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***Sexual Portraits  
Photographs of Radical Sexuality***

**Michael A. Rosen**

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*for Lucile*

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Thanks to Mark I. Chester for originating the concept of, and making the first, "Sexual Portraits."

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# Foreword

The important thing is my personal odyssey: who I am, where I'm going and what I do along the way.

I've been making photographs for seventeen years. During that time, I've come to understand that I want two things from photography. First, to learn how others have made their choices about how they conduct themselves on our cosmic journey-to help me make my choices. Second, to challenge myself to do important, excellent and original work, with no excuses.

In my exploration of the art and craft of black and white photography, I exploit the technical variables of the medium. I emphasize a particular aspect of the medium and couple that with compatible and interesting subject matter.

I have frequently applied this exploration to erotic themes. My study of nudes exploited the use of grain and used the human body as an abstract compositional form. That work has been widely exhibited, both locally and nationally. My study of sadomasochistic sex exploited movement as a way of capturing a highly emotional energy exchange. The S/M work culminated in the publication of *Sexual Magic: the S/M Photographs* in 1986. My current work is sexual portraiture, which contrasts startling subject matter with a classical treatment. The work is as challenging for me as it is for the viewer.

This is my second self-published book on radical sexuality. It represents a continuing commitment to a sex-positive point of view. Sexuality is a vital part of our make-up, and sex-play is an important means of communicating with other humans and exploring and expanding our individual limits. I celebrate anyone and everyone who explores the energy connection possible between individuals, whatever their gender or sexual orientation.

Think of this as a travel book. I've visited a place to which few have access, where the culture is very different from mainstream America. I've made photographs there and brought them back to you. I've also interviewed the inhabitants and have attempted to present a composite picture of radical sexuality as I have found it, via these photographs and interview fragments. Do not assume that all the people I've photographed participate in all the activities depicted or discussed.

Finally, this book is a manifesto, a declaration of what I call the Zero'th Amendment: "I do with my body and my life what I want and, so long as I harm no one, that's no one else's business."

—Michael A. Rosen

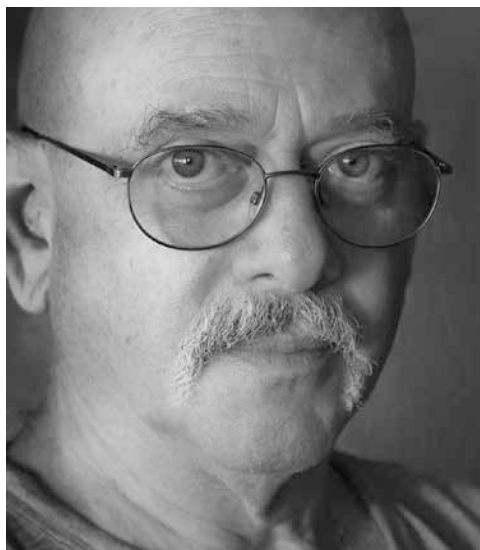
# About This Digital Version

This PDF is a digital version of *Sexual Portraits: Photographs of Radical Sexuality*, which was published as a high quality paperback monograph in 1990. The 47 photographs are of people in radical sexual roles, including BDSM and gender play. Many display erotic piercings and/or tattoos.

## What's Free, and Why, and What's For Sale

First, what is it that I'm giving away? The pictures all have a visible copyright notice. The license agreement allows printing the pictures, but forbids the removal of the copyright notice. So think of this as an advertisement for myself and my work. For me, publication has always been about putting my point of view out in the world in the most effective manner. Last century, I chose printed books for sale; this century I've added a free PDF option.

All images in this body of work are for sale as modern archival inkjet prints, which will last longer than traditional gelatin silver photographic prints. \$50 for an 8x10, \$100 for an 11x14, as of November, 2013. Support this work. Buy my art prints.



Buy my books—*Sexual Art: Photographs That Test The Limits*, *Sexual Magic: the S/M Photographs*, *Sexual Portraits: Photographs of Radical Sexuality*, and *Lust & Romance: Rated X Fine Art Photographs*—from Amazon and other online vendors, and *Vanilla Sex: Explicit Fine Art Photographs* from blurb.com. Or from me at my website, [michaelrosen.com](http://michaelrosen.com).

## Technical Notes/ Printing The Pictures

The images for this PDF were scanned from the original gelatin silver prints that were used to make the 1990 monograph. After building the PDF, I made test prints of pages using my Apple Mac Pro and the Adobe Reader application, with my Epson 3880 printer via the Epson "Advanced Black-and-White" driver on inexpensive glossy Inkjet paper. (It's best to use a grayscale mode for grayscale pictures, if your printer has one, rather than printing in color—although it is certainly possible to achieve good results printing grayscale files as a color image. The Epson 3880 uses two gray inks, a black ink and very little color ink in their ABW mode. Canon and HP offer competitive systems.) At Printer Settings/Basic, I chose ABW, 1440 dpi

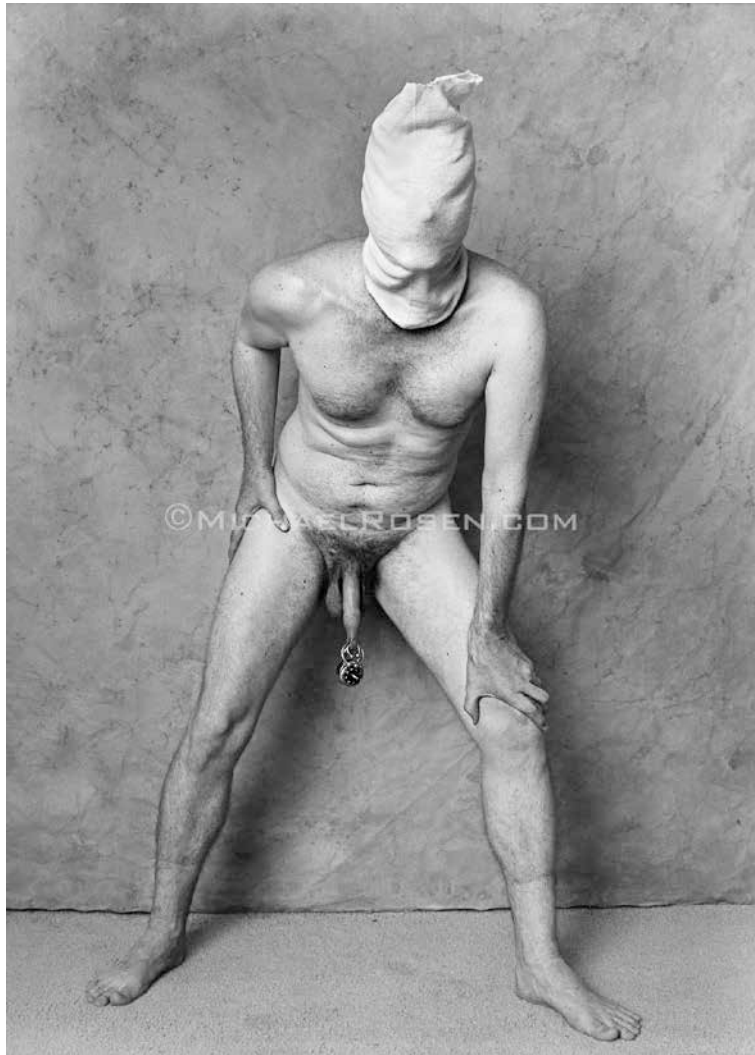
and Premium Photo Paper Glossy. At Printer Settings/Advanced, I found that the most accurate setting is one or two lighter than the default: the settings are Darkest, Darker (default), Dark, Normal (best, in my opinion, with my setup) and Lighter. I chose the default for all other settings.

My monitor is profiled and, hopefully, yours is, too. But I have no control over what my pictures look like on your monitor. And I really have no control over what my pictures look like coming out of your printer. Please don't complain if you don't like your results; I offer no help.

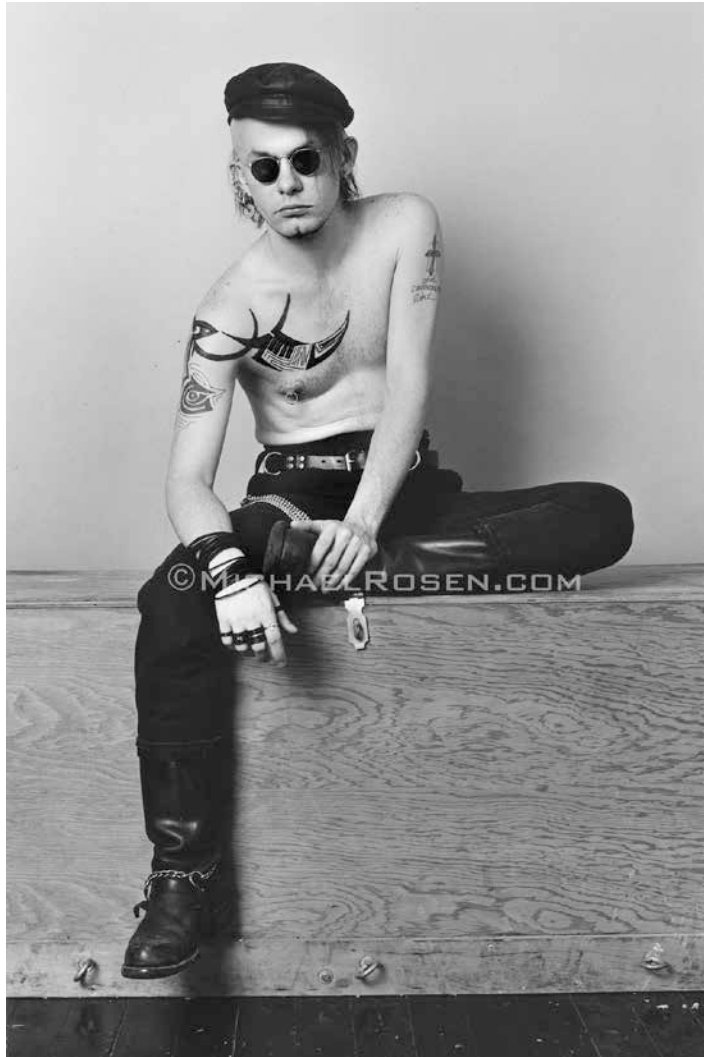
### **What's Next?**

I continue to actively photograph healthy sexual behavior and publish books of my photographs. I am always looking for individuals, couples or groups-of all genders, races, ages and persuasions-who want to share their sexual energy, from the vanilla-ish to the outrageous, with my camera. Email [michael@michaelrosen.com](mailto:michael@michaelrosen.com). See more of my work at [www.michaelrosen.com](http://www.michaelrosen.com).

—*Michael A. Rosen, November, 2013*



*Carl, 1987*



*Bill, 1984*



*Hawke, 1989*



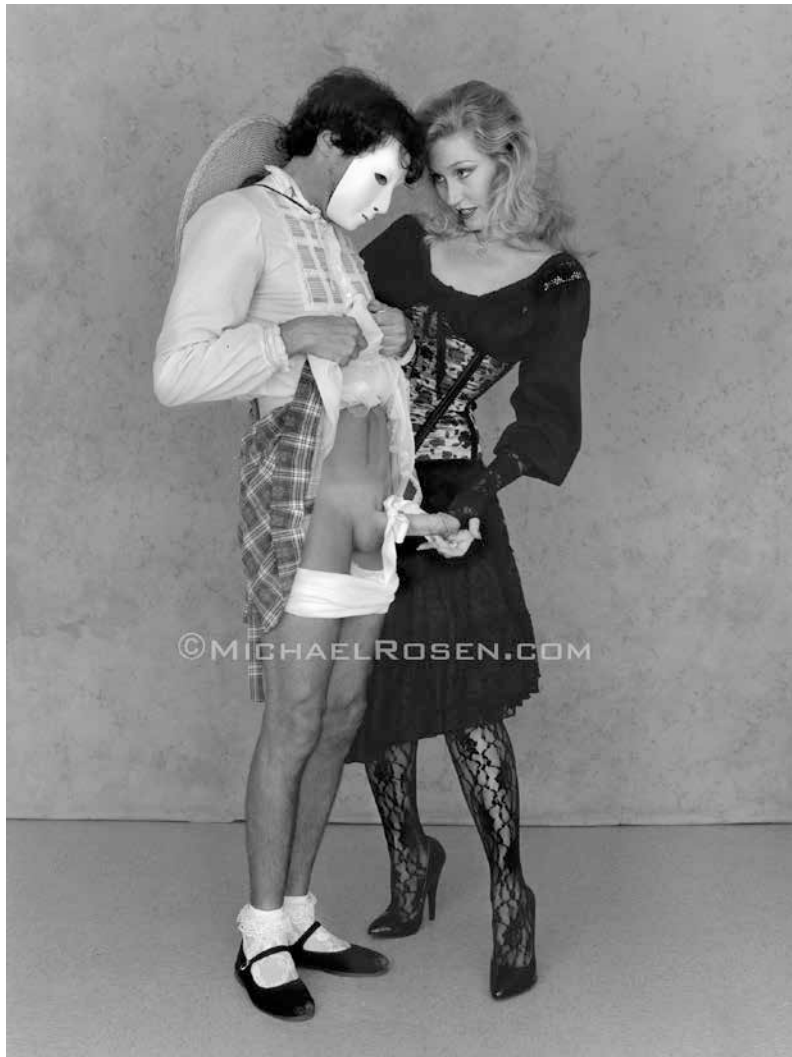
*Drew Ward and Jim Ward, 1989*

There is a real balance here that makes our SM relationship work. He loves to get whipped and I love to whip him. He is very turned on by bondage and I am very turned on by binding him. The two sides of the activities stimulate us in different ways.

I may spend an hour tying Jim down to the bed, doing a very elaborate rope and leather or string combination that makes it very difficult for him to move. (Naturally, following a responsible top's way, there is no restriction of his breathing or circulation ... *(continued on page 52)*)



*Myra and Maggie, 1988*



*vinci and Verushka, 1988*



*Marcia and Lynn, 1989*



*Michael, 1987*

My first body piercings were my nipples and a “Prince Albert.” An actual piercing takes only a few seconds and I let out a good yell for each one, which I always like to do. Afterwards my body definitely went through some changes: I felt faint, went flush and all of that. But up until that point in my life I had never done something that felt so absolutely right. I didn’t question it at all, even something as major as having my nipples and my dick pierced. It was just so right. (*continued on page 55*)

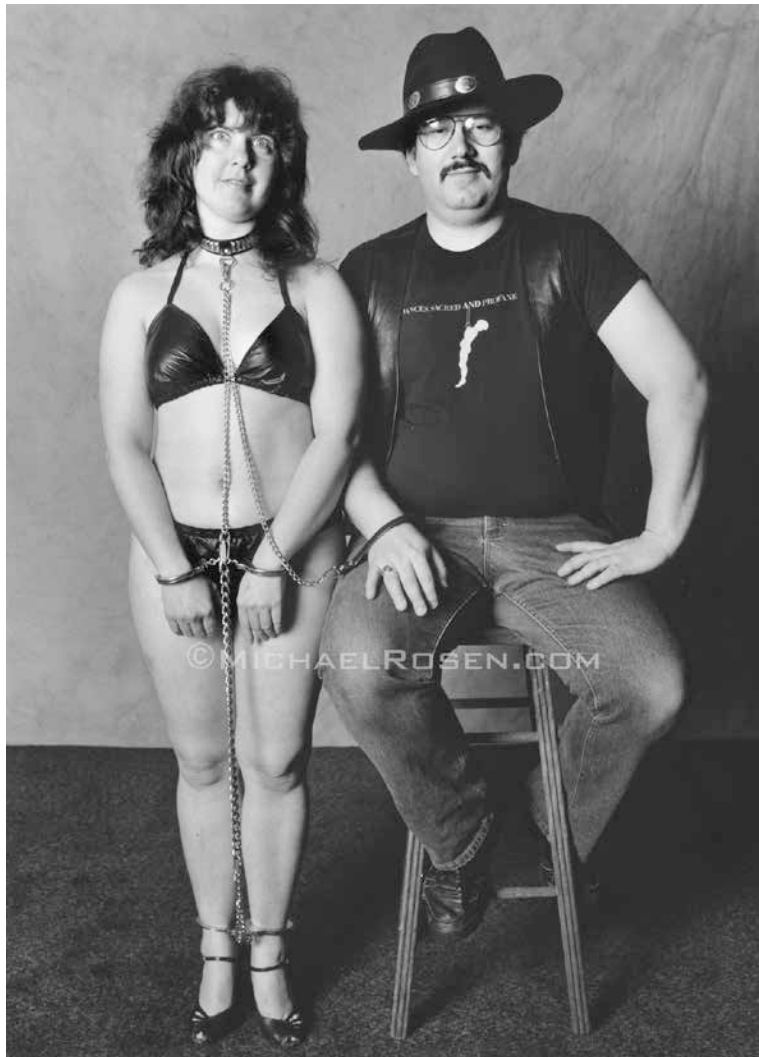


*Myrna, 1988*



*Daddy Bear/Rings, 1988*

My piercings are nice for stimulation when I'm jerking off, which I do a lot. The Prince Albert and the tit piercings are the most erotic. They are the ones that I use the most in play; the others are just decorations. The tits and the Prince Albert are the ones I like to hook electrodes to. I have a little blue box that sends electrical charges into wherever there is metal. It uses a nine-volt battery and has controls to adjust the frequency and amplitude of the pulsations. (*continued on page 57*)



*Karen and Josh, 1987*

*Josh:* We like a lot of role-playing stuff in sex. We like Master and slave stuff and playing with personas. I don't even know that there's a distinct borderline between our sexual activity and having fun that's sort of related to sexuality,

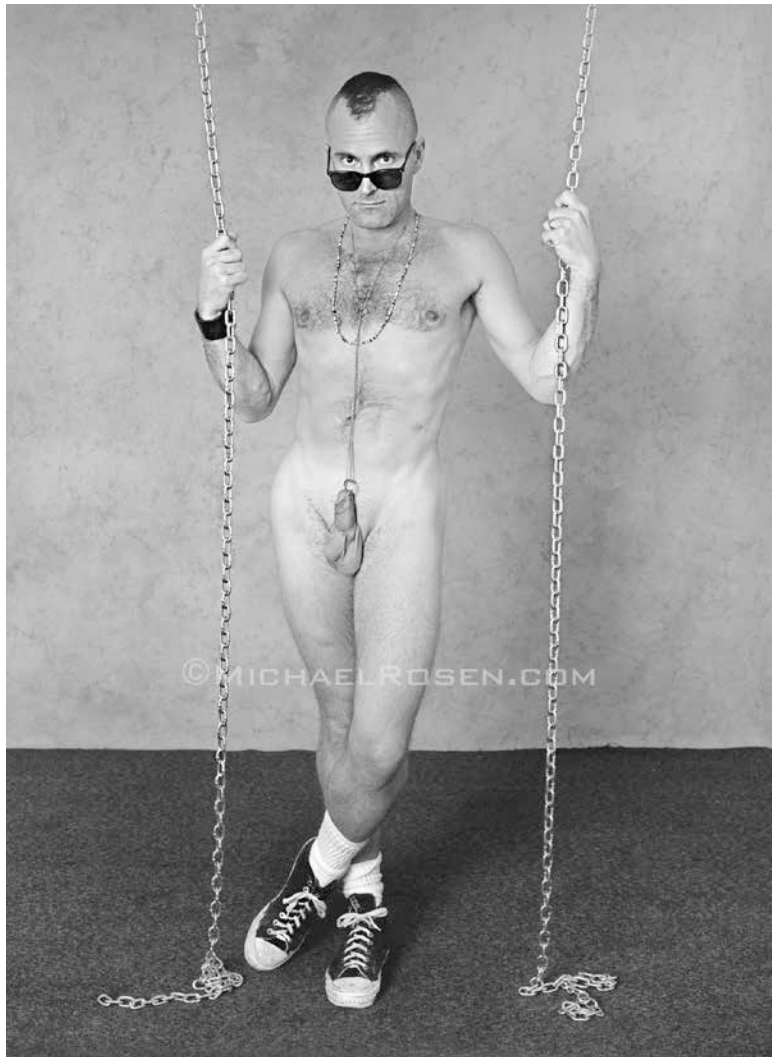
*Karen:* I love role-playing. I enjoy playing, period. I'm an exhibitionist and I will find any excuse to be one. One aspect of that is my different personas: slave, who is well-behaved, into submission and serving Master; my cat persona, Cwumpet; Kimmie, the professional; Ami ... (continued on page 58)



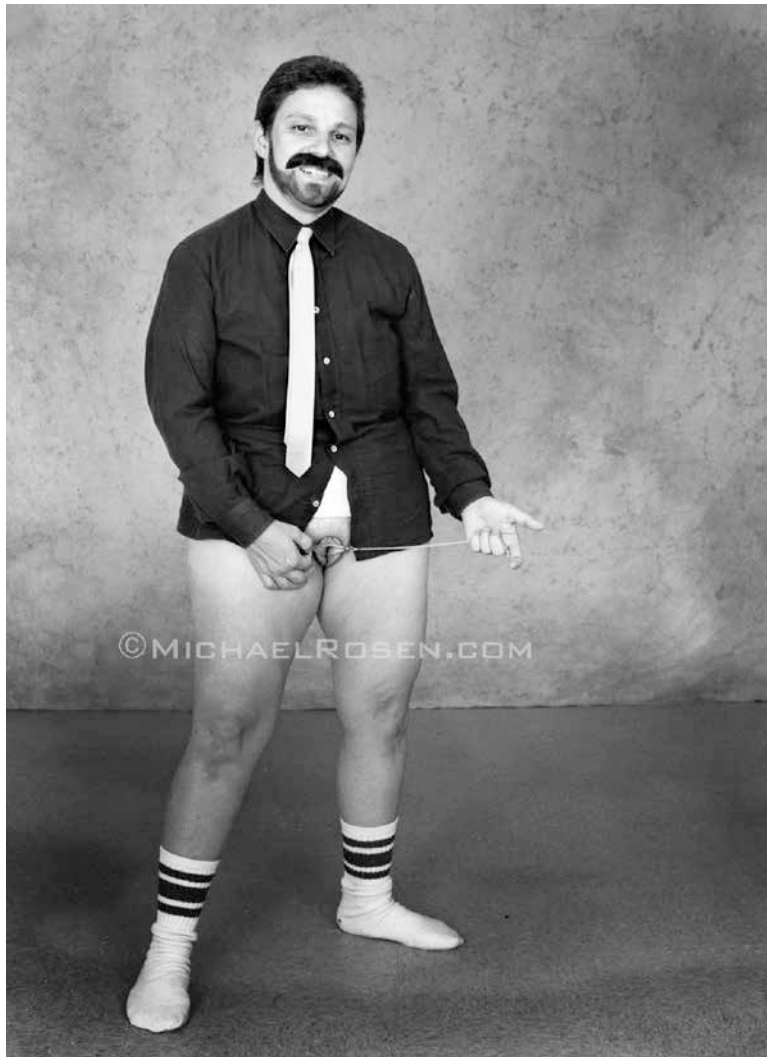
*Fred and Michel, 1987*



*Alix, 1988*



*Tim, 1988*



*Joey D., 1988*



*Cynthia and Amanda, 1988*



*Janet, 1988*

I need a sex party regularly. It's almost a survival issue. If I didn't go, I wouldn't get stroked much in my life. I am so busy I don't date. Sometimes I'm just looking for three loving men who'll take some time with me, not some asshole who immediately wants to get off and I'm supposed to jack him off. Sometimes people just want to rub my back and that's nice, versus the asshole who is trying to put his cock down my throat. (*continued on page 60*)

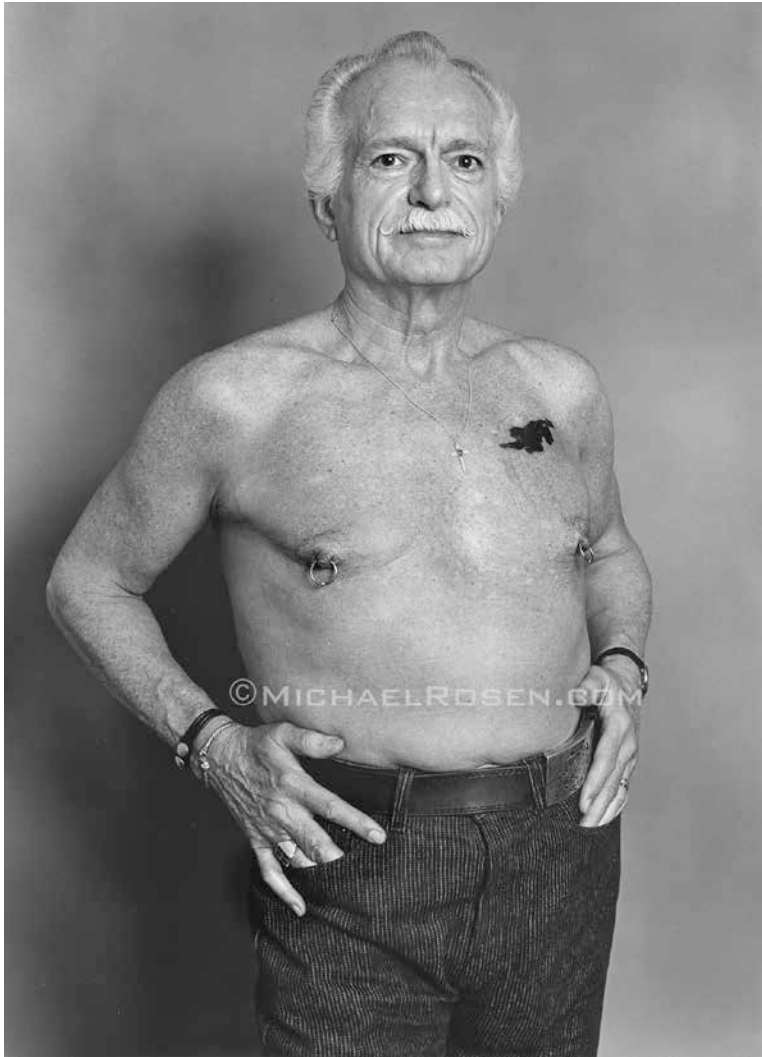


*Talbot, 1987*



*Stacy and Sharon, 1988*

*Stacy:* Intensity is everything for me. Why have half a teaspoon of applesauce when you can relish an entire apple? Why settle, when with a little effort and imagination and creativity you can soar? Why settle for the mundane, why settle for the average fuck, when you can make it an incredible experience? And it's the intensity that can make it incredible-an increased combination of power and passion that's narrowly directed. It can be explosive. The feeling is in my head and in my heart and in my cunt. *(continued on page 62)*



*Keith, 1987*



*Karen, 1986*



*Kriss Kross, 1990*



*Robert, 1987*



*Brandie, 1990*

I have taken hormones and developed breasts and so on, but I haven't had the operation to make me anatomically female. So I'm still male in that I have a penis and the rest of it. The hormones do things like help the growth of hair; my hair is much longer and doesn't fall out as much. As far as feelings, I've always felt feminine anyway, so it hasn't really altered anything that way.

My driver's license and my I.D. Cards say "female" and it's not questioned. (*continued on page 64*)



*Susie Bright, 1990*



*Riley, Halloween 1987*

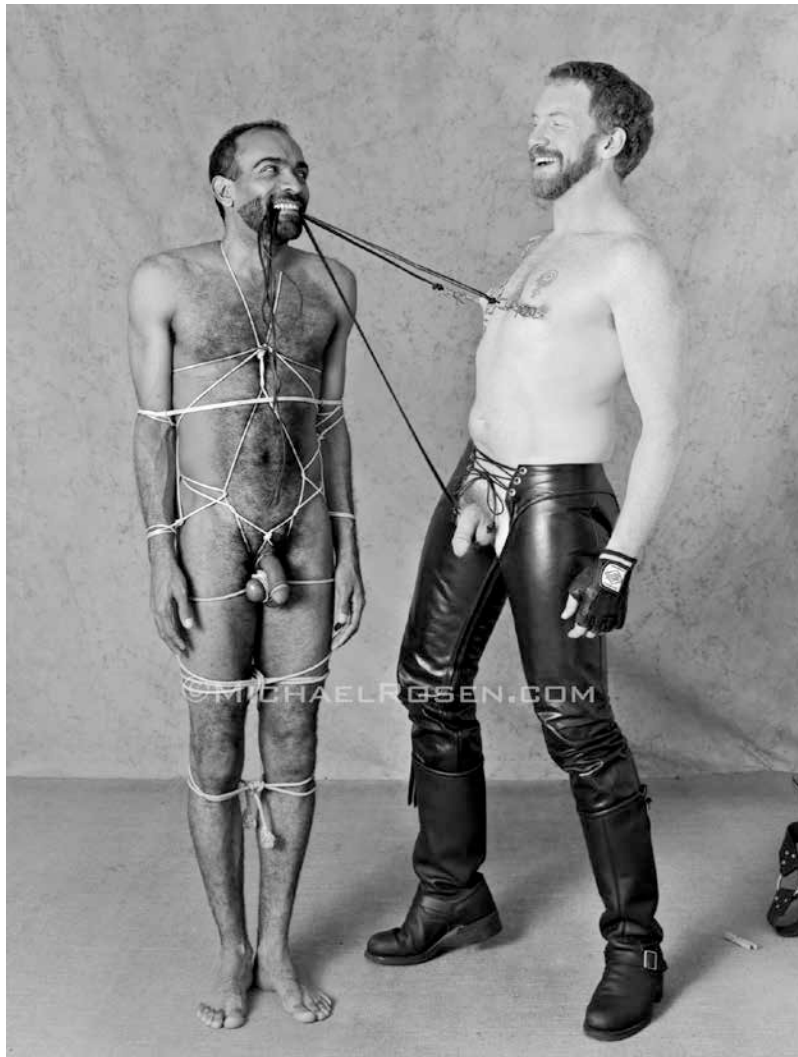


Carol, 1988

If someone pulls on my nipple rings during sex play, sometimes it feels good and sometimes it doesn't. Nipple play, any kind of sex play, depends to some extent on me and to some extent depends on my partner. Some people do wonderful things with nipples and some people don't. A person who doesn't do wonderful things with nipples is not going to improve technique by having rings to pull on as well as the tissue available. (*continued on page 65*)



*Sybil and Greg, 1987*



*Michael with Jack Fertig, 1989*

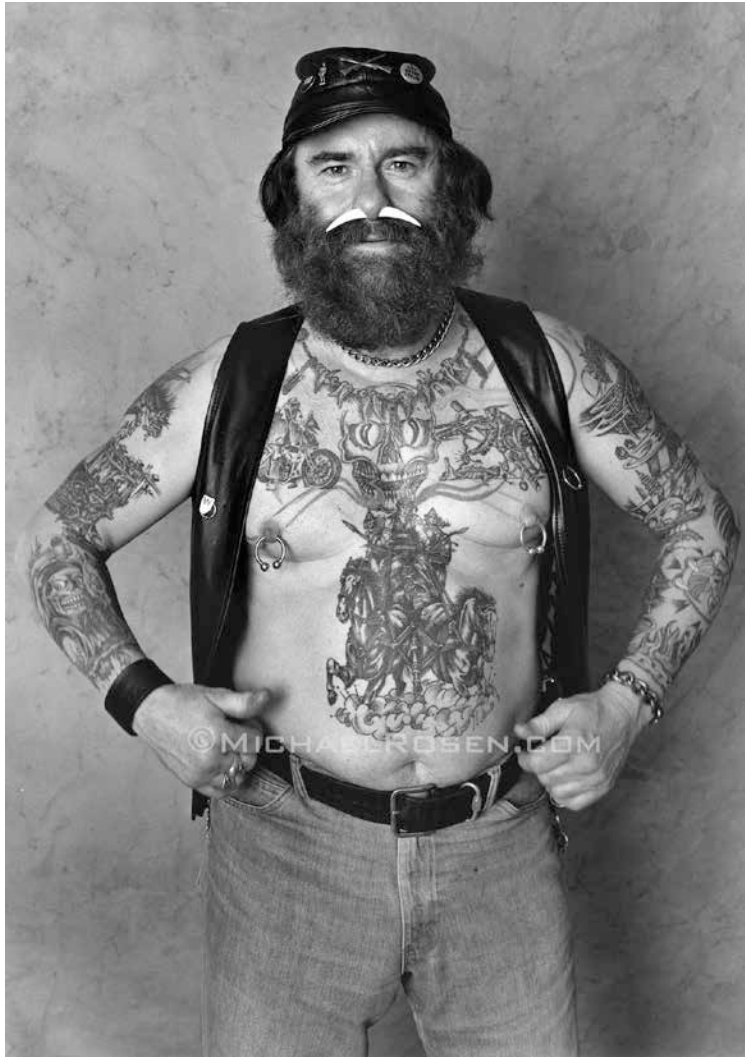


*Noni, 1989*

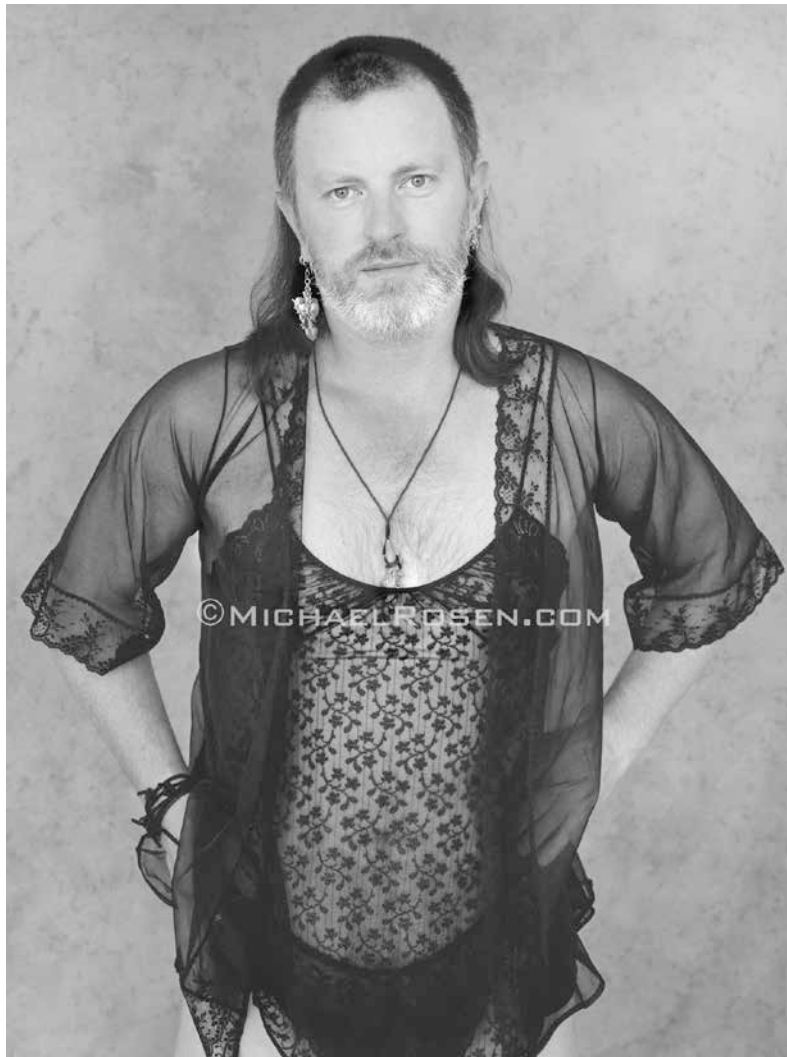
I remember the first time I shaved my head. It was an out-of-body experience, certainly. It was a sensational experience and since then I've loved to shave people, because it's very liberating, it's cathartic and it's part and parcel of what submission and domination is about. It's taking a point of view-our whole set of ideas and preconceptions, our folkways and mores-and suddenly changing it dramatically. How people think of us. How we think of ourselves. *(continued on page 66)*



*Melisa, Halloween 1987*



*Dick, 1987*



*Jack, 1988*

I didn't really think I was into lingerie until I realized I have a whole collection. I have lots of women's clothes. I have a whole closet full. The way I pick out something to wear is how colorful it is and what it feels like. Most of the lingerie I have is black or red. I like black and red because they're really sexy colors. Part of the fun is acquiring it-actually going out and getting it, coming home with it. All the stuff I get is from thrift stores and that's part of the fun, too. Going to the ladies department ... *(continued on page 68)*



*Bette and Richard, 1987*

*Bette:* One of the reasons I can top as well as I can is that I am totally detached. SM is a power and control trip for me. My main focus and function is not getting myself off. It's creating a balance and a sense of pleasure/pain so that I can take my bottom into a kind of meditative, euphoric state and then bring him out, take him back and bring him out again. I don't consider myself a dominant; I feel that I am a sadist. I like to hurt people. I like to hurt men especially. *(continued on page 69)*



*Alexis, 1987*



*Morgan with Raelyn Gallina, 1990*



*Marsha and Friend, 1990*



top: Baby Pixie and Master Billy; William and Denise, 1990  
bottom: Juliette and Sybil Holiday; Mistress Sybil and Her Priest/Slave, 1990

Our personas are not masks or roles or parts taken on the way one might take on parts in a play, but emerge from the unity each of us is, with their own ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, their own needs and desires, and their own reasons for being.

*Sybil*: Baby Pixie, Baby Ma'am, and the Baby Goddess are all aspects of my child persona. Sweet and trusting, Baby Pixie is childhood sweethearts with Master Billy and Baby Billy, and she is Daddy Bill's little girl. (*continued on page 71*)



*Wendy, 1987*



*Scott Taylor, 1987*



*W and J, 1987*



*Carol Queen and Robert Lawrence, 1989*



*Cléo Dubois and Fakir Musafar, 1988*

*Fakir:* Through years of lonely experimentation I feel I have found a way of connecting back with the source of my own creation. I had my first out-of-body experience in my teens. I discovered that I wasn't my body, that I could live separate and independent from my body and go into and out of my body. When I was out of my body, my perspective was changed. There was no time-no past, no present. I could walk forward and backward in time, even go into the future, just like going from one room to another. (*continued on page 74*)



*Ganymede and Alain, 1988*

*Ganymede:* Sometimes people describe a sexual experience as a religious experience. I try to keep the power of sexuality available for transcendence, for spiritual awareness, as well as for things like pleasure and self-expression. Sexuality is one of the strongest, most powerful and direct connections to your spiritual life. Through sexuality you can connect with your spiritual power much more directly than by going to church, where people deny your sexual and spiritual power. (*continued on page 76*)



*Drew Ward and Jim Ward, 1989  
plate 4, page 11*

There is a real balance here that makes our SM relationship work. He loves to get whipped and I love to whip him. He is very turned on by bondage and I am very turned on by binding him. The two sides of the activities stimulate us in different ways.

I may spend an hour tying Jim down to the bed, doing a very elaborate rope and leather or string combination that makes it very difficult for him to move. (Naturally, following a responsible top's way, there is no restriction of his breathing or circulation, or anything that would in any way physically harm him. It's just that he can't move his limbs or body.) He finds that very stimulating and I love to do it. My turn-on comes from his reactions to what I do. His struggling against the bonds turns me on a lot and feeling restrained turns him on. Seeing his reactions and hearing his gasps and groans of pleasure when I put tit clamps on him, or squeeze his balls, or something like that, turns me on tremendously.

Jim prefers whipping where there is a heavy thud, from what we call a flogger, rather than from a whip with very narrow ends that gives a stinging feeling. So I tend to use a flogger. That's an example of how we've worked things out: this is what I enjoy and this is what you enjoy and this is how they can mesh in a way that is mutually satisfying, safe, exciting and stimulating.

What I do is always based on a great deal of caring for him. I think that is one of the most misunderstood things about SM. People that aren't into SM don't see that whipping, for example, can be a very caring action, an expression of how much I love and care for Jim, rather than working out frustrations or something like that.

We may do things that are relatively gentle. Stimulating a person continuously over a long period of time can be a very intense experience. Whipping one's partner over a short period of time can also be an intense experience. Intensity comes in many different forms and, for me, it has to stimulate more than just what is between my legs. I need to find it stimulating between my ears as well. And elsewhere on my body. There are times when Jim and I have sex where I don't have an orgasm and nothing is done toward achieving one. He may or may not have an orgasm. It's wonderful

for both of us, it's sex as far as I'm concerned and it's really great. You can have great sex without an orgasm.

Pain? To me, pain is unpleasant and unwanted stimulation. If the stimulation I'm receiving is something I want and enjoy, then it's not really pain. If it's stimulating and pleasant, it's not pain, it's something else. It's pleasant stimulation.

Whatever individuals do with each other that gives them pleasure and harms no one else is no one else's business and shouldn't be interfered with. But there is no way of convincing the Jesse Helmses and the Dannemeyers and the Swaggerts of the world. Those individuals are the true Satanists. They have sold out to Satan, without being aware of it. They are so obsessed with Satan that Satan is their god. It's really pretty pathetic.

They worship suffering and are threatened by anyone who worships or pursues pleasure. That is antithetical to my spiritual being—to worship death and suffering: That's what the Christian religion is, a cult of suffering and death. I just can't go along with that. To me life is too beautiful and precious to obsess on suffering and hold that as the ideal.

*from an interview with Drew Ward*

Anthropologists say that there is evidence of piercing going back to pre-history. It's part of human nature and it has been a part of virtually every culture in the world at some time or another. The particular piercings may be different; in one part of the world, they pierce one part of the body, and in another part of the world, they pierce another part. It may be something that lasts for a few hundred years here, a few hundred years there. But it's always been going on somewhere, as far back as they can trace, and it's going strong today.

In tribal societies, there are many reasons for piercing the body. One obvious one is decoration. The urge to ornament the body has always been there, whether they hang shells on their piercings or however so-called primitive tribal cultures ornament their bodies, even today. Another very important reason is as a rite of passage. In tribal societies, when the young men (or young women) reach a certain age, they are ready to come into the society. There are rites and rituals whereby they endure some painful or frightening experience, or both. By facing that and coming through it, they are welcomed into the culture as adults. Our society doesn't have that. I personally feel that's one of the reasons there is so much violence in the young in our society. They are seeking to validate themselves as grownups. So, piercing can be used in the rite of passage.

There are other reasons for piercings. It can be a thing of status. Individuals who enjoy a high rank or position in their particular culture may wear something of value in their piercings—whether it's gold or something else that represents wealth to them. By wearing these things in their bodies they show their rank and social position. Also, it's a very practical way of taking care of your wealth, at least as much as you can carry.

In certain parts of the world—ancient Greece, ancient Rome, the Islamic countries—there was a practice called infibulation. The genitals are pierced—the foreskin in a man or the labia lips in a woman—and a locking device is inserted, so the person is incapable of intercourse. This practice has been incorporated in SM societies to some extent, switched from anti-sexual to erotic, as a form of bondage and control, particularly within some slave/ Master relationships.

Then there is the direct stimulation that piercings provide, purely for erotic reasons. The fact is that a little piece of metal installed in a hole in certain parts of your body will give you greatly heightened sexual feelings. That is the main reason people today are getting pierced. They are discovering that there is a tremendous augmentation of the feelings they experience during sex. That little piece of metal moving

in the flesh takes it all to a higher octave. That's why we're doing it.

And that has a lot to do with why it has been done traditionally. For instance, the ampallang, which is the horizontal piercing straight through the head of the penis, is probably the most well-documented of all of the exotic piercings. There are lots of references to it. It is indigenous to parts of the South Pacific—Borneo, New Guinea, parts of the Philippines—and it was mentioned by some of the missionaries, who of course tried to suppress it. That is a piercing that is done purely for erotic reasons. And there is another version of it, the appradavra, which is the vertical counterpart, that is mentioned in the Kama Sutra. And it is done for the same reason: for erotic stimulation.

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There has been a revival of what is sometimes called the old religion. Large numbers of people are tracing religious roots back to pre-history. All the major religions of the world—Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism—are really very anti-life as far as I'm concerned. This world is a "vale of tears." The body is no good; you're supposed to transcend the body. If you're really good, when you die you'll go to heaven and get your goodies. Wiccans say that's a bunch of baloney. If you believe in some kind of

deity, this deity is loving, this deity has created something that is wonderful. This planet is sacred.

The Jews and the Christians believe in a male God. Those are patriarchal religions and a male can create only by using something outside himself. The end result is to perceive the creation as somehow less holy than the creator.

Wiccans and pagans speak of the deity more as the mother, as a female. We don't deny the male aspect, but if you look at the deity from the female side, she gives birth to creation. Creation comes out of her and because she is sacred her creation is sacred. If you look at creation as something sacred, you attempt to work in harmony with nature, not conquer her.

Fundamentalists cut themselves off at the waist. They don't have genitals. They won't own them anyway. Wiccans say we are total. Wiccans try to use the energy that is in the genitals, which is very, very potent, and draw that energy up through the power centers; to the power center in the belly, up through the heart and on up to enlightenment. You can't do that if you are only a partial person. If you say you have nothing from the waist down, you are only half a person. You don't have any juice. Life is to be celebrated. It's not to be denied.

The most powerful force in the universe is sex, the thing that keeps life going. Without sex, there is no life. It's just that simple.

*from an interview with Jim Ward*



*Michael, 1987  
plate 8, page 15*

My first body piercings were my nipples and a "Prince Albert." An actual piercing takes only a few seconds and I let out a good yell for each one, which I always like to do. Afterwards my body definitely went through some changes: I felt faint, went flush and all of that. But up until that point in my life I had never done something that felt so absolutely right. I didn't question it at all, even something as major as having my nipples and my dick pierced. It was just so right.

I didn't get any of the piercings unless my body said OK. For some of them, I was just playing with my body and all of a sudden hit an area that

had a zing to it—“OK we’re going to pierce it there.” Since I had permission from my body, there was never a question; even the preparation was just a matter of getting to the point of being ready to accept the piercing.

My nipples weren’t an important area to me until they were pierced. They’re not naturally sensitive, so I didn’t play with them. The six months when the nipples were healing brought me to a whole new relationship with my body. I had to pay attention, clean them at least twice a day. Plus if I moved a certain way they would definitely let me know that they were there. It came to be a whole process, not of just being aware that they were there, but of really caring for that part of my body. It brought me to a better understanding of my body.

My nipples have grown, too. I had nipples, but I didn’t have play-with nipples. After the piercing they protruded more. It was fun. They became body toys. It was nice to have something extra to play with. And now I play with my nipples.

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How do I have sex with a big Prince Albert? I take it out, but I leave the other jewelry in. Some men get piercings all over the dick, but I like to keep mine streamlined with the body, so that none of them gets in the way. I have three to four frenum piercings (the one at the base of the dick is a frenum if I’m hard and a hafada, a scrotum piercing, if I’m soft) and the jewelry is really very much flush with the dick when I’m hard. I’m generally not a top. I do love to get fucked. But, I have fucked two men since I’ve had frenums and they really liked the feeling of the frenum jewelry. Because of the placement, there are little extra sensual points on the dick, just like the dildos that have bumps on them. It’s not as if the jewelry is in there jabbing around. So they really liked it, although at first they said, “Oh my God, what’s going to happen?”

*from an interview with Michael H.*



*Daddy Bear/Rings, 1988  
plate 10, page 17*

My piercings are nice for stimulation when I'm jerking off, which I do a lot. The Prince Albert and the tit piercings are the most erotic. They are the ones that I use the most in play; the others are just decorations. The tits and the Prince Albert are the ones I like to hook electrodes to. I have a little blue box that sends electrical charges into wherever there is metal. It uses a nine-volt battery and has controls to adjust the frequency and amplitude of the pulsations.

I can hook the electrodes to my tit rings. Or I can hook the tits together with a chain so I need only one electrode there, and put the other electrode on the Prince Albert. On the tits, it feels like piranhas chewing, but it doesn't leave any bruises or marks. As soon as I turn it off my tits are not even sore. (When I take tit clamps off then my tits might be sore for a while.) The electricity feels like needles being stuck through my tits, the same sensation as a piercing, on a lesser basis but for a longer period of time. You can make the electricity pulsate

or make it go really fast, depending on how you adjust the controls.

When I put an electrode on the Prince Albert, it sends electrical charges down into my dick and, when I make the electricity pulsate, it feels like I'm being jacked off from the inside.

Then, if I want to feel another sensation, I put a stainless steel sound down inside my urethra. A sound is a bar about 12 inches long that goes inside the urethra. It slides down in there by virtue of its weight and rests right on the prostate. I put an electrode on the sound and charge myself up by sending electricity into my prostate. Another way I can stimulate my prostate is with a metal cigar tube up my ass. I put one electrode on that and the other on the tits. Then I get a sensation like I'm being fucked with a dick or something and it's rubbing against my prostate. And I can jerk off, too.

When my prostate is stimulated, I get an all-over feeling of well-being, a blissful feeling. My body feels blissed-out, not just in my prostate but all over. It's different from stimulating the penis, which sends that charge right down into your dick. And you can jerk off at the same time. I find that the sensation of the electricity becomes more intense than the sensation of the ejaculation. So if you want to feel

the ejaculation, it's best to shut your electricity off at that point. Then you can feel yourself coming. Otherwise, you'll come and something will shoot out, but you'll still be feeling the electricity.

Since I've had the piercings, I haven't had much opportunity for penetration sex. I'm not too keen on wearing a condom. Rather, I like the sensation of a hand on my dick, whether it's mine or someone else's. I like looking at someone's hand on my dick. Even in the old days, the old unsafe sex days, I was never turned on to sticking my dick into a cunt or an ass. No, thank you. Sticking it into someone's mouth is okay, but not in the ass. The sensation was never intense enough that I could stay hard. With a woman it was especially unintense; it was awful.

I would love to get fucked by somebody wearing a Prince Albert or other piercings, but the opportunity has not happened and I haven't had that experience. So I haven't done it all. It may seem like I have, but I haven't.

*from an interview with  
Daddy Bear/Rings*



*Karen and Josh, 1987  
plate 11, page 18*

*Josh:* We like a lot of role-playing stuff in sex. We like Master and slave stuff and playing with personas. I don't even know that there's a distinct borderline between our sexual activity and having fun that's sort of related to sexuality,

*Karen:* I love role-playing. I enjoy playing, period. I'm an exhibitionist and I will find any excuse to be one. One aspect of that is my different personas: slave, who is well-behaved, into submission and serving Master; my cat persona, Cwumpet; Kimmie, the professional; Ami ...

*Josh:* Ami, who's into, "I want to be tied up, I want you to do me, do me."

*Karen:* Yeah, Ami's a do-me. Ami is definitely a do-me.

*Josh:* slave'll sit there and wait patiently till you deign to pay her attention. Ami will ...

*Karen:* ... hop in your face and tell you to do it. But Ami doesn't really like pain. Ami likes bondage; she's

a bondage nymph. slave likes pain. slave serves Master by taking the pain. I believe slave likes pain; I don't. Actually, I'm not sure if slave enjoys pain, if she enjoys suffering or serving Master, or if it's a combination of all three. I'll have to ask her some time.

*Josh:* My personas tend to be less developed. Master likes to top. He's a very real space in my head, and he's a very different guy than I am. There's The Magus, the one who did magic, when I did magic seriously. There's The British Gentleman. He's very patrician, very proper.

*Karen:* I think of him as pompous ... Master is a very well-controlled, warm, loving, sensitive person. He controls the universe around him and demands respect.

*Josh:* Control is certainly what he's about. Control and power. I think the key is he's incredibly—and I'm falling into third person, because I'm not in that space now—focused. He's the one who picked up chi when I was studying martial arts. He's the one who really understands how to focus that type of energy and direct it into a point. Master can look at people and take their minds right there, move their minds. The energy is so focused that it goes through them, through conscious processing right into their back brain. When I'm not Master, I can't do that. He can do it pretty consistently. He's an amazing guy.

Master likes to possess people. The chief thing that he wants out of the universe is control. The key thing he wants out of women is to possess them. He's been around a long time, so he's got a lot of technique. He knows bondage, he knows wax, he knows caning and he knows whipping. What all those techniques are about is creating a state in her mind where she is, simultaneously, totally out of control and totally possessed by him. What he's looking for is a state where she's orgasming helplessly, out of control, and at the same time completely filled with a sense that he's the one creating this, that he's possessed her.

*Karen:* Yeah. He possesses slave, coolly and calmly. Absolutely. Master is the Master of Endorphins.

Endorphins make you high. They make you feel sexy. They make you have an energy rush. They take you right to the edge of the cliff. Sometimes endorphins take you so high that your pain tolerance goes up and you can take more.

*Josh:* Bottoming is an endorphin rush. When you get hurt, your body releases endorphins, the body's natural opiates. If you get injured, you can use the power of the pain to move a huge rock or run back to your village or whatever. It's a survival mechanism. If you get hurt a little—and let's face it, none of the stuff we do in S/M games

comes under the heading of really major league pain and injury—your body produces endorphins and you get a little high. When you get hurt a little more, it produces more endorphins.

It's a timing question. If you hurt too fast too hard, the pain builds up faster than the natural opiate, and instead of getting high you just feel, "Ouch, that hurts, I'm out of this scene." But if the timing is right, every increase of pain drives the endorphin level higher and you can take the pain.

On the other hand, topping is mostly an adrenalin high, but it's an endorphin high as well. When you're doing things to a slave, there is a feedback loop where as they get higher, you get higher—they get higher, you get higher—because you're feeling along with the bottom. You're doing it to them, but you're also doing it to yourself. (It works the other way around, too. In being done you're also the doer. You're partially in your own head and partially in your partner's head simultaneously. It's very weird.) Part of topping is a huge rush from a release of aggression. It's a predator rush. I know just how the lion feels when he jumps the jumbuck. It's a predator rush that's excitement and aggression, all mixed up with sexual energy.

*from an interview with Karen and Josh*



*Janet, 1988  
plate 17, page 24*

I need a sex party regularly. It's almost a survival issue. If I didn't go, I wouldn't get stroked much in my life. I am so busy I don't date. Sometimes I'm just looking for three loving men who'll take some time with me, not some asshole who immediately wants to get off and I'm supposed to jack him off. Sometimes people just want to rub my back and that's nice, versus the asshole who is trying to put his cock down my throat.

The safe-sex jack-off parties are really interesting. There are always many more men than women. It's a voyeuristic trip, so if you want to be an exhibitionist, that's the place! I'm very adventuresome. I like jack-off. It's taken a long time to accept that I like to masturbate. I sometimes like to masturbate with other people.

I might be sitting there by myself and then five guys might come up and sit next to me, stare at me, sit very close and jack off to me. Sometimes, if I'm in the mood, I act like I'm one of the boys. There might be eight guys

sitting there jacking off and I just sit down next to them and say, “I’m here to jack-off, I don’t want any of you touching me.” If they start to slide over and touch me, I just say, “No thanks.” I am so cool. I know exactly how to say, “Don’t touch me,” but not offend. So I just sit there and very calmly jack off with them.

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I think of myself as sensually dominant, when I’m dominant. I like to tie a man up and take a riding crop and spank his balls and his cock. Talk dirty to him and force him to talk dirty back to me. Or have him down on his knees and spread my cunt over him. Talk dirty to him, be the mistress and force him to jack off, then lick my cunt. Something like that.

What turns me on? Someone talking dirty, and it’s really important that they have it in their voice, and that they are real sensitive with their hands. They can be very gentle and loving one minute and then contrast it. One minute spanking me real hard and the next touching me incredibly gently. Running things across my tits—like a hairbrush—so that there are varying sensations. I love for people to be physical with me. I don’t know how to explain it. I’m not some cute little dainty doll. It’s really okay if you want to explore my body. Pick me up,

spank my ass, find out how hard I can take it, or how gentle. My body’s there to explore and I give permission. I’ve had a fair amount of sex and you’re not going to scare me however you touch my body, because I’ll sure as hell tell you to be gentle or, “Don’t touch at all, you’re crossing my barriers,” if I need to.

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When I was doing phone sex, I totally adored being a dominatrix. I liked the anonymous contact with people all over the country. I didn’t know who I was talking to, and it was wonderful to talk to some farmer who had no way to talk to anybody about S&M and get off. He could do his trip, and I could do mine.

He might say, “I want a dominatrix and I want her to be very gentle and I want cock and ball torture and I want ass play and enemas” and so on. A fantasy S&M shopping list. He’d be asking for somebody to deliver that and I’d try to do it.

Or it’s a baby fetish and he’s got diapers on and he’s wanting me to talk all about his diapers and wetting himself and that trip. It’s pretty psychological. I have to enter that person’s head space from the very vague outline he tells me, and try to get into his turn-on. Then I start

playing the role and I may change my voice and he will feed it back to me. He'll get in the role and be the baby or the submissive man. If I'm not doing it right, he'll feed me lines: "No, no, you're doing it too hard," or "Too soft," or whatever. So it's interesting and pretty sophisticated.

*from an interview with Janet*



*Stacy and Sharon, 1988  
plate 19, page 26*

Intensity is everything for me. Why have half a teaspoon of applesauce when you can relish an entire apple? Why settle, when with a little effort and imagination and creativity you can soar? Why settle for the mundane, why settle for the average fuck, when you can make it an incredible experience? And it's the intensity that can make it incredible—an increased combination of power and passion that's narrowly directed. It can be explosive. The feeling is in my head and in my heart and in my cunt.

The most intense is always the best for me. The times when you're just so focused. When the endorphins, the body's natural opiates, get flowing. The more intense you get—the more and more focused, the more involved, the deeper you get along those lines—the more endorphins are released. You're reaching the primary brain, the one you share with the animals. And beyond that there is the spiritual, as far as I'm concerned, the white light. I truly believe you can go and see your God, whatever that is to you. It's another path. Some people use drugs. Some people use meditation. I believe you can use SM to tap those same things. It's another path if you choose to go that direction.

*from an interview with Stacy*

There are a lot of scenarios, a lot of games, a lot of possibilities.

You can tantalize a woman with ice cubes. You put a very small rounded piece of ice inside her cunt, stand her up and let it drip out. It does terrible things to her head. All this stuff is coming out. It's perfectly safe. It feels like you are so wet, so excited, that you've just had an orgasm and you cannot control the body fluids coming out of you. Another feeling is embarrassment—I've got all this stuff coming out.

We have played with clothespins, lots and lots and lots of clothespins. Also with piercings. Play piercings, temporary piercings. In and around the tits, in and around the thighs. Tying little strings to them. One time, Stacy tried to sew my cunt together. That was just a little too intense for me. There were a lot of needles.

Stacy and I play with fire—hot wax. I enjoy the feeling of hot wax, all over my body, a lot. I have used hot wax on Stacy once or twice; I don't think she found it that enjoyable. She's not that much into pain.

Stacy has a very nice nine-thonged whip that I enjoy a whole bunch. I enjoy being beaten on my back until I'm black and blue. This turns me on. This turns me on a lot. And I enjoy the feeling of a bull whip. We've played in public with a gentleman in the community who wields a very mean bull whip, and I enjoy that kind of sharp, immediate, cracking pain.

I enjoy rope bondage. Stacy has put me in a body harness made out of rope. I enjoy the constriction, flexing and feeling the constriction.

We've gone out in public, gone out for a beer, with me wearing a dildo in a harness around my waist, so that I had a bulge coming down the inside right thigh.

Stacy has been known to terribly humiliate me. My personality is more butch than anything else. So she's made me wear this terrible white teddy, with lace all over it. I get very self-conscious about that. She thinks it's hilarious. She has put me in this white teddy and taken me downtown late at night.

We've got a pretty broad repertoire. Stacy enjoys playing with knives. Running them up and down my body. Sticking them into my body a little bit. Any kind of sharp instrument play.

She has put me up on a hoist and tickled the bottom of my feet to the point that I thought I was going to pee on her. She has wrapped me up in plastic. So far we have not played with electricity; that's something that I don't think I'm really into. But I don't think there are too many other areas, in terms of SM, giving pain or receiving pain, or intense physical feelings, that we haven't tried.

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Rape fantasies are one of the last sexual taboos. Now a fantasy is a lot different from really wanting it to happen. No woman wants to be raped and I would never go out and rape somebody any more than I would want some asshole raping me. But I do have rape fantasies, both as the one raped and as the rapist.

When I'm the rapist what I like is that I'm overpowering another individual. She's mine. I'm possessing her. I'm taking her. She will do what I want her to do. "Okay bitch, now take this, now I'm gonna fuck your brains out."

For instance, I'm a burglar and I break into Stacy's apartment, wearing a ski mask. She comes in from shopping and finds this terrible person in her house. I take her into the bedroom and make her get undressed, put her on her knees and tie up her hands. Or I put the handcuffs on her and put something lightweight over her face, so she can't quite see, can't distinguish things. Then I stand her up, bend her over this nice bed that we've got, and spank her for a while. Then I finger fuck her and about the time she's ready to say "yes," the dildo comes out and she is righteously fucked. All the time she is wiggling and screaming and yelling. Yelling for the cops. This is an intruder. And all the while getting so wet she can't stand it.

*from an interview with Sharon*



*Brandie, 1990  
plate 24, page 31*

I have taken hormones and developed breasts and so on, but I haven't had the operation to make me anatomically female. So I'm still male in that I have a penis and the rest of it. The hormones do things like help the growth of hair; my hair is much longer and doesn't fall out as much. As far as feelings, I've always felt feminine anyway, so it hasn't really altered anything that way.

My driver's license and my I.D. Cards say "female" and it's not questioned. The only way I can actually have my birth certificate changed is if I have the operation. Then I'd be female. But, for one reason or another, it will probably not happen. Basically, it's the cost of the operation that's prohibitive. I don't have ten thousand dollars. That's what it cost three or four years ago; it probably costs more than that now. So, I'm satisfied to live as I'm living. Most of my friends consider me female, even my male friends. They don't question anything about what I'm doing or why.

I identify myself as a lesbian. I basically like women sexually, as another female would. I've been involved in some homosexual relationships—homosexual in that when I was male I had a male lover for 14 years. But now I like females, and always did.

*from an interview with Brandie*



Carol, 1988  
plate 27, page 34

If someone pulls on my nipple rings during sex play, sometimes it feels good and sometimes it doesn't. Nipple play, any kind of sex play, depends to some extent on me and to some extent depends on my partner. Some people do wonderful things with nipples and some people don't. A person who doesn't do wonderful things with nipples is not going to improve technique by having rings to pull on as well as the tissue available.

In addition to the nipple rings, I have a piercing in both of the labia minora and a clitoral hood piercing.

They're just *there*, but they can be used in sex play. Recently I was playing with a woman while wearing a pair of thigh-high stockings, which of course have elastic way up on the thigh. She found the labia piercing rings very convenient: She clamped a clothespin onto each ring and then tucked a leg of each clothespin under the elastic of the stocking, so that my labia were spread and she had the kind of access she wanted to my cunt. Then she put a clothespin on the clitoral hood ring and used it to pull the hood back and forth, while she did the other things she was doing to make me happy. So in that situation the rings were very convenient.

Most of my recent sexual behavior is what is labeled sexual sadomasochism. Safe, sane, consensual, sexual sadomasochism. It involves a wide range of activities. I like whipping ass. I like getting my ass whipped. I like tying people up and doing things to them. I like tying people up and watching them wiggle. I like being tied up and wiggling and having things done to me. I have a particular fondness for having hot wax dropped on vulnerable parts of my body. Why? Because it feels good. It's weird to say that, but it's the only answer.

Some kinds of pain—pain erotically applied by somebody who knows how to do it—can get me very, very high sexually. I’ve had orgasms from pain fairly regularly when playing with partners whose activities allow it. Whipping and caning work. Plain standing bondage doesn’t do anything. But not all kinds of pain work. It depends on the partners, the activities, where my head’s at. I think anything that involves a thoughtfully increasing amount of pain will probably do it for me.

I also can have orgasms putting my vibrator up to my ear and pressing. My ears are incredibly sensitive. One day, when John and I were shopping, we became overwhelmed with good feelings and wound up with our arms around each other, and he starting biting my ear. Not hard, but with gradually increasing pressure. He was wearing a leather jacket with an artificial fur collar. I remember very clearly burying my mouth in his fur collar and screaming when I had an orgasm, right there in the supermarket, from having my ear bitten. I have erogenous zones in the most bizarre places. I have had orgasms from having the backs of my knees licked. Licked, not bitten. It’s something like having my cunt eaten. It just goes right up there.

Why do these things turn us on? Because we’re lucky! I don’t know whether its physiological, psychological or a combination of both, but some people seem to be more capable of experiencing sexual pleasure. Some people seem to be capable of experiencing sexual pleasure from a wide variety of activities that don’t seem as though they should produce that much pleasure. Like licking the backs of the knees. We’re just lucky!

*from an interview with Carol T.*



*Noni, 1989  
plate 30, page 37*

I remember the first time I shaved my head. It was an out-of-body experience, certainly. It was a sensational experience and since then I’ve loved to shave people, because it’s very liberating, it’s cathartic and it’s part and parcel of what submission and domination is about. It’s taking a point of view—our whole set of ideas and preconceptions, our folkways and mores—and suddenly changing it dramatically. How people think of

us. How we think of ourselves. Our appearance. It's hard for people to get past the things they have been conditioned to believe all their lives, hard to take risks. It depends on how much you're willing to throw into the contest. That is my criterion for poetry, for all creativity, and for all intense experiences—whether it's sexual, sensual or simply living in the world: How much you want to throw into the life you have to live. How much passionate energy and intensity you can muster for your life. It's really what you are willing to put out, what you're willing to wager, what your life is worth, what your safety is worth.

For me, radical sexuality is just an extension of personal creativity and spontaneity. I've spent many hours and quite a lot of effort creating a variety of SM scenes in order to surprise, delight and take someone further than they can ordinarily go. I've infiltrated a person's psyche and created a whole different genre in that person's life. I've created moments that are worth living for, that are never forgotten, that are part of that person always.

Let me give you an example. I arrive at the place where my lover works, in a chauffeured limousine. Long, sleek and white, with all the fun things: the bar, the TV, the phone. She doesn't know I'm coming and she has customers. I tell the customers to get out. There's a bit of a squabble, but they leave. I take her into the back

room—and she isn't totally submissive to this either, it takes a bit of doing—handcuff her, blindfold her and lead her out of the place, after locking the doors, into the chauffeured car. The chauffeur drives around for a while to confuse her. In the meantime, in the back of the limousine, we play with each other a little bit. I open a bottle of champagne. We finally get to the motel and she's led in. Everything has been arranged. The bed is turned down. All the equipment is sitting out. There is another bottle of champagne. There are flowers. I tie her up and fuck her incessantly and mercilessly and then put her all back together. The car appears. I take her back to work and dump her off. Her mind has been blown completely!

It costs a bundle. It's spontaneous. It works. Try it some time.

*from an interview with Noni*



*Jack, 1988*  
*plate 33, page 40*

I didn't really think I was into lingerie until I realized I have a whole collection. I have lots of women's clothes. I have a whole closet full.

The way I pick out something to wear is how colorful it is and what it feels like. Most of the lingerie I have is black or red. I like black and red because they're really sexy colors. Part of the fun is acquiring it—actually going out and getting it, coming home with it. All the stuff I get is from thrift stores and that's part of the fun, too. Going to the ladies department, pawing the big piles of lingerie, finding something that's red or black, something that's really sexy, and then taking it to the checkout stand.

What really gets me excited is seeing men wearing really feminine stuff, and I think lingerie is as feminine as you can get. The real base of it is to see a man who is not attempting to pass for a woman dress in really feminine clothes.

When the first *Playgirl* calendar came out, a friend of mine had it in his kitchen and he had put glitter all over

one of the foldouts. I thought that was funny. I had one too, and went home and drew a dress on him. That was really fun. It was really erotic to see a man wearing lingerie, a man wearing a dress.

I remember the first time I ever saw fisting. The top was in full leather—chaps, vest, boots and a hood—and a lacy blue peignoir! That's what I'm interested in: combining parts of being really male and parts of being really female. That's really kinky to me.

Recently, I've been getting feedback about aspects of my personality that other people perceive that I've sort of known all along. That when I wear a dress or other feminine things it's clear that I'm a man but, at the same time, I do it well. It looks good. It looks like I should be wearing it. It's not like I'm trying to pass for a woman at all. I'm not denying that I'm a male. It's a blending, a gender blur. What we used to call gender fuck in the 70s.

I used to think it was my mission as a radical fairy to make sure that all the fairies I knew would have some sort of skirt or dress. When I went to thrift stores, I would buy stuff that was really outrageous, that I knew would never fit me, but that I knew somebody else would want. Then frequently I went to gatherings and gave things away, or encouraged people: "Here, put this on. I think it's something that

would look good on you.” I still do that. I remember a particular man that I really admired, really liked a lot. I gave him a present of a red slip, which he put on. But he felt the red slip was too outrageous for him, so I also gave him a filmy housedress. You could see the red slip through the housedress. It made his appearance less outrageous and reminded me of how I think of him—as intensely sexual, but also pretty shy.

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When I’ve gone to the doctor I’ve taken all my rings out, but I’ve carried them in my pocket. As soon as I’ve left, I’ve put them back in. I really felt that I was invisible when I had them out. When I put them back in, I really did feel that I was whole again.

Piercings and tattoos are a way of claiming my body, a way of marking it as mine, a way of saying, “This is my body and I can do with it what I want.” I like my body and I like how other people see it. I don’t feel invisible when I go to the gym—I know that the other men notice my piercings. Some openly stare at me and some look out of the corners of their eyes. Some are astonished. I’m not a 19-year-old blond body builder, but this is who I am: I have pierced tits and a pierced dick and a tattoo and lots of holes in my ears.

*from an interview with Jack D.*



*Bette and Richard, 1987  
plate 34, page 41*

*Bette:* One of the reasons I can top as well as I can is that I am totally detached. SM is a power and control trip for me. My main focus and function is not getting myself off. It’s creating a balance and a sense of pleasure/pain so that I can take my bottom into a kind of meditative, euphoric state and then bring him out, take him back and bring him out again.

I don’t consider myself a dominant; I feel that I am a sadist. I like to hurt people. I like to hurt men especially. I don’t care about the foot worshiping and the groveling and the sniveling and the submissive stuff and all the other things that submissive men get into. I’m not putting that down, because it’s very important in many people’s lives. But I just want to get in there, tie the guy up, blindfold him and hurt him.

*Richard:* I feel differently. I like the games of dominance and submission. I like to go fetch and go do things and be told to go do this and go do that and I love telling somebody to do it. I want to be a Master at some point. I want to be a slave at another point. But I also like pain. I like giving it and

I like receiving it. I get off the most when I'm hurting the most, or the person that I'm playing with is hurting the most.

Pain is a mind-altering drug. Pain can give intense mental-sexual climaxes that you can't get through a physical orgasm. My orgasms during a pain trip are definitely spiritual. With an ordinary physical orgasm, you reach a point of climax and you shoot and your body goes limp. It needs to rest because it's spent. Going through a pain trip, your mind thinks it has reached a plateau and can't do any more. Then, all of a sudden, a new toy is brought out and you're doing something above that level. Each time you reach a new level, it's like another climax. You reach a point of ecstasy that you don't reach by shooting cum out of your cock. You have a mental orgasm, which is much more powerful than a physical one. You can get more climaxes out of pain and you're not depleted afterwards. You can go do it again. That's the hook of the drug, you want to do it again, and my drug is pain.

*Bette:* You can't attain the state that Richard is talking about without a certain type of breathing, a certain type of mind-set, a certain focus. You need to know how to meditate. The breathing helps you focus and process the physical pain. The physical pain helps you get to a higher pain level.

The breathing helps you focus and process more pain, which shoots you to a higher level of pain. A skilled top brings you up to your maximum level, lets you stay there for a few moments, a few seconds, however long you can sustain it. I can tell from a submissive's body language when the submissive has been at that level long enough. Then I either increase or decrease the pain. I never decrease it to zero. If I decrease, it's only just a tiny bit and then I increase it even more, so their level climbs.

After a while, you don't even have to use pain. If you use sensory deprivation—blindfolding them and taking part of their hearing away—you don't really have to hurt somebody, if you've got them trained well enough. At one point in time I used my hair a lot, just ran my hair across somebody's body. Well, if your senses are really, really enhanced, my hair could feel like a thousand little needle-pricks. If you've had a severe whipping on your butt or your back, and I touch you there with a feather, that feather can feel like a knife. It really, really can.

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*Richard:* My nipples are a point of sexual focus for me. I wear a chain between my nipple rings 90 per cent of the time, so when I walk I can play with my nipples and no one knows what the hell I'm doing. I'm pulling

on my nipples just like I'm scratching my belly or something. I get a sexual charge out of that.

Much my work is redundant as hell. If the adjustments weren't so critical, I could do it in my sleep. My mind wanders to sexual pleasures and I play with my tits. It's easier than playing with my cock. So that charges me throughout the day. When I masturbate I play with my nipples, and I love having my tits manipulated and played with during a scene. I like the feeling of metal inside my body. When I turn the nipple rings or the cock ring I can feel that intrusive metalness inside my body and that seems to stimulate the sexual response. If I rub the tit back and forth, I can feel the metal inside, or underneath the skin, and that's a real sexual turn-on.

Men only allow themselves to get pleasure from the cock. There are other regions of the body that are just as stimulating as the end of the dick—the tits, the ass, the inside of the thighs, under the arms, all the way down the side of the body. There are all sorts of really neat erogenous zones that men don't play with, but they should.

*from an interview with  
Bette and Richard*



*Baby Pixie and Master Billy  
William and Denise  
Juliette and Sybil Holiday  
Mistress Sybil and Her Priest/Slave, 1990*

Our personas are not masks or roles or parts taken on the way one might take on parts in a play, but emerge from the unity each of us is, with their own ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, their own needs and desires, and their own reasons for being.

*Sybil*: Baby Pixie, Baby Ma'am, and the Baby Goddess are all aspects of my child persona. Sweet and trusting, Baby Pixie is childhood sweethearts with Master Billy and Baby Billy, and she is Daddy Bill's little girl. Baby Ma'am, my four-year-old top, happily dominates anyone who will let her when she comes out. The Baby Goddess is an innocent in wisdom: a seer who speaks an uncompromising, gentle truth as she perceives it. Snuggled up with Daddy Bill, Baby Pixie is the only one of my personas who loves—or even cares about—watching the San Francisco Giants play baseball.

*Bill:* Master Billy, “The Terror of the Universe,” is the oldest of my three child personas. Though a leather top, he is also 4-1/2 years old. Trusting, eager, and enthusiastic, he has a fondness for cheeseburgers and chocolate chip cookies. On the other hand, he has a limited vocabulary and a limited range of emotional expression. When he cannot have his way on demand he may become confused and crestfallen. Deeply in love with Baby Pixie, his childhood sweetheart, he sees his task in life as protecting the Baby Goddess.

*Sybil:* Sybil Holiday is most of who I am in the world: the central organizing personality who encompasses all my other personas. Sexy, bright, and fun, she is a much advanced embodiment of Holiday O’Hara, who celebrated her Pagan Temple dancer sexuality by working throughout the 1970s as a burlesque strip tease artist complete with rhinestones and blonde hair. At present a sex educator and image/gender consultant, she facilitates a safe space in which people bring forth their hidden aspects. She still loves to dance, and to shop for beautiful bargains with Juliette. She has osteoarthritis.

*Bill:* In some ways Juliette is forever 12 years old and forever a virgin, enamored of white lace, rhinestones, and happy endings. She is

also 16, however, and knows she lives in a middle-aged male body. Though she sometimes seems shy, in fact she is thoughtful, opinionated, and self-assured. An aesthete, she likes reading, art, and classical music, and chooses most of our clothes. She has both a melancholic and a sunny disposition: the repository of sorrow for all my personas, she is also a party girl—the only one among us who loves to dance. Juliette is a lesbian, happily married with a ring and a last name, to Sybil Holiday.

*Sybil:* Mistress Sybil is the most sexual and least compromising of my personas. Caring, sadistic, and strict, sometimes cold and bitchy, she is the extension through Holiday O’Hara of the Biker Mama, who rode with a biker gang on New York’s Lower East Side in the late 1960s. Her spiritual power derives from the ancient Phrygian goddess Cybele. She likes to watch many people do her housework in collars and aprons, and to reward them with a good spanking, but has chosen Bill to be her life partner and the only Slave she owns.

*Bill:* In the tradition of many ancient nature religions, The Priest serves the spirit of the Great Goddess and the feminine principle from the position of a Slave devoted to his Mistress. Exactly the body’s age, he is an adult extension of the two-year-old Baby Billy, gentle, open, receptive, and

innocent. He is also more centered and compassionate than any of my other parts. The Priest is a large component of Pixie's Daddy Bill, and of Bill-William who works as a counselor and teacher.

*Sybil*: Denise, the Academic, is the only one of my personas who is shy and timid before other peoples' judgments. She hardly ever appears in public, preferring to let Holiday, Sybil Holiday, and Mistress Sybil front for her. She remains behind the scenes where she studies, writes, does our academic thinking, gets scared, and pays our bills. Her age ranges between eight years and my chronological age. She adores Professor William, to whom she is sexually submissive, and views William the Executive with a teensy bit of apprehension.

*Bill*: The Executive, whom I also call The Psychopath, is a psychic bully forever in his late 20s, my most extreme embodiment of egocentric self-aggrandizement. However, he is connected with the far kinder and less rigid, but equally straight, Professor William. This association may be the reason the otherwise compassionless Executive is able to function as the last line of defense for the innocent Baby Billy. When all else has failed, according to his lights, and he believes the Baby is in some sort of danger, The Executive may appear as an explosive guardian, filled with a rage he would like others to believe is violent.

The pair of "I"s who wrote the notes above are not quite Sybil and Bill. When we are most ourselves we each recognize a gentle inner dialogue that is almost subliminal, as all personas flow together as a team. For each of us "I" is that process where all our own personas overlap and share their knowledge of the broader life without exactly being in it.

Each of us is aware of more than a dozen personas. Every one of them is a facet of the wholes we are. You might think of us as cut gemstones, offering dozens of glimpses into our hearts. Each view is unique, and each perspective on our innermost Selves is different, yet for each of us all faces belong to one being, and the being has but a single heart.

*from an interview with  
Sybil and Bill*



*Cléo Dubois and Fakir Musafar, 1988*  
plate 43, page 50

*Fakir:* Through years of lonely experimentation I feel I have found a way of connecting back with the source of my own creation. I had my first out-of-body experience in my teens. I discovered that I wasn't my body, that I could live separate and independent from my body and go into and out of my body. When I was out of my body, my perspective was changed. There was no time—no past, no present. I could walk forward and backward in time, even go into the future, just like going from one room to another. These experiences have colored my whole life.

Pain is one way to reach an out-of-body experience. For instance, if the pain is in a single spot, you focus all of your attention on one specific point in your body. It's very possible, with a bit of training, to get so focused on that one spot that finally the spot disappears and your attention disconnects from the body altogether. You don't really feel any pain; you're just observing. When you do this, it's very easy after a while, to become a

watcher, rather than a participant. And in that disconnected state, it's very easy to be guided on to an inner journey.

The inner journey can be anywhere. It can be backward or forward in time. It can be here and now. Usually the most wise thing is to ask your higher spirit to take you on the journey that you need now. Trust to the wisdom of the higher spirit. The higher self knows what you need to make your next step forward. And during this state it's possible. You surrender. You let go to your higher self. It can take over and give you the experience you need.

For many years I did these experiments alone and in seclusion; but, recently I've gone through a transition and I went looking for a tribe, looking for others who might welcome ecstatic experiences, might be able to use what has come out of those experiments, to share that for a mutual good. Now I have found my community, and they've been open and loving and accepting. A great part of finding that community has been Cléo, who was a very important influence in helping me overcome my "coming out" barriers.

*Cléo:* From watching Fakir in the SM community for seven years before dating him, I knew that what kept him

unable to reach his own community while he was in the middle of it was that he presented himself as being asexual. He used the words “play with your body,” but he didn’t ever say “play with your sexuality.” So I set out to bring forth his sexuality, and this allowed people to look at him as more of a human and less of a strange visionary with ecstatic experiences.

So I believe I’ve helped him bridge that gap by accepting sexuality as part of the spectrum that could lead to spirituality. I was attracted to him for his strangeness, but I did not know if there was any sexuality that I could tap into with him. I found that I could tap in through S&M, and also through other sensual, sexual and fetishistic activities.

Now we are sharing rites with a group of men and women who are on the forefront of sexual, sensual and spiritual exploration. Many of them are gay, and they welcome their friends’ energies—male or female . They’re people that don’t fit into boxes. They seek barriers to cross. The S&M energy, the ritual energy, blurs all of these barriers, and people share magic together, share intense moments that are beyond common experiences.

We do rituals that use the body to search for ecstasy and trance space, other dimensions, and out-of-body or

in-the-body trance experiences. Rites of passage and ecstatic ceremonies have been lost in modern society, almost all over the world. They are misunderstood and labeled weird or shocking. But, Fakir is now passing them along like an elder passes learning to younger men and women. When we go to those gatherings, which are held in nature, that knowledge is passed on. And now we have videos, as well as photos and books. We are part of a big new tribe of Modern Primitives who do not fit in the mold our parents and institutions would like us to. I am very glad Fakir can facilitate these old rituals for others and myself.

*Fakir:* Yes, I’ve found a community. I fit in as a shaman, a facilitator, an elder—but I’m still developing because there are things that I bypassed and didn’t learn on the way. I’m now, very late in life, experiencing, developing and exploring my own sexuality—which I had bypassed for many years in pursuit of something else. I’m having fun. It’s wonderful because it’s a balancing out, a completion. We’re filling the bag; we’re getting ready to wrap it all up. The package is almost complete, and the last layer on the cake happens to be a good dose of exploring my own sensuality and sexuality.

*Cléo*: And we're getting married. We want our relationship to continue to include those men and women we choose to share our sensual, sexual and ritual energies with.

*Fakir*: Yes, we're getting married. It's traditional and non-traditional at the same time.

*from an interview with  
Cléo Dubois and Fakir Musafar*



*Ganymede and Alain, 1988  
plate 44, page 51*

Sometimes people describe a sexual experience as a religious experience. I try to keep the power of sexuality available for transcendence, for spiritual awareness, as well as for things like pleasure and self-expression. Sexuality is one of the strongest, most powerful and direct connections to your spiritual life. Through sexuality you can connect with your spiritual power much more directly than by going to church, where people deny your sexual and spiritual power and try to take it away from you with guilt trips and rules and regulations. Throw those away

and connect with your own magic and acknowledge your own sexuality and your own spirituality. You're bound to find that they're deeply connected. All my sexual energy is spiritual energy and, as such, it's one of my most important tools of magic and one of my most important sources of material for self-growth.

I use ritual in my sexuality because I'm devoted to merging sexuality and spirituality. That's where the greatest pleasure is. The greatest fears are transcended in that arena and the greatest benefit comes from there. Our recent piercing rituals are not about sexuality, per se, but they have the same kind of energy. People are naked. People are tribal. People leave the outside world, enter a sacred space and come to a place of incredible intimacy with one another, as if they are making love. Even though they are not sexual or orgasmic, these rituals culminate in a penetration of one of the initiates with steel and a new mark of honor, of courage, and all the attendant erotic overtones. When the drums hit the crescendo, when the person is pierced and there's a great tribal scream, that's orgasmic.

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When I was 12 years old, I read in *National Geographic* about the manhood rituals of African tribes. An elder of the tribe would pierce the young boys' foreskins with a piece of

obsidian. This was so fascinating to me that I tried it. I took a needle and tried to punch a hole in my foreskin. Now, as an adult, I understand much more about what was going on. We have no manhood rituals in this society, no appropriate rites of passage into the community. I wanted some and I tried to create them for myself. By doing that I was taking power, even though at that time I didn't finish it, I didn't make a piercing.

Many years later, I saw genital piercings in the flesh for the first time and I knew instantly that I would do that. Most of my piercings have been done as a rite of empowerment, a taking power in my own life over pleasure and pain and what happens to me. It's also a leaving behind of childhood, where I'm dependent upon mother, upon authority, and saying, "I am now of the age to make my own decisions and choices." Today I walk in a community that likes those kinds of secret or forbidden things and shares them with each other. It's not elitist, but a rite of empowerment not only does bring you to a place of power, in some ways it sets you apart from other people that don't share that power.

*from an interview with Ganymede*

A long time ago, when I first began to experiment with bondage, all I was interested in was being bound—that was a turn-on. Now I realize that being the dominant one is also interesting, also a turn-on. There is an exchange of energy, an exchange of power, whether you are the top or the bottom. The bottom is in bondage, so you think that the top is in control. In a way, since there is so much trust, the one on the bottom is in control of the situation. He's not going to get something he doesn't want. And, some people don't want to be controlled, no matter what; when they reach their limit they're going to say "stop." So, they are in control, not the top.

Sometimes I feel it's fine to let someone put me in bondage; it's as if someone is taking care of me. That's the only way I can describe it: someone is taking care of me and doing something to me that will be fun and pleasurable. I surrender completely to that contact. Then, when I top the person, I am in control and it's my turn to give to them.

It's much harder to get the right balance or to get the right people together if one wants to be only the bottom or only the top. I do both and I explore; there is no boundary.

*from an interview with Alain*

I used to be not very aggressive, sexually. I only had sex with people that I knew. Until maybe two years ago, I knew the name of every man I'd been to bed with, every man I'd had sex with. I wasn't promiscuous. I wasn't having sex with strangers. That had to do with being raised Catholic and only marrying people that you've fucked and only fucking people that you marry. Everybody I went to bed with was a potential boyfriend.

Then I started going to this sex club and started having sex with people I didn't know. But it was vertical sex: people were standing up. It was jacking people off, having fun. It felt like a catharsis, a therapy, for me to get over being so stuck into always looking for a boyfriend.

So, my sexual behavior has changed in that I've become more of a slut. Because of AIDS. Because I realized that there were things I could do that were safe. That I could have sex with several different men in one night and be entirely safe and that would be fine. And I started doing more kinky things.

Now, because of AIDS—because there is an emphasis on safe sex and because it's entirely possible to have wonderful, hot, kinky, wild sex and be entirely safe—I feel much more sexual.

I feel like I am more myself. And I am having more sex with different men because of how I feel.

I think that you can still have wild carefree sex, you just have to be a lot more careful.

*from an interview with Jack D.*

There's a question that always comes up—does the top really top the bottom or does the bottom ... ? I went round and round on this when I was a young player and it finally became clear that that's a ridiculous question. The answer is, of course, that S/M is like a dance. Somebody's leading and somebody's following, but it's not as if one partner is in charge or running the dance. They're just doing the dance. The part you do is the leading part, the part she does is the following part, or vice versa if your relationship works that way. But it's all one piece of dance here. That's why our relationship works in a lot of ways as a very egalitarian one, because it's not about who's running things, it's about how the dance is doing.

*from an interview with Josh*

It's like a child's play. You're in a disorganized and wondrous universe of so many possibilities. Your personal integrity and commitment and devotion determine how you see your possibilities and how you chart your course. That defines who you are sexually, not just the things you do. I still do some things that I did when I was in college; others: forget it, they're gone. I know that tomorrow there will be something new that I haven't tried. Maybe I'm afraid today, but I'll try it tomorrow. And then the tomorrow after that there will be something else.

That doesn't mean I'm going to overcome every fear or that I'm going to leap into the abyss of possibilities. I'm going to go one step at a time at my own pace. But I know that my pace is forward and that it's fast. I'm not about to turn around and shut down and close myself off to possibilities now.

*from an interview with Ganymede*