mere literary conceit when it started and only became serious with industrialisation is that it turned women into wimps or harridans with nothing in between. How can you have a decent relationship with another human being if you are worshipped as a stereotype? How can you develop a relationship if you can only do it by becoming a stereotype? The stereotypes are still deeply embedded in Western marital culture. She also uses the case of the various British Contagious Diseases Acts, clumsy attempts to halt the spread of venereal disease through regulation of prostitution, as an example of the opposite - the damage caused to the community by moralists attacking basically sensible legislation! Courtly love moderated the Judaeo-Christian death instinct that would have preferred castration and celibacy to sexual pleasure by bringing raw sexuality within some tolerable ideological bounds. We have noted elsewhere how the Meiji restoration and then the MacArthur period after imposed such modernisation in Japan - yet somehow, in the last half-millennium, only the Japanese have managed to resist cultural subjection in matters of sexuality. Tannahill, without emphasising it, points out how the politicisation of Western women has had a direct relationship with eugenics, racial and class prejudice. The rise of women in politics is not quite the story of progressive enlightenment that we would like to believe. These people were as culturally dangerous as any bunch of celibate priests. Even the British come across as one of the more liberal of nations, successfully negotiating in general some sort of freedom out of the weight of respectability. America was another matter America today, still culturally the dominant nation on earth, sends out two contradictory signals. On the other hand, three hundred or so years of puritanism, patriarchy, respectable feminism and political fear have created a domestic political culture where the sight of a nipple on prime-time television causes a national cultural crisis, a politician is judged on his fidelity to his partner rather than his competence and sexuality is the subject of endless study and torment in which every act becomes a political one. America is like an inconsistent parent - censorious one day, not caring the next. No wonder the world acts like a dysfunctional family. The villain of the story is not feminism. It is a revolution that is still localised and metropolitan, still childish, certainly immature. Men, shell-shocked by being blamed for crimes about which they are still confused whether they committed them or not, are developing their own responses, based not on conduct required by an agrarian society out of time and place but on what men and women really are like over a life cycle - on the basis of true equality and respect. These respectable dames, whose attitudes would drift down into the class they oppressed or gave employment to, if that suits you better, required leisure. While their menfolk employed thousands of prostitutes to give them something that could not be discussed at home and brought back the risk of venereal disease, the girls had servants - thousands of them. Within thirty years, the number has risen to 1., The institution of temple prostitute might have been a lot better for some of them than the drudgery and obligatory attendance at church on Sundays just to be told that everyone had their place. As Tannahill points out, the High Victorian myth of the family and the respectable woman presided over an explosive increase in prostitution, an epidemic spread of venereal disease and the introduction of a morbid taste for masochism amongst the middle class male. She does not say but we would add that it created the conformist death instinct that materially contributed to the dumb willingness to die in a trench for an abstraction. That abstraction, in one country, turned into a killing machine for the destruction of, symbolically, the race that kicked off the Judaeo-Christian ethic but then got left behind as its Frankenstein monster of Christianity transmuted into the hell of its opposite in national socialism. A Freudian might regard Auschwitz as the grandson attempting to murder the grandfather - Western culture is a continuum and not a

series of revolutions. This was a top-down moralism that crushed the souls and spirits of many men and most women. The point of the revolution is that the culture of the desert has begun to be replaced by a culture of the oasis for many. But neither of these are insoluable. Both arise not from viciousness per se but from stupidity and liberal economics and globalisation. Education, the recreation of community, government regulation to deal with exploitation rather than morality and improved barriers on trade where it is exploitative should be sufficient. Contrasted with the West in the book is what is now clearly its rival, China. Today, we must see China differently. It also offers us two contrasting traditions whose dialectic will be as influential as the Judaeo-Christian death instinct and courtly love have been in the creation of the Western soul. The other is the conformist order-driven top-down culture of Neo-Confucianism which is not, by any means, anti-sexual but is concerned with public propriety. A point made by the author here is that Chinese sexual life is rich but intensely private. We may extrapolate that Neo-Confucian resistance to Western radical sexual liberalism need not be assumed to mean puritanism in private, although foreign conquest and the malign influence of Western missionaries and Marxist earnestness as well as state-driven population control have driven much of the richness away and replaced it with a dogged seriousness that would gain the approval of many an Anglo-Saxon harridan seeking to re-moralise society. It is interesting that the new freedom now inclines people to conservatism in the United Kingdom because politicians like Harriet Harman, in the dying days of the least competent centre-left administration in post-war European history, seem to want to use their last year of office to use a legislative sledgehammer to crack the serious nut of exploitation. This book is recommended because it is humane. Which is a fitting paradox. Pleasure is always a precursor to pain, though many people especially women seem to have missed out on the pleasure part and gone directly to pain and death via disgust and boredom. The only people who seem to have developed any kind of system of knowledge designed to make sex pleasurable A surprisingly depressing tome which illustrates the fact that it is not our allegedly oversized brains that has caused all our millenia of misery, but the bits between our legs. The only people who seem to have developed any kind of system of knowledge designed to make sex pleasurable for women were the Chinese, and this they did not for the purpose of making their cloistered herds of women happy, but to maximize the theft of their life essences. Indeed it was thought that if a man had sex with enough different women he could attain immortality. This knowledge was suppressed completely in China by the 17th century but it did leak through to Japan along with the rest of Chinese civilization. It also probably inspired the Kama Sutra, but from what I have read of that it is quite crude and treats women no better than beasts. Both options of course are preferable to the sex as sin approach pursued in the west. That makes somewhat hair raising reading to say the least.

Chapter 2 : - Sex In History by Reay Tannahill

SEX IN HISTORY chronicles the pleasures- and perils- of the flesh from the time of mankind's distant ancestors to the modern day; from a sexual act which was bried, crude and purposeful, to the myriad varieties of contemporary sexual mores. Reay Tannahill's scholarly, yet accessible study ranges.

Nervously wondering where the snow is. However the up side of this is that are now a massive amount of quotes for you to read below, that will give you a very good idea of what the writing is like and the types of anecdotes and examples the author uses. Because I somehow doubt the book spontaneously generated itself on my bookshelf - or that two other books somehow mated and it was the result. Though that last theory would explain a lot about why my bookshelves are always full. I always assume this when reading anything scientific or historical. The following are quotes, added bit by bit as I read. In the dying decades of the twentieth centruy, they argue, sex is an open book. It was extremely amusing that, on discovery that he had an integral role in creating life, that men apparently became er, overly empowered: The men who emerged from the neolithic into the period of recorded history had the kind of assurance, arrogance, and authority that spring not from useful toil, not from knowledge of a good job well done, but from the kind of blinding revelation - beyond argument, beyond questioning - that was later to be experienced by the prophets of the Old Testament and the saints of the New. The idea that there was a female, mother goddess in the past: Later there was Demeter, the Earth Mother, though she rated no higher than Corn Goddess, Adonis being the true fertility diety. In imperial Rome, too, Cybele and Isis attracted enormous followings. But the general concept of the Great Goddess owes as much to the Victorian imagination as to historical truth. The men of the nineteenth century, rewriting early history with the new disciplines of anthropology and archeology as guides and a highly flattering view of women and motherhood always in their minds, adjusted their image of polytheistic religions to suit their own intellectual needs. In fact, the goddesses in question seem to have had a good deal in common with the ladies of Victorian times, rejoicing in just as much glory and just as little power. But lovers throughout history have used the human navel as repository for a wide range of erotically stimulating objects, and, on balance, a hot fish seems no more improbable than the ice cubes fashionable in some circles today. I love books where the author uses footnotes for this sort of "no, really, you think that bit was weird, check out this! For the regulation six days during which she wore a sanitary towel in Sumarian tug. So does the fact that the pharaoh Rameses II was noted not only for the number of his children - he fathered upwards of - but for the number of his blackheads. Nineteenth-century European doctors still believed that the touch of a menstruating woman would turn a ham rancid. I should add here that because I typed this when I was tired Rameses became a "pharoach" until I edited it. Will have to see if p has any answers. One of the weirder histories is how the Christianized west demonized sex. It all comes down to early church theologians and their interpretation. One of the early problems for them was answering the question: The biblical story of Onan Genesis Rather than do this, Onan "spilled his seed on the ground" and the Lord kills him. Or refusal to obey the law of levirate? Catholic theologians in later times, determined to outlaw all forms of contraception other than abstention, were to come out strongly in favor of the first. A Lausanne physician, S. Tissot, in decided on the second and wrote a book entitled On Onanism, or a physical dissertation on the ills produced by masturbation, with the result that later generations blamed Onan for originating the horrible sin of "self-abuse. In the Vatican, leaving Onan out of it, still condemned masturbation in language of majestic obscurity in its Declaration on Certain Questions concerning Sexual Ethics because "the deliberate use of the sexual faculty outside normal conjugal relations essentially contradicts the finality of the faculty. I suppose I should add here that my own background is Presbyterian. His first wife appears to have been his mother, Tiy , a strong-minded lady from Nubia. They had one daughter. Then he married his maternal cousin, Nefretiti , and fathered three more daughters. Yet he was to achieve immortality not only as one of the interesting but irrelevant eccentrics who litter the pages of the past, but as the prototype of Oedipus , central character of Boeotian myth, great tragic figure of Sophoclean drama, and symbol of the particular type of parent-fixation neurosis Akhenaten, unlike Oedipus, did not kill his father; instead he obliterated all traces of his rule. It seems unlikely that

Akhenaten suffered from the guilt in which Sophocles and Freud enshrouded him, but there appears to be little doubt that it was, indeed, his own curious tale that was carried across the Mediterranean almost 3, years ago to become enshrined in Western literature and tradition. For those wanting to dig up more on this the footnote refers to *The Evolution of Man and Society*, by C. Characteristically unable to resist improving on a good story, he added, "Tall, handsome women soon manage to get home again, but the ugly ones stay a long time before they can fulfill the condition which the law demands, some of them, indeed, as much as three or four years. Aphrodite, for example, goddess of sexual intercourse, was born from the foam, but not the foam that so innocently caps a Botticelli wave. They drifted away in the foam of their own semen, and it was from this that Aphrodite was born. Neither Greeks nor Romans had much use for women, except for creating heirs. So, no huge surprises. Studded in reverse on the sole is a message that would print itself on the roadway for the next passerby to read. The message, of course, is "Follow me. It was they who invented the half-cup brassiere, not quite as scientifically structured as the modern kind, but satisfactory enough. They had girdles too, usually worn by hetairai to conceal pregnancy. And for girls whose figures were underdeveloped, the hips could be "fitted with a quilt, so that people exclaim: In a period of general literacy, their conclusions would have been contested, modified, and modified again. But literacy and learning were two of the most important victims in the collapse of the Classical world. As a result, the words and conclusions of the Church Fathers remain unassailed, and so, in time, became unassailable. It is undoubtedly a tribute if an ambiguous one to such men as St. Augustine that much of what the modern still understands as "sin" stems not from the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, or from the tablets handed down from Sinai, but from the early sexual vicissitudes of a handful of men who lived in the twilight days of imperial Rome. They were not bloodless natural ascetics, but men who had led full lives and full sex lives before being converted to celibacy, and they had reacted with sometimes morbid revulsion against the sins they now abjured. It was Augustine who epitomized a general feeling among the Church Fathers that the act of intercourse was fundamentally disgusting. In fact there was an unstated consensus that God ought to have invented a better way of dealing with the problem of procreation. If it was, it should be without passion. This argument now seems both illogical and weird - but that has a lot to do with the century I live in, as this was accepted for centuries. Church fathers originally defined sodomy as specifically homosexual, but: Many centuries later, however, Western lawgivers - perhaps out of innocence, perhaps out of understandable confusion - again began to use the word "sodomy" in a less restricted sense, treated it as a compendium of all they understood by "unnatural vice. Today, in such states as Virginia, for example, the so-called sodomy statutes do not specifically ban homosexuality but anal and oral intercourse, regardless of the sex of the persons involved. For sex without the Big Guilt at least. A bit on her here: Pan Chou, Woman Historian

Chapter 3 : Reay Tannahill | Revolv

So I last added to this looong post in October - and along with many others I forgot to update it when I finished it. And now (May) the book's in storage.

Chapter 4 : Reay Tannahill | LibraryThing

Tannahill doesn't pretend to theory or depth, offering instead ""the inclusion of Taoist sex manuals, Turkish eunuchs, ancient Greek dildoes, and Panamanian sodomites as adequate recompense for the omission of a certain amount of local or legal detail.""

Chapter 5 : Review: Sex in History by Reay Tannahill - Batgrl: Bookish Hooha

Buy a cheap copy of Sex in History book by Reay Tannahill. SEX IN HISTORY chronicles the pleasures- and perils- of the flesh from the time of mankind's distant ancestors to the modern day; from a sexual act which was bried.

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History of Sex. by Reay Tannahill. Scarborough Books, , page softcover, 1 lb. 10 oz. Very Good Condition. Slight wear on edges.

Chapter 7 : Sex in history | Open Library

Sex in history by Reay Tannahill, , Stein and Day edition, in English.

Chapter 8 : - Sex in History by Reay Tannahill

Reay Tannahill was born on December 9, in Glasgow, Scotland, where she brought up. Her forename was the maiden name of her mother, Olive Reay. She was educated at Shawlands Academy, and obtained an MA in History and a postgraduate certificate in Social Sciences at the University of Glasgow.

Chapter 9 : Sex in History by Reay Tannahill

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