

The Taboo of Female Sexual Pleasure.

A Socio-Cultural Analysis and a Design Proposal based on the
Italian Market.

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“Knowing where the clitoris is is important,
But knowing where your clitoris is... that's power.”

Emily Nagoski

Abstract

Nella società moderna i sextoys sono ancora un tabù, un oggetto di cui è difficile parlare apertamente e che spesso genera imbarazzo tra gli interlocutori. L'intensità di tale disagio dipende dal contesto sociale e culturale in cui si è cresciuti e dalle inclinazioni personali.

L'Italia è il paese col più alto tasso di machismo in Europa, ma davvero le nuove generazioni sono ancora vittime di questo retaggio culturale?

Attraverso una ricerca approfondita sul contesto-socioculturale, sui brand ad oggi più evoluti e sul target di riferimento (i.e. le giovani donne), la tesi discute apertamente e porta alla luce una tematica ancora tabù nel nostro paese, fuori e dentro il contesto accademico. L'obiettivo finale è la proposta di un concept avanzato di un prodotto per il piacere sessuale femminile, ideato per una maggior consapevolezza (intima, personale, fisica) per le donne. Inoltre, la tesi intende rafforzare la narrazione sex positive che si è fatta strada negli ultimi anni e raccontare questi oggetti del piacere come strumenti di potere per la persona.

In modern society sextoys are still taboo, an object that is difficult to talk about openly and that often generates embarrassment among interlocutors. The intensity of this discomfort depends on the social and cultural context in which one has grown and on personal inclinations.

Italy is the country with the highest level of machismo in Europe, but are the new generations still victims of this cultural heritage?

Through an in-depth research on the socio-cultural context, on the most evolved brands and on the target audience (i.e. young women), the thesis openly discusses and brings to light a topic still taboo in our country, outside and within the academic context. The final goal is the proposal of an advanced concept of a product for female sexual pleasure, designed for greater awareness (intimate, personal, physical) for women. In addition, the thesis aims to strengthen the sex positive narrative that has made its way in recent years and tell these objects of pleasure as tools of power for the person.

Introduction

This thesis aims to expose the research process that allowed me to analyze the world of sextoys, pornography and adult industry, and the creative process with which I designed a sextoy that meets the needs and represents the values of a target group of young women to whom I had the good fortune to submit a special survey.

The aim of the thesis is to bring to light an unexplored theme in Italy and create an awareness tool for women, and in general for people who have the will to go beyond their limits. It also wants to strengthen a sex positive narrative that has made its way in recent years even in our country, a narrative that is struggling to blossom in the right way, to look at sexuality and sextoys as tools to achieve greater personal awareness.

I had the honor of being able to start my research under the guidance of Dr. Judith Glover, who was fundamental for the choice of my target and the context in which to develop my thesis, and the study of the Italian context in particular. I started from his doctoral thesis “Taboo to Mainstream” in which Glover has, for the first time ever, mapped the world of sextoys. Later I read other books, Italian and not, about social aspect and sexuality (from Postporn to sex education) and then do more targeted research in grey literature (papers, articles, blogs, Instagram sex-positive accounts, legislations...).

A specifically created survey was answered by 269 people, which yielded extensive and interesting results, which were processed (see Annex 1). Where useful and appropriate, within the topics discussed in the thesis, reference will be made to the results of the survey.

Finally, a benchmark was made on the safest and best designed brands currently on the market, creating market positioning schemes and identifying what might be the meeting points between my target and the market opportunities, to be able to design a sextoy for female pleasure based on my counter-brief.

The thesis is divided into three parts:

1. The relevance of an uncomfortable topic: in this part I conducted in-depth research on the woman's body, female pleasure and sexuality in general with respect to the cultural context in which we find ourselves, analyzing what obstacles have been overcome and what have been the results achieved in the course of history to date, in the world and in Italy.

2. The evolving market of sextoys: I then analyzed the world of sextoys in all its facets. I described their story, the reasons why the first vibrators were born and their development from the Victorian age to the present day. I delved deeper into the reasons why they are still very much linked to the adult industry, studying when the industry broke away from that type of content and how the transition from adult objects to objects of sexual pleasure and wellbeing took place, and the change of narrative of the companies born in the last 20 years, studying their characteristics through a specific benchmark.

3. A proposal for a sextoy for female pleasure: in the third part of the thesis I analyzed the survey answers about user habits, attitudes and sexual knowledge, interlacing the data with the benchmark research, to conclude with the design process of a sextoy for female pleasure, developing the counter brief previously defined.

Summary

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The Evolving Market of Sextoys

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A Proposal for a Sextoy for Female Pleasure

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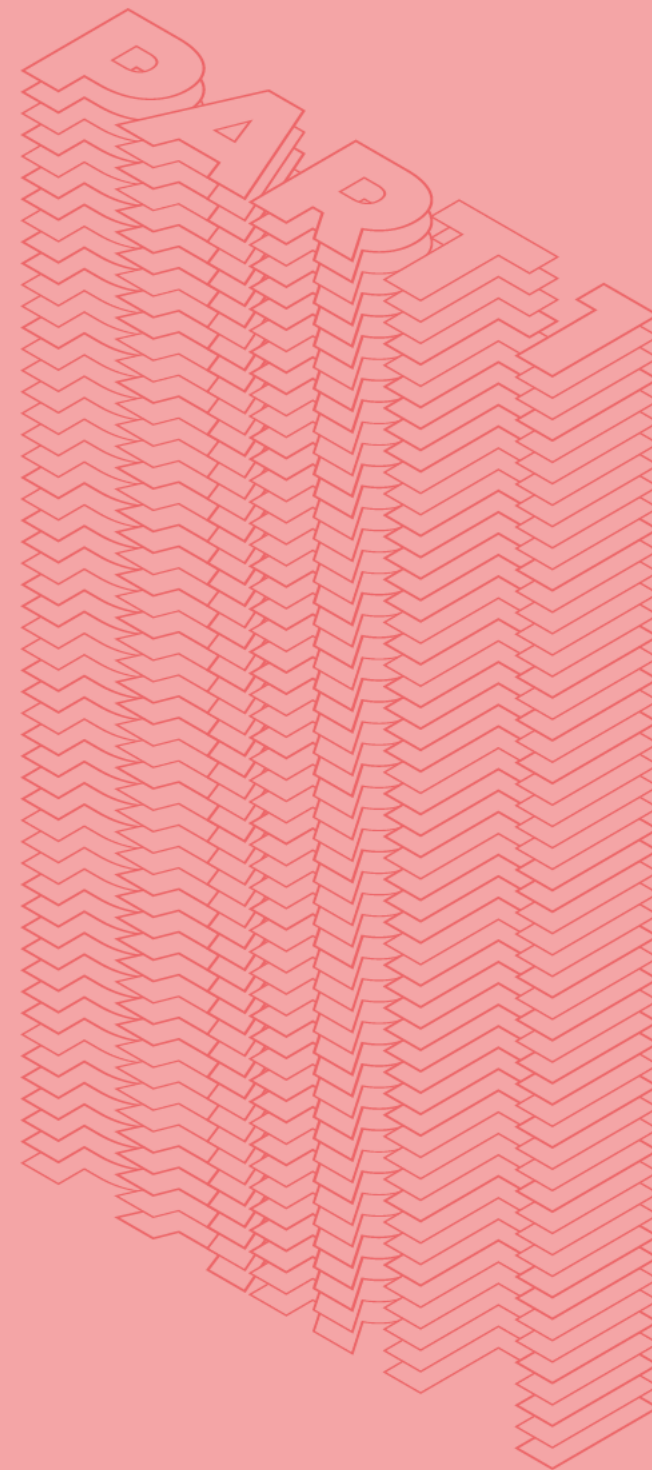
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The Relevance of an Uncomfortable Topic



1

Still an existing Taboo

1.1 Let's talk about Sex Pleasure

It's 2022 and talking about female pleasure is still problematic, but let's get back to the origin. It is often said that sex is a taboo argument but, looking at magazines, TV shows, advertisements, etc. it can be seen that actually sex is everywhere. Sex sells everything very well, it is used as a promoting argument for the most diverse objects in advertisements that are proposed everyday especially on television. Just think about Italian Müller advertisement (fig. 1), a famous yogurt production company. "Make love with taste" and "My moment of pleasure" are their punchline¹.



Fig. 1 Frame from "Pubblicità Muller Yogurt bianco wafer cioccolato - Agosto 2018", https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qReyLnKwXU&ab_channel=Pubblcitatitaliano, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

So, if the discourse about sex is so well spread, discussed and normally used in a lot of different contexts without any problem, why people still have problems talking it in a serious and acknowledged way?

The primary cause behind sexual disappointment is no longer the taboo against sex itself but rather a taboo against pleasure (Vernon, 2013): people still have problems talking about it as an important and relevant topic.

1.2 The Social Condemnation of Sexuality

"Are we really free about sex? Or do we obey a system of rules that have existed for far too long?"

Sexual morality is the thing in which our civilization is most backward, in fact, even in more recent times, for some aspects sexual repression is increasing, such as for prostitution.

On the whole, despite a widespread certainty of the contrary, the attitude towards sex is the thing in which we have moved the least away from the primitive beliefs that prevailed when we still knew nothing about how nature and humanity work. In comparison, technology, medicine, economy and freedom of expression have taken much bigger steps.

Sex is probably among the fundamental human activities that has been the subject of the greatest smear campaign during the centuries of our civilization."

This is the statement that Lombardi Vallauri makes in his essay on the morality of Italians (Lombardi Vallauri 2020), but it is unfortunately applicable to all Western culture.

1.3 Cultural Suppression of Female Sexuality

Sexual morality, today, is one of the aspects in which our civilization has progressed the least. In fact, if you want to damage someone reputation, it is enough to use her sexual behavior as a weapon (Lombardi Vallauri, 2020). This happens very often to women, who are not the masters of their own body and behaviors yet.

Women, in fact, especially have been culturally programmed to provide, not only as mothers but also as lovers. (Vernon, 2013). If people think about jobs which involve the activity of care (such as maids, caregivers, nurses, teachers etc.) most of the time they instinctively think of women because in history these jobs have always been carried out by them.

1.3.1 Toxic Weeds in Female Sexual Garden

From where this suppression came? Canadian sex researcher Robin Milhausen said:

"We're raising women to be sexually dysfunctional, with all the "no" messages we're giving them about diseases and shame and fear. And then as soon as they're eighteen they're supposed to be sexual rock stars multiorgasmic and totally uninhibited. It doesn't make any sense. None of the things we do in our society prepares women for that." (Nagoski, 2015)

This is exactly what happens in a sex negative culture like ours, the Western Culture.

Every girl is born with a little plot of rich and fertile soil, unique to themselves. Our brain and body are the soil of this garden. The toxic weeds are outdated ideas that consists of three interwoven cultural messages of sexual socializations that women encounter in modern times (Nagoski, 2015).

Emiy Nagoski (fig. 2) defines them the Moral Message, the Medical Message



Fig. 2 Emily Nagoski, https://www.ted.com/talks/emily_nagoski_the_truth_about_unwanted_arousal/transcript?language=it, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

and the Media Message.

I'll briefly describe them here. I wrote them in the first person cause I wanted to enhance the idea of negative voices that really surround women's heads and thoughts.

- **The Moral Message:** "You are a Damaged Goods

If you want or like sex, you're a slut. Your virginity is your most valuable asset. If you have too many partners (more than your male partner has had) you should be ashamed. You don't have to like it, you have to accommodate the man to whom your body belongs. Sex is something that makes a woman unlovable, and so a slut.

- **The Medical Message:** "You are Diseased"

Sex can cause disease and pregnancy, so it's dangerous. If you are ready to take that risk, then there's a specific order for sexual arousal: it should be simultaneous with your partner, as your orgasm should be.

If this doesn't happen, you're damaged. And you should be visited by a doctor. Since a woman's sexual response is different from a man's, she is diseased. Except for pregnancy, which is what sex is for.

- **The Media Message:** "You Are Inadequate"

If you don't try all the possible thing that can be done during sex (spanking, food play, threesome, every possible type of orgasms...) you're frigid. If you've had too few partners and never watched porn, you're prude.

You're too fat or too thin, your breasts are too big or too small. Your body is wrong, damaged. If you don't change, if you like yourself for what you are, you're settled and lazy. You're doing it all wrong.

1.4 Tearing The Veil: the Illusion we're forced to live in

The Susan Lipshitz collection (fig. 3) is multidisciplinary and deals with the unconscious and symbolic aspects of femininity within a patriarchal culture. The papers focus on the real and mythical roles of women as Free Woman, Amazon, Pure Woman, Whore, Witch and Mother, looking at the ambiguous and ambivalent attitudes of patriarchal culture towards female sexuality, illness, weakness and passivity. The focus of the book in the psychic level and the interest was to pose questions about sex difference within culture in such a way as to make the phallogentrism of this culture visible. (Delmont,

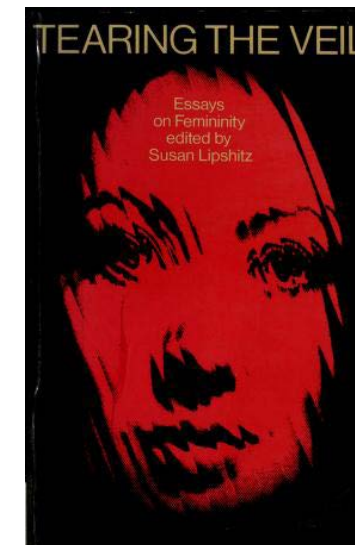


Fig. 3 Tearing the Veil cover, by Susan Lipshitz, <https://archive.org/details/tearingveilessay00lipsrich/mode/2up>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

1979).

Since the essays approach each element through the material of a different discipline - history, anthropology, psychoanalysis, and literature - they do not form a unitary theory of femininity, a project which remains problematic. The attempt was to do an analysis of the construction of femininity at the level of the psychic and the unconscious, exploring the possibilities of a particular interpretation in the universality of patriarchy as a context for an interpretation of the construction of sex difference and its relation to the reproductive process. The assumption is that femininity is a meaning that is constructed and relates the feminine subject to representations of her conditions of existence and to the female body. The patriarchal order is not only a system of power relations but a system of meanings in which maleness is standard and certain elements of femininity, notably its association with strength or homosexuality, are excluded. What emerge from the essays is the suggestion of a very subtle process of definition that insists on particular ways of being and perceiving as natural which can be interpreted as acquired. There's an indication of a consistent cultural construction of femininity for both men and women that people see referred to and constructed by certain practices (childbirth, prostitution possession, literature, history and feminist politics) discussed in the book. Each expressed element of femininity in the stereotype is examined as an ideological element, independent of biological and economic factors. As these essays show, sanctions against the expression of female sexuality for 'pleasure' rather than for reproduction occur at the levels of fantasy and the unconscious as well as in the social organization of legitimate inheritance through the family, law, the State, etc.

1.4.1 The figure of The Witch

The association of femininity and illness as a function of the limitation of physical female sexuality for reproduction is well discussed for this figure. Women can be thought of as witch-like cause they have the power to create live beings, a capacity that could be considered part of their mystery. However, women's accusation and persecution as witches in history or in other cultures seems to be explicable as a social process and in terms of social relations. Since women oppression could be not alleviated giving them, after abolishing illness at menopause, political power by

rational means, the persistence of particular associations of femininity and masculinity, respectively with illness and health, have to be understood in the context of the construction of male and female relations within culture and in the unconscious.

1.5 Surprisingly Basic Information about Sex

1.5.1 The Lies people have all been told

For a long time in Western science and medicine, women's sexuality was viewed basically as the lite version of men sexuality: basically the same but not as good.

It was sort of assumed that since men have orgasms during penis-in-vagina sex (intercourse), women should have orgasms in the same way, and if they don't, it's because they're kind of broken (Nagoski, 2015).

In reality, about 30% of women orgasms reliable with intercourse. The other 70% sometimes, rarely, or never orgasm with intercourse and they are all healthy and normal. A woman might orgasm lots of other ways, like manual sex, oral sex, vibrators, and that's still normal. (Nagoski, 2015)

1.5.2 Arousal Nonconcordance

It was just assumed that because a man's genitals typically behave it's mind is behaving (if the penis is erect he's feeling turned on) that also women works in this way. But exist the concept of "arousal nonconcordance", where the behavior of the genitals may not match the mental experience, and this happens both for women and for men. (Nagoski, 2015)

1.5.3 Dual Control Model

In the last decade of the twentieth century, researcher Erick Janssen and John Bancroft of the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction developed a model that provides a organizing principle for understanding how humans sexual response works. The "dual control model" affirms that the sexual response mechanism in the brain consists of a pair of universal components, a "sexual accelerator" and a "sexual brakes",

and those components respond to broad categories of sexual stimuli. The sensitivity varies for everyone. This is the mechanism underlying the human sexual behavior. (Nagoski, 2015)

1.5.4 Women are not ashamed anymore

Medieval anatomists called a women's external genitals the pudendum, a word derived from the Latin pudere, meaning "to make ashamed". Women genitals were thus named "from the shamefacedness that is in women to have them seen". The reasoning went like this: Women's genitals are tucked away between their legs, as if they wanted to be hidden, whereas male genitals face forward, for all to see, and why would men's and women's genitals be different in this way? For medieval anatomists it's because of shame.

But this is just a matter of biology, and actually female genitalia are not underneath but actually in front as male ones. The female equivalent to the penis is the clitoris that is positioned right up front, in the equivalent location to the penis. It's less obvious cause it's smaller not because it's shy or ashamed, but because females don't have to transport their DNA into someone else's body.

Also the external labia, the female equivalent of the scrotum, are exposed outside the female bod but since the female gonads (the ovaries) are internal rather than external like the testicles, the labia don't extend so they're less obvious. (Nagoski, 2015)

1.6 TENGA Self-Pleasure Report 2021

Every year Tenga, a famous Japanese sextoys and sex accessorizes brand (I'll analyse it in the second and third part of this thesis), conduct a global survey about self-pleasure in order to open up conversations about masturbation and the taboos surrounding it, and resumes the results in the Global Self-Pleasure Report . This year they surveyed over 5,000 people aged between 18-54 across five countries, with 1,000 each in the US, UK, Germany, France and Spain. Unfortunately this Report doesn't include Italy but it's important to analyse data at least from European countries. In this paragraph I collect the most interesting data from the Report² (fig. 4-9).

1.6.1 Self-care Routine

Self-care refers to the activities and practices that we deliberately choose to engage in on a regular basis to maintain and enhance our health and wellbeing.

While some have started to make more time for self-love during the pandemic, for many it has long been an integral part of their weekly self-care routine. Men especially tend to include masturbation into their weekly me-time, at least half of the men. For one-third of women masturbation is part of the self-care routine.

Q: Overall, did masturbation help you feel better or act as a form of "self-care" during self-isolation or quarantine?

Showing those who said yes:

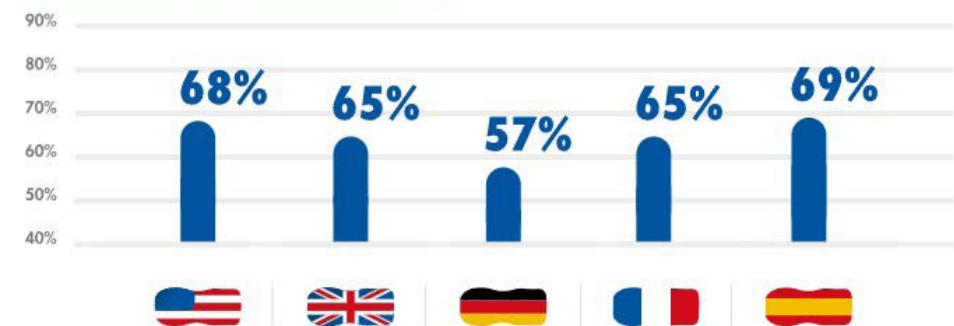


Fig. 4 Question 1, Tenga Report, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

Q: While in lockdown or in self-quarantine, did you masturbate more or less than usual?

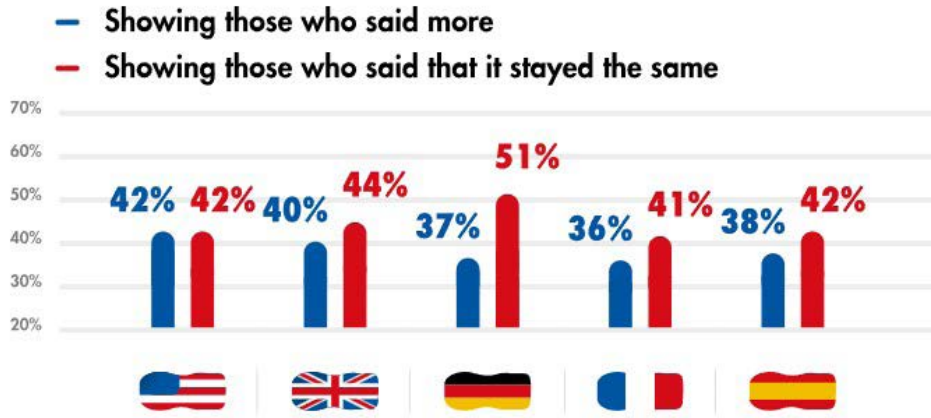


Fig. 5 Question 2, Tenga Report, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

Q: Do you have a weekly self-care routine?

Showing those who said yes:

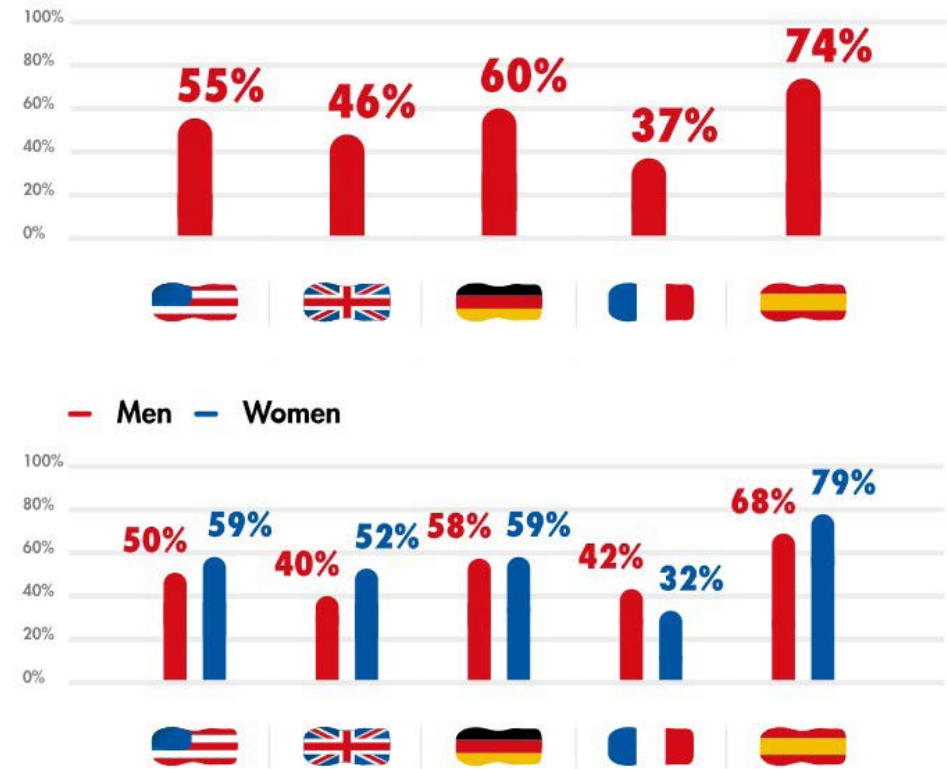


Fig. 6 Question 3, Tenga Report, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

Showing those who said it includes masturbation:

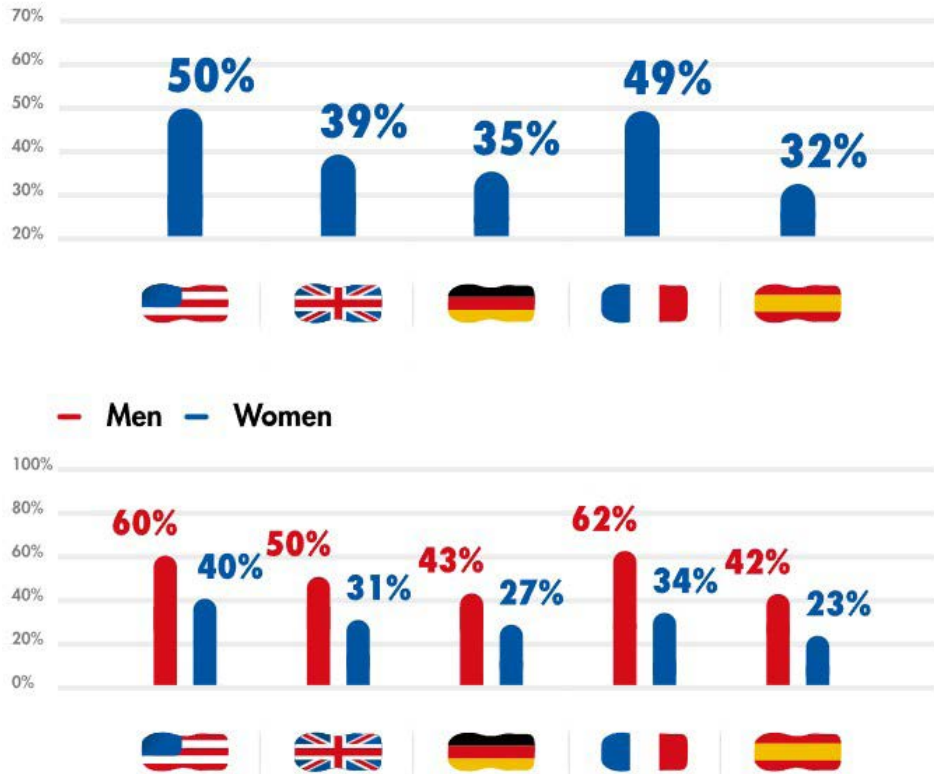


Fig. 7 Question 4, Tenga Report, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

1.6.2 Sextoy use

This year's report also revealed that Americans and Europeans are increasingly incorporating sex toys and masturbation into their lifestyles. With roughly 50% reporting to have used a sex toy before, some (about 20%) used the additional time during the pandemic to add to their sex toy collection, and a further 8% bought their first sex toy during this time.

Q: Have you ever used any sex toys?

Showing those who said yes:

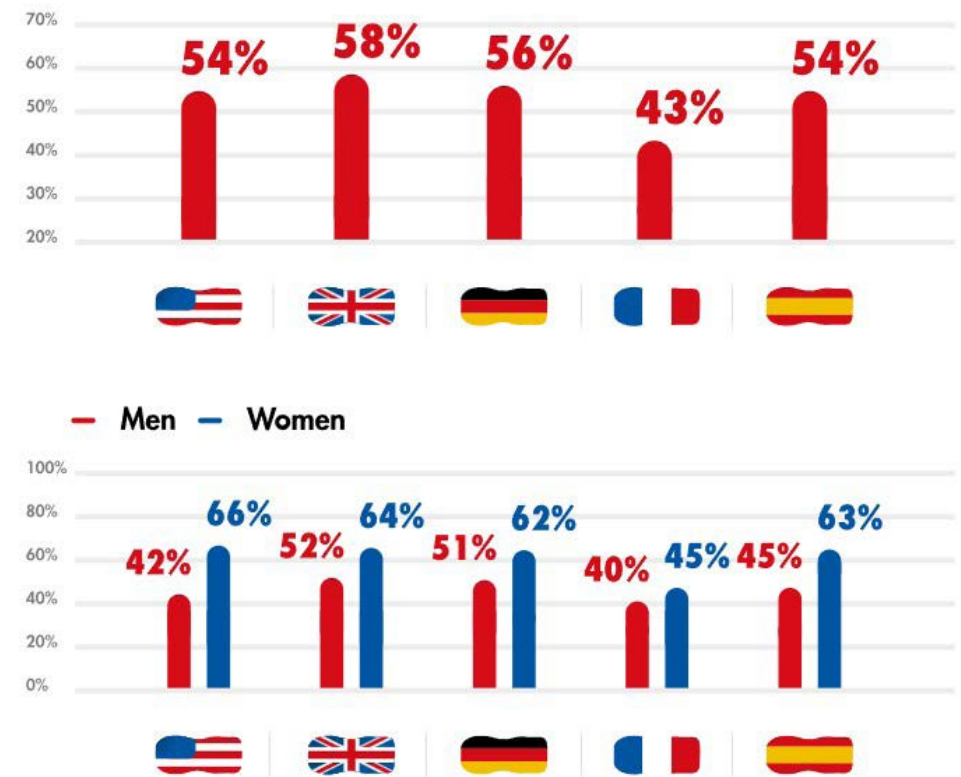
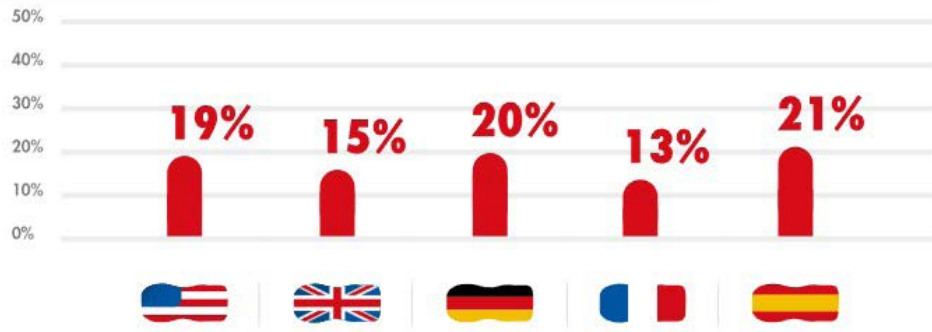


Fig. 8 Question 5, Tenga Report, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

Q: Did you use a sex toy in the past year?

Showing those who bought an additional sex toy:



Showing those who bought a sex toy for the first time:

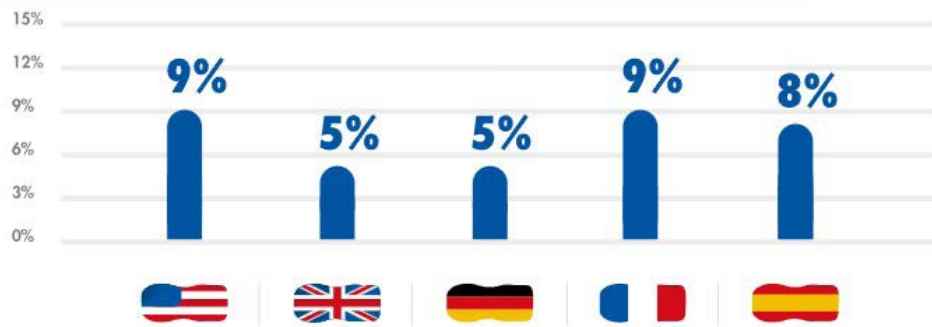


Fig. 9 Question 6, Tenga Report, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

2

Sexual Health

2.1 What is Sexual Health

The way people talk about pleasure is complicated, but it's a lot more important than it's given credit for.

Pleasure is deeply connected to sex, and the World Health Organization consider sexual health part of everyone overall quality of life. WHO defines sexual health as a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence³ (fig. 10).

But sexual health goes beyond sex itself, it's the moment when something happens and a question blow up in women minds: "Why did no one prepare me for this?"

As Dr. Emily Nagoski, PH.D., Sex Educator & Author "Come As You Are", says in the new series by Netflix "The Principles of Pleasure"⁴,

Modern physics has existed since Newton, let's say. We're not yet to Newton. We do not have a basic understanding of the system that we're trying to

understand. [...] The fact is that through the 1930s, '40s, and 50's, into the '60 we got a lot of demographic information of very high-quality. The development in the 1940s of the penicillin to treat STIs was a radical transformation. The development of the pill, like so much good stuff happened. We began to get some good psychophysiological information out of Masters and Johnson's lab. Into the '70s, we began to develop effective interventions to treat sexual dysfunctions. And then in the '70s and '80s more and more women became sex researchers, sex therapist, sex educators. Feminism created a context that allowed women to come into these spaces and say, "Being a woman is not inherently a disease." And that, by itself, transformed the way questions were asked in sex science, and in sex therapy, and in sex education. And with all that progress, all that we've learned, we're right at the beginning."

By the time women reach sexual maturity most of them have learned to repress rather than embrace their sexuality (Vernon, 2013). So, to reverse this mechanism, how people can define an approach as positive and respectful for them and for their relationships? What does this imply?



Fig. 10 Ritual masturbation session with mirror, *The Boudoir Bible*, p. 65, Bethony Vernon, illustration by François Berthoud

2.2 Absence of Knowledge: the Lack of Sex Education

The state of sex education around the world is worrying because it's not mandated, it's not seen as something that's important. It's just seen as an option, and not a valid one.

A proper sex education would be a game changer for overall health and happiness. That's power. Power in knowing our own body. This might be why women have been denied this information for centuries.

Today sex education doesn't even consider LGBTQI+ experiences, pleasure, fun things about sex, communication, how the clitoris is made and how it works, basic information about relationships and a lot of other fundamental topics.

If women don't know their own bodies, how can they be the masters of it? How can they decide and make the best choices for it?

2.2.1 Design for Sex Education

Coby Huang has designed sex education toys to explore what brings us pleasure⁵. Her series is called *Rituals of Sexual Pleasure* and is composed by explorative tools made with wood, wool, silicone, glass, tin (fig. 11).

The kit was created for users to make experiments using different materials and textures to understand which sensation feel good for them and which spots of their body is more enjoyable to stimulate or to simply touch.



Fig. 11 Coby Huang, *Rituals of Sexual Pleasure* tool series, 2020, <https://www.dezeen.com/2020/02/25/sex-education-toys-coby-huang-young-swedish-design/>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

Said the designer:

“There are so many sex toys on the market to choose from, but do we really know what we want? [...] Do we know what excites us and makes us orgasm? People forget that penetration is not the only way to reach orgasm, and an orgasm is not the only way to feel pleasure. So rather than just buying a one size fits all sex toy, I think it's about having toolbox to explore our own body.”

She worked with different materials cause they provide different qualities: soft and hard, cold and warm, heavy and light, smooth and rough. The probes are for stimulating the whole body, to figure out what kind of touch can enhance and maintain sexual arousal.

2.3 Access to Abortion

As it is told in the last paragraph, a woman should be aware of which are the best choices for her. This is not a statement that denies the individuality of women but wants to emphasize it. The same things are not good for everyone, and everyone doesn't like the same things, but everyone should accept that whichever choice a woman make for her own body and mental health, is the right thing to do for her.

Politicians, organizations, doctors, everyone should guarantee women that they have certain rights. For centuries it was straight white men who decided what was best for everyone and still this habit has not changed. The society in which we live is taking small steps towards a more egalitarian future and society, but there is still a long way to go.

2.3.1 WHO Recommendations

It would be awesome to be able to say that the issue of abortion is outdated, which there is no need to talk about, but even today people must continue to discuss about something that should be a fundamental right, the right to voluntarily terminate a pregnancy.

The World Health Organization has issued new guidelines on abortion to help deliver lifesaving care.

“Nearly every death and injury that results from unsafe abortion is entirely preventable, [...], that's why we recommend women and girls can access abortion and family planning, when they need them.”

That's what Craig Lissner, the United Nations health agency's acting director for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research, said during the launch, in March 2022 ⁶.

To keep women and girls safe, the WHO has released more than 50 recommendations regarding clinical practice health service delivery, and legal and policy intervention to support quality abortion care. The fact is that worldwide, only around half of all abortions take place safely, causing around 39.000 deaths per year, resulting in millions of women hospitalized for health complications, with over 60% in Africa and 30% in Asia: they're impacting the most vulnerable.

2.3.2 Abortion is still criminalized

While most country permit abortion under specified circumstances, about 20 countries provide no legal grounds whatsoever for abortion. More than three quarters of all countries have legal penalties for abortion, which can include lengthy prison sentences or heavy fines for people having or assisting with the procedure.

Abortion laws vary widely among countries and territories and have changed a lot over time. It's unfortunately known that also in western countries, which in this respect are the most advanced and the ones where abortion is less criminalized, there's a lot of stigma around the practice (also in Italy as it's readable in chapter 4).

Texas for example has passed one of the strictest abortion laws in the US, banning the procedure after around six weeks' gestation. That has left many women looking for options ⁷. In the US in general the situation it is not reassuring (fig. 12).

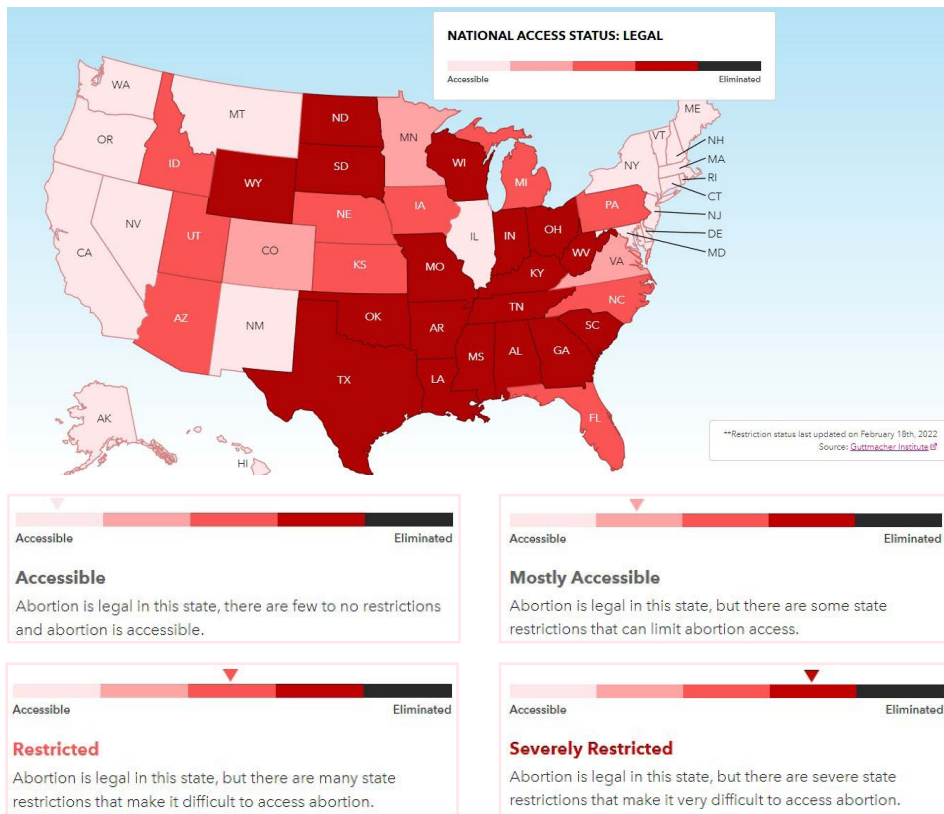


Fig. 12 USA abortion access status, 2022, <https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/abortion-access-to-ol/IN>, Last consultation: 06/04/2022.

2.3.3 RU486

In the last year there has been a lot of discussion about the RU486 pill, there has been a lot of debate about the right of easy access to abortion because, as we will see in chapter 4, in Italy the presence of hospitals full of conscientious objectors is now normal, instead taking the pill RU486 there would not even the need to be hospitalized.

RU486 is a synthetic antiprogesterone used as a drug (in association with a prostaglandin) to induce the termination of pharmacological pregnancy, within the first 49 days of amenorrhea; the drug, which is taken orally, was introduced in Italy after a long Radical battle only in 2009. The drug is marketed in Italy and France under the name Mifegyne and in the United

States under the name Mifeprex.

Currently in almost all states of the European Union allow the use of the pill. Poland, Lithuania, Ireland and Malta (fig. 13) are the only countries to be excluded from the totality because abortion in these countries is still illegal.



Fig. 13 Demonstration for the right to abortion in Malta, <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/only-malta-and-andorra-prohibit-abortion-under-any-circumstances.664897>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

In the rest of the world, in almost all countries where abortion is legal, tens of millions of women have voluntarily aborted with this method, which is considered safe and effective by the World Health Organization⁸. On Fox 2 Detroit, on January 23, 2022, the currently pregnant activist Jex Blackmore showed on live television how much it was easy and effortless to take RU486 to terminate the pregnancy⁹ (fig. 14).



Fig. 14 Detroit activist takes mail-order abortion pill on live TV, 2022, https://youtu.be/Si_EU73j904, Last consultation: 06/04/2022.

2.4 Access to Contraceptives

The benefits of contraception, named as one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are widely recognized and include improved health and well-being, reduced global maternal mortality, health benefits of pregnancy spacing for maternal and child health, female engagement in the work force, and economic self-sufficiency for women. (Sonfield et al., 2013)

Doxapharma conducted research for Gedeon Richter¹⁰ to focus on the situation regarding the level of information and awareness of women on different contraceptives, and to highlight the role and relationship with the gynecologist, regarding the choice of contraceptive.

The survey of 200 gynecologists and 242 women of childbearing age shows that there are still significant information gaps on contraception. The 40% of the women surveyed felt that they were not properly informed and, in 62% of cases, were not satisfied with their notions on the subject¹¹.

In addition to information gaps, the biggest problem lies in the difficulty of having access to contraceptives.

Over 200 million women in the world, while wanting to avoid pregnancy, are

not using a method of contraception but it was not their choice. Barriers to access to services also remain for cultural or ideological reasons in many areas of the world¹².

Women must have access to reproductive health care, including the full range of contraceptive choices, to fulfill these rights.

In America for example, facilitating affordable access to contraceptives would not only improve health but also would reduce health care costs, as each dollar spent on publicly funded contraceptive services saves the U.S. health care system nearly \$6. (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women, 2017) Citing human rights, but also public health, social policy and economic grounds, most countries in the European Union aim to make affordable contraceptives and contraceptive information available to women. Yet, in some Member States, for example in Austria, Bulgaria, Poland, Lithuania and Slovakia, access remains an issue cause a comprehensive legal and policy framework on reproductive health and rights is not in place and, most important, contraceptives are not subsidized under public health insurance schemes, so they're out of reach for many women. In Slovakia, for example, contraceptives used solely for pregnancy prevention are understood as "life-style drugs" and are as such explicitly banned from coverage under public health insurance by law. (Centre For Reproductive Rights, 2012)

2.4.1 How it works in Italy

Italy is still far behind in access to free contraceptives. The latest European Atlas of Contraception drawn up by Aidos (Italian Association of Women for Development) places Italy at the 26th place in the ranking of the 45 European countries analyzed¹³. There is a total absence of policies that guarantee access to free contraceptives, despite the fact that contraception in Italy should already be free, as provided for by the norm on family counseling in 1975 and that on voluntary termination of pregnancy in 1978¹⁴. At national level, however, this has never been mentioned and it is up to the individual hospitals and clinics to implement or not the law¹⁵.

The regions that occupy the top three places for access to contraceptives are Emilia Romagna, Tuscany and Puglia with indices of 88 percent, 81 percent and 72 percent. Puglia has achieved excellent results because it

approved a resolution on free contraception already in 2008, managing to build services that ensure adequate access to information and the offer of contraceptive methods. The last positions are instead occupied by Abruzzo, Molise and Sicily with indicators respectively to 41 percent, 34 percent and 33 percent¹⁶ (fig. 15-17).

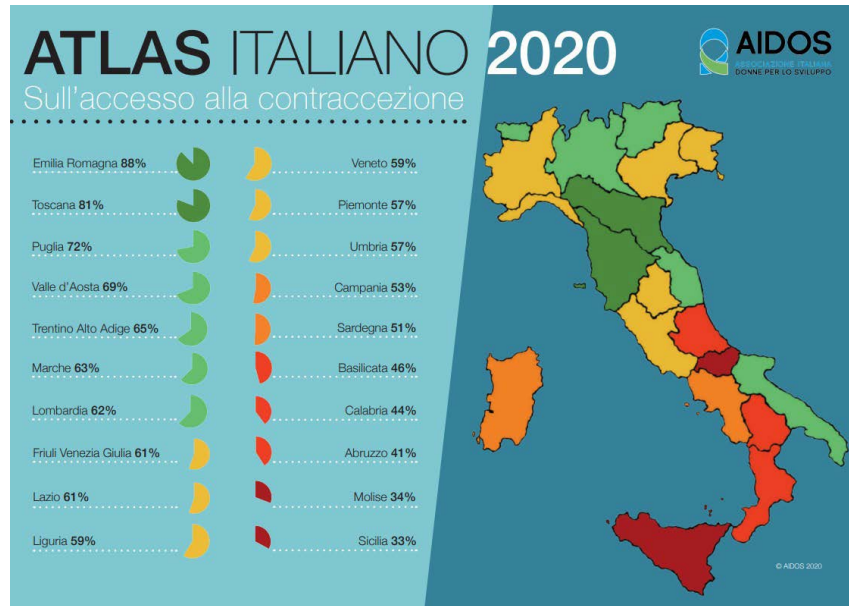


Fig. 15 Infographic 1, Italian atlas on contraception access, 2020, <https://aidos.it/atlas-italiano-sullaccesso-alla-contraccezione/>, Last consultation: 04/04/2022.



Fig. 16 Infographic 2, Italian atlas on contraception access, 2020, <https://aidos.it/atlas-italiano-sullaccesso-alla-contraccezione/>, Last consultation: 04/04/2022.



Fig. 17 Infographic 3, Italian atlas on contraception access, 2020, <https://aidos.it/atlas-italiano-sullaccesso-alla-contraccezione/>, Last consultation: 04/04/2022.

2.5 Self Acceptance Movements

2.5.1 Body Positive Movement

Body positivity is a social movement focused on the acceptance of all bodies and the ideas that all bodies are beautiful, regardless of size, shape, skin tone, gender, and physical abilities, while challenging present-day beauty standards as an undesirable social construct. Proponents focus on the appreciation of the functionality and health of the human body, instead of its physiological appearance¹⁷.

Responding to the avalanche of images that are continuously proposed by the media as the ideal body image, the movement wants to create a space to show bodies defined non-compliant, of all shapes and sizes.

Also, lot of artists took part in the movement with their art. The collection of cloth and metal-wire garments by Brazilian fashion designer Karoline Vitto (fig. 18) finds beauty in the bulges of flesh that women are encouraged to cover up¹⁸.



Fig. 18 Karoline Vitto's garments accentuate the fat rolls women are told to hide, 2019, https://www.dezeen.com/2019/08/05/karoline-vitto-the-body-as-material-fashion-collection/?li_source=L1&li_medium=bottom_block_1, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

This movement has, however, recently taken a mainstream turn that has ideally distanced itself from what was the initial intent of the movement. As already said the body positivity was born to give space and voice to bodies not compliant but a lot of brands of any kind have taken advantage of the idea of the movement for marketing campaigns (as now happens every year in June when LGBTQI+ marketing campaigns emerge from nowhere, and then disappear immediately the following July¹⁹) in which non-conforming bodies are often not taken into account as it would be right to do, as in this picture from the Dove Real Beauty campaign²⁰ (fig. 19).



Fig. 19 Image from the Dove Real Beauty campaign. Photo Dove, <https://www.vox.com/2018/6/5/17236212/body-positivity-scam-dove-campaign-ads>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

2.5.2 Body Neutrality Movement

For body neutrality the body, beautiful or ugly, allows people to live and move in the world and this is reason enough to accept and love it (Olid, 2022).

The concept is therefore not to learn to love ourselves by force, to love our body as it is, our own imperfections and defects. Body neutrality aims to give a point of view as objective and disinterested as possible. Do people like it? It doesn't matter, we may not like each other, and that would be natural.

The goal is not to be negative towards your body but not even to flaunt the love for it with excessive positivity: the important thing is to shift the attention from aesthetics to functionality, appreciating the body for what every day allows people to do. From running to observing. From laughing with friends to get emotional for a movie²¹.

2.5.3 Sex Positive Movement

While the definition may vary slightly from person to person, sex-positivity generally refers to having a positive attitude about sex, respecting others' sexual preferences and consensual sexual practices, and treating sex as a normal, healthy part of life, rather than a taboo topic or something to be ashamed of.

Sex-positivity may seem like a recent phenomenon but Freud addressed such concepts in his papers on sexuality already in the late 1920s. In the 1960s and early 1970s sexual liberation was popularized during the sexual liberation, or the "free-love movement". Its supporters rejected traditional views on sexuality and believed that sexual relations between consenting people should not be regulated by law. They advocated for freedom of sexual expression in premarital sex, pornography use, public nudity, contraceptive use (like birth control pills), gay liberation, interracial marriage, women's rights, and other sex-related issues²².

2.5.4 How my Target feel about Themselves

In my survey The taboo of Female Sexual Pleasure (Attachment 1), in section 2.a I asked some questions related to the perception of self, asking if the girls involved agreed or disagreed.

The comforting result was that most of the girls who responded have a good relationship with their body (about two thirds of the sample), but we could do better as a society. Most find moments to take care of themselves, he has, at least once, seen his own vulva in front of a mirror and talks about sexuality willingly. Many of them are interested in the topic and like to keep informed about sexuality.

The data that are less promising are mainly three:

- Almost half of the sample has no regular gynecological visits;

- More than half of the sample states that the judgment of other people has consequences on their sexuality;
- More than half of the sample limit their sexuality for fear of external judgment.

These data are not reassuring and can only be changed with the education to sexuality that maybe one day can be truly complete. Western culture is still a long way from that day but it is important to work on it consistently.

2.6 The Importance of being Aware

2.6.1 The Power Women have

Women should have the right to receive information about their own pleasure, to know thoroughly and thoroughly their natural, sexual and gender identity, their sexual and reproductive rights and consent. As Melina Gaze (sexual education expert and Ecuadorian American militant artist) says in an interview in Pussypedia (Mendelson, 2022), this applies to everyone, even the youngest people. It starts from the assumption that young people don't care anything about their body otherwise they will have sex! But the truth is that everyone has the right to experience their own sexiness, part of which is pleasure.

Certain skills should be developed BEFORE a person actually start having sex, and this is where it becomes important to know herself and, to all intents and purposes, her rights. The knowledge of our body and our preferences and limits is power also and especially when it comes to sexual relations.

Some research has also shown that, when within a sex education proposal is present the topic of pleasure, people learn to negotiate better with the intent of having safer sex, use contraceptives and overall have a more pleasant and fairer experience.

2.6.2 Orgasms

"An orgasm, physiologically, is eight to 12 contractions that occur throughout the pelvis that start just shy of a second apart and increase in latency until their termination."

says Dr. Nicole Prause, Ph.D., Sexual Psychophysicologist & Founder, Liberos, in the series “The Principles of Pleasure”²³ (fig. 20).

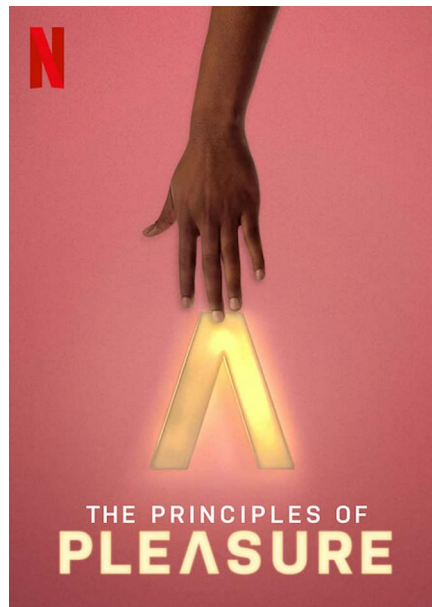


Fig. 20 Cover of the series The Principles of Pleasure, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt18299058/>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

Orgasms are great but they can make sex goal-oriented and add unnecessary pressure. Focusing on pleasure grounds a person in the moment without future expectations.

Many women hail vibrators as being the implement that revealed their innate capacity to orgasm. These days, the market of sextoys is booming and vibrators have never been more accessible. However, vibrators tend to make clitoral orgasm the primary, if not exclusive, motivator toward stimulation.

When women use a vibrator, they should explore the entirety of the vulva and the vagina with the fingers as well as with the vibrator, without forgetting the clitoral system, which radiates inward from the clitoris, is not limited to the clitoris gland alone. (Vernon, 2013)

It's not mandatory to have one if it's not a need. It's important to understand what can be healthy in sexual intercourses or not.

2.6.3 Masturbation: not only the Clitoris

In November 2020 doing a search on PubMed looking for the word “penis” there were 50,671 results, against the word “clitoris” that gave only 2,444. Today (April 2022) the results are at 53,033 against 2,551.

To date a very small part of the population knows exactly how a clitoris is made (and no, it is not only the visible part covered by a hood that Bill Burr has nicknamed in his comedy sketch “the man on the boat”, or the glans of the clitoris) but it's more like a four-legged animal that stretches along the pubic bone, below the mount of venus, and splits in two. The two roots (called the crura) are composed of erectile tissue, while the two large bulbs (vestibular bulbs) on the lower part embrace the urethra and vagina, are composed of spongy tissue that is abundantly sprayed with excitement.

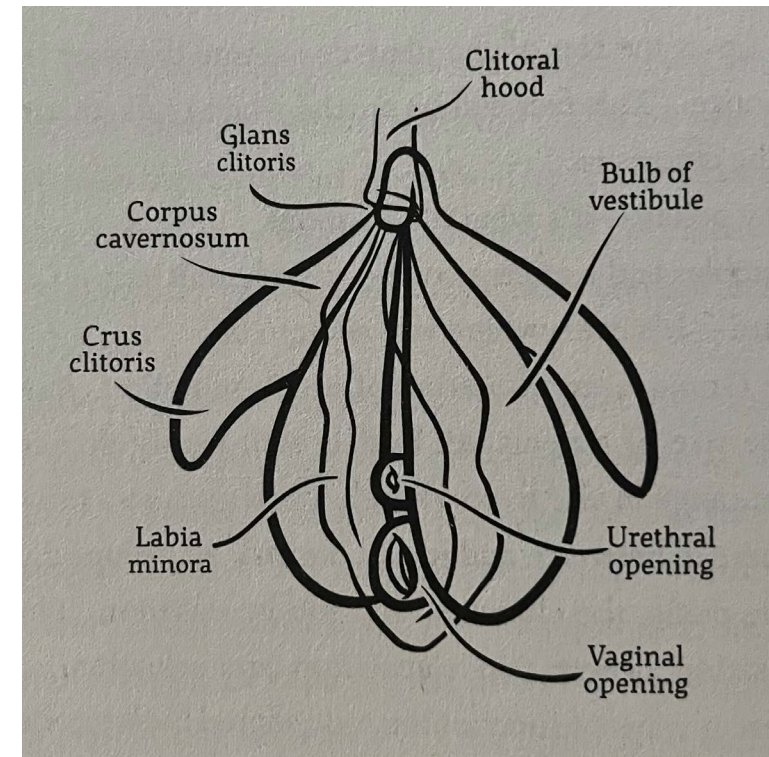


Fig. 21 The anatomy of the clitoris, Come as you are, p. 22, Emily Nagoski.

Knowing how the clitoris (fig. 21) is made (and here we return to the power that women have when they know their body) serves not only to know its anatomy but also to understand what it is about when a woman distinguishes between clitoral orgasm and vaginal orgasm, a distinction that does not actually exist.

A 1998 study published in the *Journal of Urology* by Dr Helen O'Connell, "Anatomical Relationship Between Urethra and Clitoris", showed that the structures of the vagina and urethra are connected (Mendelson, 2022). The

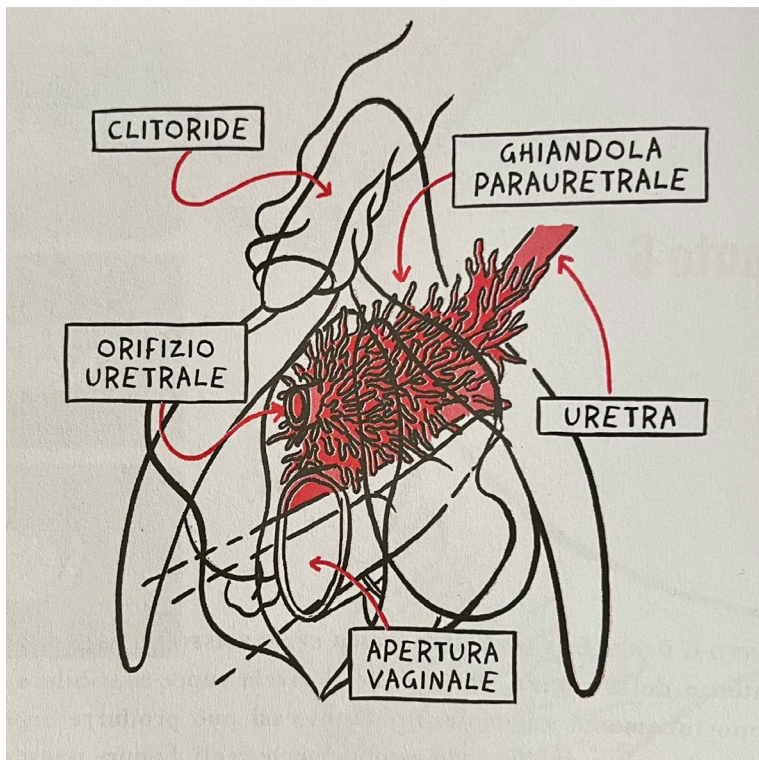


Fig. 22 Clitourethrovaginal Complex Anatomy, *Pussypedia*, p. 98, Zoe Mendelson, illustration by María Conejo.

excitement rushes the blood vessels of the urethral sponge, the clitoral bulbs swell by crushing the urethral sponge and the vagina together (fig. 22). The clitoral bulbs and urethra share the venous and nervous system with the vagina, so when a woman has a vaginal orgasm it is still a clitoral orgasm

because the systems are closely interconnected.

That said, only a minority of women easily orgasm without external clitoral stimulation. For this reason, in order to improve and increase the pleasure it is good not to simply rely on penetration, because the whole part of the vulva (the outer part of the vagina) is extremely receptive. Moreover, female pleasure (and not) is also achieved by giving importance to the whole body without focusing only on the genitals.

2.6.4 Sextoys could help

Bethony Vernon says that most sextoys manufacturers have unintentionally reinforced the negative point of view hovering over extra-genital stimulation (for example also objects catalogued as products for BDSM practices, from nipple clamps to whips) perpetuating the taboo and failing to accompany the products with a manual for proper use. Similarly, other manufacturers of sextoys that could be called "modern and cutting-edge" point out when their products are ultra-powerful and when they orgasm in seconds, or how punctual their stimulation is (which for some people could be extremely annoying). The important thing for every woman is to dedicate the right time to discover themselves without being conditioned by preconceptions distorted by a culture that does not love them. Like any tool, from a hammer to a computer, this erotic instruments should be viewed as aids (fig. 23). They simply have the ability to provide sensations more effectively than hands, and if partners so decide, more intensely and at greater length. (Vernon, 2013)

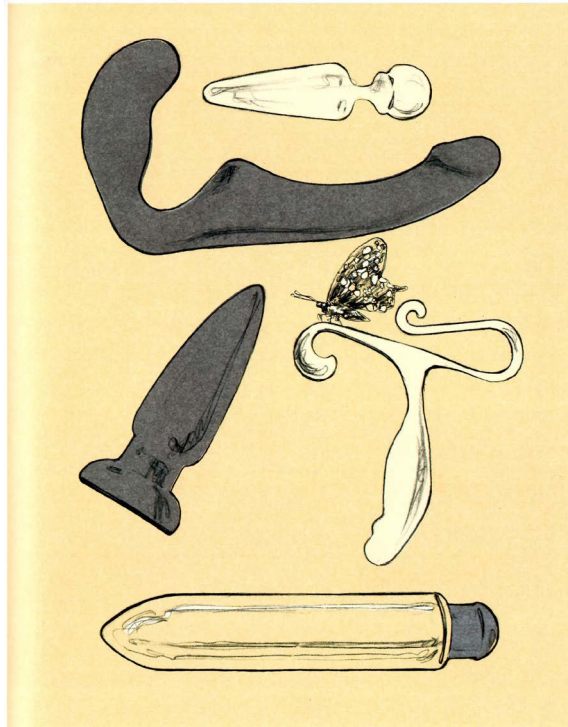


Fig. 23 Implements for penetration, *The Boudoir Bible*, p. 117, Bethony Vernon, illustration by François Berthoud

2.6.5 Pleasure Gap

The Pleasure gap or orgasm gap, in a nutshell, is the gap between how much men have an orgasms during sex and how little women can say the same. Gender and orientation of the partner are a big piece of the puzzle. Studies that include folks in queer relationships in addition to folks in heterosexual relationships show that the experience of sex without orgasm was only common for heterosexual relationships, not queer ones (Blair et al., 2018). I would like to be able to quote research on the precise percentages (usually they are around 90% of success for men and, if it goes well, 60% for women) but the research is constantly changing and can vary from year to year, from country to country, from generation to generation.

In fact, it is known that men enjoy much more than women and this happens for a thousand reasons, some of which were previously mentioned (the fact that few women can achieve orgasm with penetration alone -this thing is mentioned in practically all papers or scientific articles about it-, the fact that women pretend more in a heterosexual relationship because they are not given importance to their pleasure, and so on).

However, orgasms aren't everything in the pleasure equation. Heterosexual cis-women and men typically prioritize their partner's orgasm above their own during partnered sex, but an over-focus on orgasm as the only goal of sex can put a lot of pressure on "performing"²⁴.

The lack of scientific research on pleasure, especially female pleasure, has created a huge learning gap leaving room for the multiplication of prejudices and legends.

In fact, most toy companies seem to have only one mission in mind: to clear the pleasure gap and give orgasms to as many people as possible. The intent is certainly honorable but achieving the goal is easier said than done. As we have already seen in paragraph 2.2 (and as we will see in paragraph 4.5) the importance of proper and comprehensive sex education should be the basis for balancing these unacceptable gender disparities.

3

The Consequences of a Patriarchal System

3.1 The Male Gaze ²⁵

Talking about “male gaze” is not about the male gaze as a gender in absolute but with a precise type of masculinity that has oriented a certain type of story, a certain type of representation. A gaze that has prevented the looks of other genders and the looks of other types of masculinity from emerging, because it is a dominant masculinity. The toxicity of the male gaze is inseparable from hegemony. When a gaze is dominant to the point of obscuring and ghettoizing other kinds of perspectives then it becomes toxic.

People must therefore be able to question the canons, which are often too rigid, and which are built on a whole series of things that are thought universal and are discovered to be increasingly partial, day after day, listening to points of view often silenced for so many years.

When it comes to relationships between different layers of society, in which there are discrimination and huge imbalances of power, it is fundamental to question the relationship between reality and imagination, then the relationship between our society, the things that really happen, and how they're represented.

“How we look at ourselves in those representations, why we are what we see, and if we do not see we are not.”

People often take this kind of approach to the observation of reality and how the media also represent it, but in reality many things begin to move in society when they are seen on screens, when they begin to have a presence in the media. If there is no such presence, often the activation of certain things encounters much more difficulties. Just think about how many representations of abortion have affected phenomena of activism related to the theme, and how much things in recent years begin to feed each other. The definition of “male gaze” was first coined by Laura Mulvey, a film and



Fig. 24 Workshop Laura Mulvey, 2018, <http://portopostdoc.com/home-en/festival/2018/view?id=788>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

theoretical scholar who supports Feminist Film Theory, that for many years has been relegated to a part of the theory on cinema and audiovisual that is considered as something minor, relative and secondary because it is feminine (fig. 24).

Mulvey coined the definition of male gaze in the essay “Narrative cinema

and visual pleasure”, reasoning on the relationships between males and females within audiovisual representations and telling how the representations of men and women are different. Spectator associate point of view concept with pleasure concept. “Visual pleasure” recalls not only pleasure as pleasure of vision but also pleasure from the point of view of sexual desire, this is because there is a one-way relationship (except for a few exceptions). This desire is defined by Mulvey as “scopophilia”, the



Fig. 25 Elvis Presley meet Judy Tyler in Jail House Rock, <https://www.girlfriend.com.au/male-gaze-in-film>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

pleasure in looking. Just as the camera possesses the woman’s body in this way, film creates the desire to possess. In terms of traditional narrative film, this means that people identify with the active protagonist (the male actors) and desire the passive objects of the gaze (the female actors). (Oliver et al., 2017).

The desired point of view is often represented by the male gaze. Obviously the target is therefore a male viewer, who must identify with the camera, such as in voyeuristic films in the style of Hitchcock, and who must desire

as a character the women represented. So what remains of women? Of women remains an object put before many eyes: the director, the character and the spectator (fig. 25).

This has been taken for granted for many years, as a certain automatist now too problematic. Language is simply the final prosthesis of a universality that sees in the masculine something not belonging to a single category but to a thing that should represent all, something that does not happen even under a male perspective.

3.2 Sexist Advertising: Women's Bodies serve to sell

It is now a fact visible to all that often and willingly women are used in advertising to sell anything. From cruising to toothbrushes. From household cleaning products to car insurance. Yet Italy has managed to do better. Not only was it able to produce advertising posters so sexist, discriminatory and violent as to upset public opinion several times, but it was specially formulated a decree law (DL Infrastructure and transport n. 121/2021)²⁶ which prohibits on the roads and on vehicles any form of advertising whose content proposes sexist or violent messages or offensive gender stereotypes. It also prohibits messages that violate individual freedoms, civil and political rights, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, or discriminate with regard to sexual orientation, gender identity, physical and mental abilities²⁷. Below are some examples of what have been the worst advertising signs in recent years throughout Italy (fig. 26-32).



Fig. 26 Sexist advertising in Salento, 2021, <https://www.open.online/2021/01/25/salento-pubblicita-sessista/>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.



Fig. 27 Sexist advertising in Rome, 2015, <https://vitolo francesco.wordpress.com/2015/04/03/mari-no-e-il-corpo-delle-donne-le-buche-e-cartelloni-pubblicitari/>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.



Fig. 28 Sexist advertising in Cuneo, 2015, <https://www.giornalelavoce.it/cuneo-offende-dignita-donne-via-cartelloni-pubblicita-in-piemonte-137925>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.



Fig. 29 Giovanna in Saratoga TV spot, 1980, <https://pelopubblico.wordpress.com/2015/05/26/sarato-ga-e-tornata-giovanna/>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.



Fig. 31 Sexist advertising in Aversa, 2019, <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/caserta-cartelli-pubblicitari-sessisti-esplode-polemica-ad-1778831.html>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.



Fig. 30 Sexist advertising in Genova, 2018, <https://www.lavocedigenova.it/2018/07/09/leggi-notizia/argomenti/cronaca-5/articolo/le-donne-hanno-in-testa-una-sola-cosa-e-polemica-sulla-pubblicita.html>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.



Fig. 32 Sexist advertising in Legnano, 2017, <https://www.ilgiorno.it/legnano/cronaca/legnano-manifesto-choc-donne-sessimo-1.3575498>, Last consultation: 03/04/2022.

3.3 Gender medicine

Gender-specific medicine is the study of how diseases differ between men and women in terms of prevention, clinical signs, therapeutic approach, prognosis, psychological and social impact. It is a neglected dimension of medicine with respect to the study of gender influences on pathophysiology, clinical signs, prevention and therapy of diseases. In the last 30 years too many epidemiological and clinical studies reported results in only one gender. (Baggio et al., 2013).

Prior to 2000, there was very little discussion about gender medicine and differences in gender diagnoses. However, with the establishment of the Partnership for Gender Specific Medicine at Columbia University (1997), the Karolinska Institutet (2002), and the Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin (2003), studies began to systematically examine comparisons between women and men. In 2001 and 2010, the Institute of Medicine in the U.S. declared that being a woman or a man significantly influenced the course of disease and should be considered in diagnosis and therapy²⁸.

In medicine, it isn't easy to separate the influence of gender on disease. However, it's known that considering the impact can lead to improvements in care for both genders, especially for women. For instance, clinical manifestations of prevalent diseases differ in women and men; it is thought that this is due partially to sex differences in disease mechanisms.

Let's make an example. Gender disparity in the incidence of cancer, aggressiveness and disease prognosis has been observed for a variety of cancers, but relatively little is known and assessed about the impact of these differences, as it was underlined in the First National Congress on Gender and Cancer in Padua 2011. The low representation of women in clinical trials is a crucial point. Already in 1977 the Food and Drug Administration excluded women from phase I – II clinical trials. This means that results obtained only in men were transferred to the entire population suffering from the same type of cancer, including women. This aspect is very important for the implications of both difference in drug-related toxicity and efficacy, according to gender. Sex differences in drug metabolism and PK²⁹ have long been recognized (Baggio et al., 2013).

Gender-specific medicine needs to reconstruct an equilibrium in order to understand how

different clinical signs, diagnostic procedures and therapeutic needs of

diseases are in men and women. This new dimension of medicine needs new investment in research but also reorganization of medical teaching and health policy (Baggio et al., 2013).

So, having all this information about what gender medicine is and the consequences it can provoke, is it really strange women don't really know their body if even medicine does not know certain differences between them and men? Often women cannot have right diagnoses because medical research has always been done on male bodies, so today certain diagnoses for problems related to the female body (such as endometriosis or vulvodynia) are hard to make. This leads to insecurities about finding a diagnosis when unusual symptoms are present, and to believe false myths about people with a vulva, such as the fact that menstruation must be painful³⁰.

4

The Italian Case

4.1 The Double Standard of Genders

The Treccani Encyclopedia defines the word Machismo as follows:

machismo <mači-> s.m. [der. of macho]. – Exaggerated and ridiculous display of virility, based on the idea that the male is superior to the female³¹

, and the word sexism as it follows:

sexism s.m. [der. of sex, on the model of racism and influence of Fr. sexism and ingl. sexism]. – Term coined in the context of the feminist movements of the sixties of the twentieth century to indicate the attitude of those who (man or woman) tend to justify, promote, or defend the idea of the inferiority of the female sex compared to the male one and the consequent discrimination made against women in the sociopolitical, cultural, professional, or simply interpersonal field; also, with sign. more generally, tendency to discriminate someone based on the sex they belong to.³²

Considering the European context, Italy is the country with the highest degree of machismo. In the following paragraphs it's clear how and why.

Italy is the symbol of love, art, of the “Dolce vita”, but it’s also a country where most men prefer to have the upper hand over woman.

As we’ve already seen, the consequences of sexism, patriarchy and male gaze are evident and disastrous. In the following pages we’re going to see which are some of the main consequences of these phenomena, also through some examples.

4.1.1 Stigma of the Whore: the Language of Patriarchy

Language can be a mirror of how shame works in Italy. To discriminate a woman it’s enough to call her “puttana”, “zoccola”, “troia” (in a single English word: whore). Since this is an insulting word that refers to the profession of the prostitute, thinking of a male equivalent we quickly realize that it does not exist. We can think of the French word gigolo (that is even not Italian!), but this word does not have a negative meaning as the feminine equivalent does.

Moreover, the word whore it’s not only used to deride a woman for her sexual behaviors. This word, and its multiple variations, in Italy is used very often to take away the voice of women. If a woman feel free to do anything, from speaking up for herself to just walk on the street, can be safely, in the truest sense of the word, called in this way at any time of the day.

The “stigma of the whore” is a precise control expedient that not only regulates female sexuality but female conduct as a whole (Zollino, 2021). It is a tool ready to punish women when they question the hierarchy of the patriarchal system, when they attitudes that as women they should not have. It is a constant threat that gravitates in the lives of all of them: for the patriarchal system women must not be aggressive, they must not impose themselves, they must not show themselves, or enjoy sex. They should choose between the two roles into which women have always been divided: saints and whores.

Women, throughout history, have been taught to be ashamed and guilty if they desire, ask, enjoy, and even today there are Christian values and Victorian morality that tend to disappear hardly, as we will also see in the following chapters and in the second part of this thesis.

The whore, understood as a woman who welcomes her sexuality and her own body without shame, is frightening because she breaks into the public space, she breaks the rules, she is the outsider who destroys the sacredness

of the body and female sexuality. In a patriarchal context like the Italian one, which is Catholic, sexophobic, hetero-mono-standardized, the insult whore becomes a weapon used to punish women and to put them back in their place³³.

4.1.2 Gender Pay-gap

Italy was one of the Group of 8 most industrialized countries and at the same time is always at the bottom of European statistics related to female employment. In 2019, the unemployment rate for women in the EU was 7.1%, higher than the rate for men which was 6.4%. Women are also more likely to work part-time: one-third of employed women were working part time (30%) in the EU in 2018, nearly four times the rate for men (8%)³⁴.

From these statistics we can interpret, as one of the main reasons, women are still not taken seriously in work contexts. This is also reflected in how much women are paid less than men. In 2020, women in Italy earned annually about 3.1 thousand euros less than men. However, the gender pay gap decreased in the last years. In 2020, it amounted to about 11.5 percent in favor of men, whereas the difference in 2016 was equal to 12.7 percent. According to JobPricing, the annual gross salary of women amounted to 27.4 thousand euros in 2019. On the other hand, men had an average annual salary of 30.4 thousand euros³⁵.

With the advent of the covid 19 pandemic unfortunately these data have dramatically aggravated, in fact with the drastic increase in firings the people most affected were women (98% of people fired)³⁶, this is first for the lower reliability that women have at work compared to men, and second for the care work that has always been attributed to them, considering both the care of the house and for possible children.

4.1.3 The Objectification of Women

Many Italian women feel that men – or at least some men – look at them as if they are interchangeable goods, to be disposed of at their will, and unfortunately there are lots of examples that prove it.

In October 2009, when during a TV talk show Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi told a well-respected, 58-year-old female politician, “You are increasingly more beautiful than you are intelligent.” She replied, “I am not

one of the women at your disposal, prime minister.”³⁷ Let’s note that if a politician can afford to make such a comment, let’s just try to imagine what it can mean to be a woman in Italy every day.

For decades, women have been used on Italian television shows as speechless bodies serving an audience-enhancement purpose. It is enough to turn the TV to any channel at any time to observe this, even in a protected time slot. No matter what the theme of the TV program, most of them contain (literally) thin, white, beautiful women (and by “beautiful” I mean a mainstream beauty, the figure of an ideal woman that has always been offered by media and not) but above all quiet.

4.1.4 Not a Child anymore: Hyper Sexualization of Teenage Girls

This process of women objectification starts since their adolescence. The Italian news of recent years do not promise anything new. The case of the teacher in Rome made a sensation when she saw a 16-year-old student making a video with a classmate, while dancing with her belly slightly uncovered, asked her if she “was on the Salaria” (or if she had dressed like a prostitute). The girl during the confrontation with the teacher asked what she would say if the shirt had been lifted by a boy. The teacher replied “I would have said that we are not at the beach”³⁸. This simple answer denotes how certain behaviors of adolescent girls, however entertaining and generally expressing their personality, are constantly relegated to a sexual performance.

The comparison between “girl with T-shirt up=prostitute” and “boy with T-shirt up=boy at the beach” is the simplest and most immediate example that shows how in our society there is an evident double standard.

Another example is the way in which Chanel Totti, the daughter of Ilary Blasi and Francesco Totti, was hypersexualized on No. 34 of Gente (a well-known Italian magazine), who covered a photo of the 13-year-old girl by photographing her from behind, from an angle that emphasized her body, commenting “is identical to mother Ilary!” comparing two women who are very distant in age³⁹. Also in the text of the article reads “Chanel will become more beautiful than mom Ilary. Tall, blonde, athletic, icy eyes, fleshy lips: the second daughter of the legendary number 10 yellow-red is already a charm and competes with the former showgirl. The two look like twins.

Seeing her in a costume, there is no doubt: she is already a little woman. He loves gymnastics and diving and the physique thanks”, a description that emphasizes the physical characteristics of a 13-year-old girl, still in development and definitely to be protected.

4.2 The Difficulties to Abort in Italy

4.2.1 Abortion Laws and Medical Conscientious Objectors

In Italy all people who wish to access a voluntary interruption of pregnancy can try but there are several obstacles, from legislation (law 194) to a bigoted culture still full of stigma that does not allow women to express their freedom through their body.

There are many examples of news only from the last year that make understand how difficult it is to have an abortion in Italy (and close to Italy, as in the case of San Marino):

- In the Republic of San Marino, on Monday 27 September 2021, the “yes” vote won with a large majority (77.3% of voters) in the referendum for the abolition of the penalization of abortion⁴⁰. Before this referendum, there were two articles of the penal code that regulated abortion. Article 153 punished with second-degree imprisonment (that is, imprisonment from six months to three years) both the pregnant woman who has an abortion and those who procure her abortion. For the doctor there is also a ban from the medical profession. Article 154, on the other hand, concerned “abortion for the sake of honor” and provided for lighter penalties – from three months to a year – if an unmarried woman is having an abortion.⁴¹
- In Emilia Romagna in many hospitals the percentage of gynecologists and anesthesiologists conscientious objectors ranges between 60% and 100%.⁴²
- In Ciriè, in Piedmont, the only hospital present has 9 objecting doctors out of 9. The structure is one of the 15 Italian in which it is impossible to obtain the voluntary interruption of pregnancy.⁴³
- Lombardy, Liguria, Piedmont, Veneto, Tuscany, Umbria, Marche,

Basilicata, Campania, Puglia are the regions with at least one hospital with 100% objectors. There are also at least 20 other hospitals with more than 80% of objecting health workers (doctors, anesthesiologists, non-medical staff).⁴⁴

- From 1 January 2022 compliance with Law 194 in Molise will be guaranteed by a single non-objecting doctor following the retirement of Michele Mariano, an abortion doctor who has already postponed his pension twice due to difficulty in finding a replacement. He is joined for 18 hours a week by Dr. Giovanna Gerardi, who would be then alone.⁴⁵
- In Sicily the high number of objectors, combined with the difficulty of moving outside the region, is increasing cases of illegal abortion.⁴⁶

Over the years the number of objectors is constantly increasing and with strong territorial disparities (ranging from an average of 63% of gynecologists in northern Italy to 80% in the South). The problem is that many of these “objectors” decide not to practice abortions in hospital, for public health, but regularly practice them in private clinics at very high costs, which can therefore be prohibitive for a large portion of the Italian population.⁴⁷

4.2.2 Difficulties in accessing Abortion⁴⁸

Information is also scarce. A woman can access the service, but it is very difficult to find the information that explains how to do it.

The Italian team Libere di abortire⁴⁹ (Free to abort) carries out a campaign about the right to abortion in Italy, which formally does not exist (fig. 33). The campaign was born on the anniversary of Law 194, a law that has been missing since it was approved, to create a network between associations and federations. Everyone may want to access a legitimate service such as the voluntary interruption of pregnancy and then find themselves in uncomfortable situations and at the limit of the unpleasant, and only a network can respond to this type of needs as there can be a much wider coordination than the individual who asks for himself.



Fig. 33 Libera di Abortire campaign, <https://radicali.it/2021/05/al-via-la-campagna-libera-di-abortire/>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

A person who wants to abort can face a number of obstacles, most of the times the procedures are carried out badly and every step present during the abortion process has a subtext that tends to communicate dissent from the choice taken by the woman who wants to abort.

For example, when a woman goes to the clinic for an abortion, if she does not know the structure, it is good to take into account that the same structure could have links with pro-life movements. Consulting staff by law can ask questions that can be invasive, for example about the reason for the decision, and can try to dissuade her by showing her alternative solutions, trying to propose removals of the reasons why the woman goes to abort (for an article of Law 194). Most hospitals also do not have IVG points (voluntary termination of pregnancy): abortion and hospitalization will be in the gynecology and maternity ward, so she can be, in this case brutally surrounded by newborns and women who are giving birth. This is indeed a time of hardship reported by many women who have carried out IVG. Another very common problem is that bureaucracy and doctors try to lengthen the time frame. This is also an issue of the law, especially if a woman need to terminate the pregnancy at the limit of the expected time. In this case the medical staff often takes advantage of the week of reflection (always provided for by law 194) in which the woman should reflect on her choice. In this case it is good to turn to more facilities (which can lead to further waste of time) and insist that the certificate says “urgent” to be able to access the IVG faster.

What Libera Di Abortire did was make the informative handbook “Free to know. Free to abort.” (fig. 34) listing all the information necessary to access, from women more prepared to the situations that could occur, to the voluntary termination of pregnancy. The vademecum is printed on paper and activists of Free to abort spread it outside schools and universities, in clinics and hospitals.

This initiative stems from the fact that on the website of the Ministry of Health there is no information about access to IVGs, not even generic guidelines.



Fig. 34 Informative handbook “Free to know. Free to abort.”, <https://www.radiolombardia.it/2021/05/24/radicali-al-via-la-campagna-libera-di-abortire/>, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

4.3 Female Sexuality and Reputation

Today lots of Italians still struggle to accept that a woman can have certain sexual habits or talk openly about her sexuality. In Italy over a third of 18–23 year old people say that a woman who openly shows interest in sex puts her reputation at risk. (Lombardi Vallauri, 2020). Women in Western society are still described as little eager for sex, if they're represented as particularly uninhibited, they're considered, even unconsciously and not explicitly, not very well.

As Lombardi Vallauri says, when something happens unconsciously is more important and decisive than something that happens consciously cause it's impossible to question it, but it's well known that sexophobia in Italy afflicts women more than men.

Traditionally, women have been confined to the home and inhibited from any extra-home activity that men have always been allowed, in their case in fact sexual repression has taken a decidedly drastic and absolute form. Sex has always been associated with guilt, this more for women than for men.

4.4 The Role of the Church

Throughout history, sexual prohibitions have taken very different forms depending on historical religions. For example, in Christianity the guilt of sex could derive from the teaching of St. Paul who increased the devaluation of the body with respect to the spirit (Lombardi Vallauri, 2020).

In Christian thought the gap of dignity between the soul and the body has reached extreme levels, which have contributed to heavily conditioning Italian value system. In reality, today many people consider themselves free from the dogmas that the church has imposed for years to condemn their sexual behavior, but unconsciously they are all still strongly influenced, and this is verifiable for many aspects of sexuality.

It would be enough to think of the condemnation of homosexual people that the Church has always perpetrated (that persists, as happened for the sinking of the DDL Zan against homo/bi/lesbian/transphobia in October 2021⁵⁰) or simply to the condemnation to masturbation. For the church, masturbation is a practice designed to satisfy a personal pleasure without the procreative purpose, the only one that sex should have according to this belief.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church published by Pope Wojtyla in 1992⁵¹, point 2352 reads:

“Masturbation must be understood as the voluntary arousal of the genital organs, in order to derive a venereal pleasure from it. [...] Whatever the reason, the deliberate use of the sexual faculty outside of normal marital relations essentially contradicts its purpose.”

There is still a very harsh moral condemnation of masturbation, this remains partly in central-northern Italy and largely in southern Italy. It's no longer condemned but it's judged negatively when the person involved has a monogamous and stable relationship. (Lombardi Vallauri, 2020). Even in my survey, 5 out of 21 girls who don't masturbate say they don't need it, regardless of whether they are in a relationship or not. There is still a strong belief to betray the partner if a person practices autoeroticism or for example enjoys porn content, as if it were a virtual betrayal.

The concept of linking autoeroticism to betrayal is unfortunately still so rooted that, consequently, it leads to the belief that sex is to be practiced only within a sentimental relationship if you want to be a decent person. This is also why people continue to invoke a feeling of shame when deciding to attack a woman for her sexual behaviors.

4.5 Sex Work: an Unregulated Business

Sexual work today is a controversial subject: talking about it also serves to reflect on gender relations, inequalities, power and sexuality.

Usually sexual work means “any activity that involves an explicit commercial agreement between two or more parties (who gets the service and who buys it), with which an economic remuneration is established (in the form of money or gifts) in exchange for an agreed and time-limited sexual/erotic/romantic service”. So “sex work” is an umbrella term that encompasses a multitude of activities and realities often very different from each other, including work indoors offline (apartments, night clubs, massage parlors), outdoor (street), but also pornography, the sale of audiovisual or intimate content used, erotic lines, cams and so on. (Zollino, 2021)

4.5.1 A Political Term

Prostitute, whore, harlot, whore... the terms used to describe sexual work and the persons, especially women, who exercise it express a precise moral judgment, As we have already seen, these terms are also used as names for women who express their sexual freedom and are stigmatised in this way. The term sex work became common in 1987 with the publication of the text *Sex Work: Writings by Women in the Industry* by Frédérique Delacoste and

Priscilla Alexander.

In Italy in 1994 Pia Covre, founder (with Carla Corso) and president of the Committee for the Civil Rights of prostitutes, convenes a meeting with the old ex-sex worker friends in which they decide, in turn, not to call themselves prostitutes but sex workers.

The introduction of this term represents a fundamental moment in the history of the movement and expresses a precise political claim: it is about sex, but above all about work.

4.5.2 Sex Work and Law

I want to make a small premise before talking about sex work in this paragraph. For me sex work is part of the huge talk about the liberation of women's bodies. For when the stigma present on this type of work is still persistent and ambivalent, it remains a job that women can choose to do, so it is always and in any case the choices that women can make or not, according to this society, with their body (fig. 35).

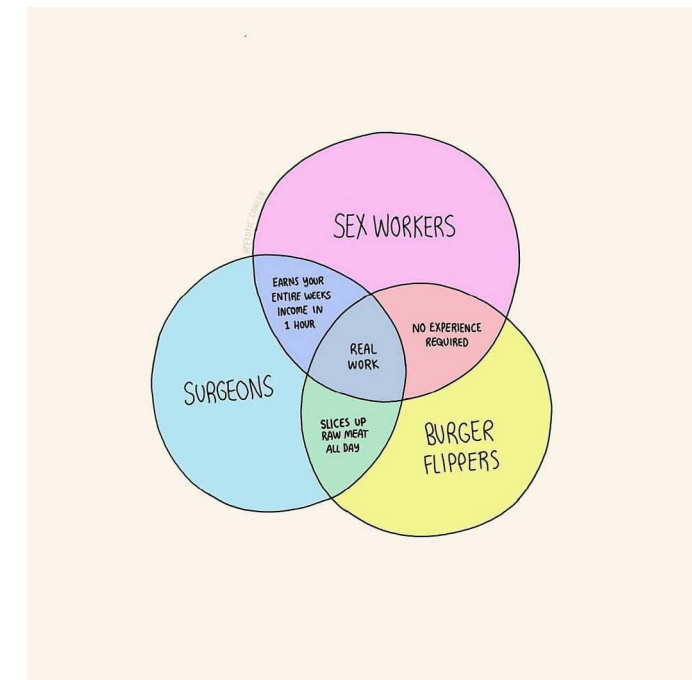


Fig. 35 Sex work is real work, https://www.instagram.com/p/BjaYecPh_Ob/, Last consultation: 16/04/2022.

Sexual work takes many forms and so many are the norms that “regulate” it. In many countries, including Italy, it can be opened a VAT number to declare a worker receipts (Ateco Code 96.09 Other service activities for the individual) but it is not always that simple. When sexual work is not recognized, however, the situation is very complicated. Anneke Necro, porn performer and director, states that:

“in porn, like other areas of sexual work, we are not considered workers. There is no regulation so you have to hope that the people who give you a job [...] can give you the guarantees and conditions you need to work. [...] there is no minimum wage, no regulation of working time or overtime.”

Each State adopts legislative models that vary even within the same country and to which different ideologies, policies and consequences correspond. Among the models developed in the nineteenth century what seems to be the most protective of sex workers is the one that provides for Decriminalization: New Zealand was the first that, working alongside the New Zealand Sex Workers’ Collective, In 2003, it adopted the Decriminalisation model. Sexual work is recognized as any job and can be practiced both outdoors and indoors, both in authorized centers and in self-managed apartments by a maximum of 4 sex workers. However, protection does not apply to migrants. In any case, decriminalization is the ultimate goal of almost all sex worker movements, and is taken up by international organizations such as Amnesty International, UNAIDS and WHO.

4.5.3 Prostitution in Italy

In Italy is in force the law No. 75 of 1958, called Merlin law, which was approved in January 1958 after a parliamentary process that lasted almost 10 years. With Senator Lina Merlin, Italy left behind a regulatory model in favor of abolitionism. The previous Cavour regulation (1860) provided that sex workers were fined and stigmatized, branding them as prostitutes definitively. The Merlin law seemed to “liberate” these women but in reality it created a legislative vacuum because prostitution in Italy is not illegal but it is not regulated either, so there are no rights or protections for sex workers.

4.6 Sex-Education in Italy

4.6.1 The Limits

Italy does not provide for the teaching of sex education as a compulsory subject, and in Europe Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania, Poland and Romania are also in the same situation. There have been more legislative proposals over the years that, however, have ended in nothing⁵².

The situation is dramatic and worrying because sex education is not mandatory so it’s done little and unfortunately almost always bad.

The situations that can occur are usually these 3:

1. Total absence of in sexual and affective education;
2. Limited sex education where the only topics covered are prevention, so the various contraceptives to avoid unwanted pregnancies (sometimes abstinence is even named), and the explanation of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) and their consequences;
3. An alternative sex education not at all reassuring: “educators among peers”.

The last option is implemented in high school and provides that the teenagers of the last three years of high school take courses on sexuality and drug addictions, and then teach what they have learned to the teenagers of the first two years of high school. This option of education is called “among peers” precisely because there is no great difference in age between the teenagers who teach and the teenagers who “learn” from them. As much as it may seem a winning idea to avoid the embarrassment that could be present between people with very different ages who talk about issues concerning sexuality, the same thing also happens among teenagers of similar age as the whole theme of sexuality is still a taboo difficult to unhinge, even and often especially among peers if they are at a very young age. The desire is to create a safe and non-judgmental environment, for example by creating a box in which to insert anonymous questions to which older children should be able

to answer having attended special courses, but often embarrassment is created when certain questions are not able to answer, for obvious reasons. It is precisely this that should push to promote a truly complete and valid education in affectivity, appointing adequate and trained people, not leaving the problems of the children to the children themselves, as if to say “do it, it is your problem”. This remains a fundamental problem of our society.

4.6.2 A Promising Step for the Future: EduForIST

EduForIST (Development of technical and practical tools for carrying out educational and training activities in the field of sexuality, affective relationships, and prevention of STIs in the school context) is a project commissioned and funded by the Ministry of Health – General Directorate of Health Prevention, carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The project aims to develop a technical reference document that defines guidelines and teaching tools that can assist the activities of operators who intervene in the school environment on the issues of education to affectivity, sexuality and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)⁵³.

In particular, the project aims to promote the acquisition of knowledge and content based on scientific evidence, based on attention to the global dimensions of the person, relational and ethical, respecting diversity and the rights of all.

The proposed educational activity will be divided into:

- four training interventions with pupils, lasting two hours each;
- an intervention with pupils for the qualitative evaluation of the activity;
- two interventions with parents and teachers, one before carrying out the educational activity to present the project, collect doubts and questions; one after the conclusion of the interventions with the class groups to offer feedback on the activity carried out.

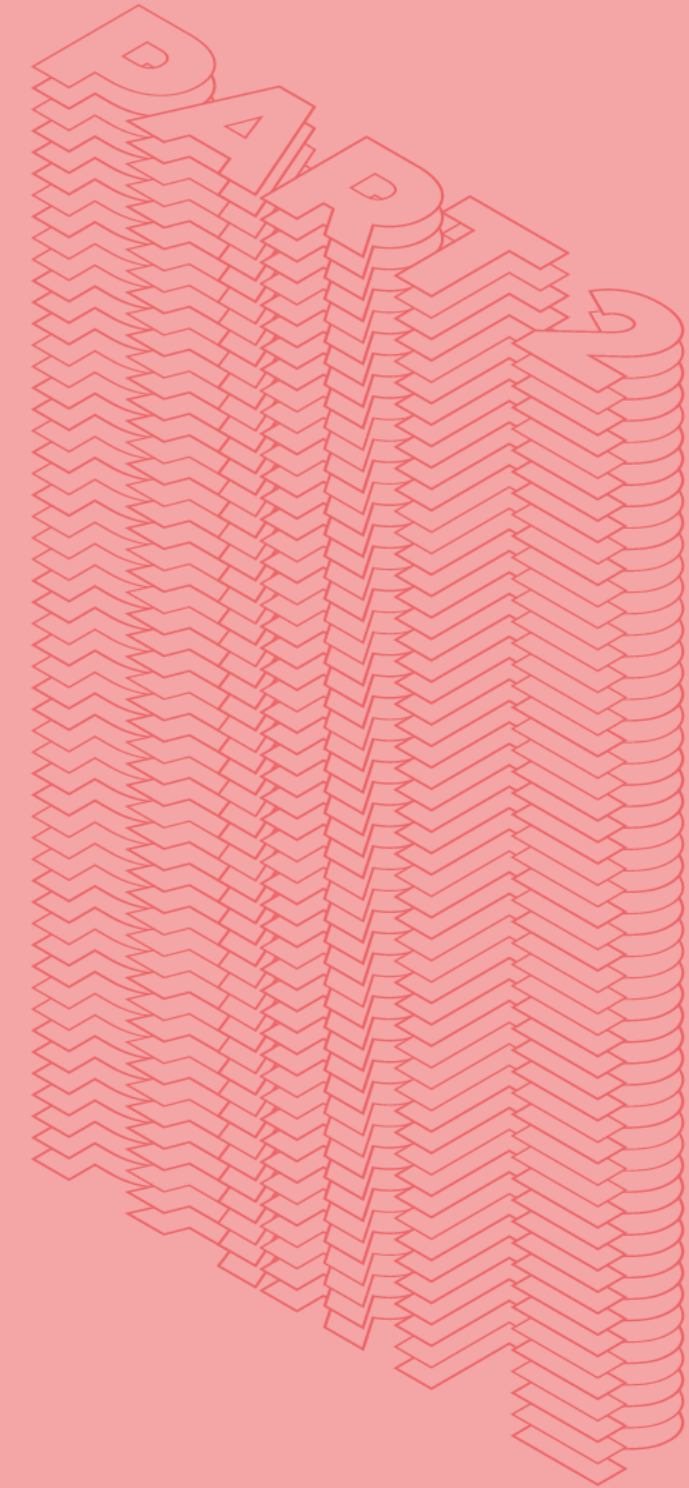
The four modules have the following training purposes:

1. acquisition of correct information about sexuality, fertility, reproduction, and pubertal development; know how to recognize the signs to accept them and live them serenely as an expression of one's own health and the maturation process of each person;
2. acquire the tools useful to express, recognize and manage emotions and feelings; develop assertiveness to make conscious choices in respect of oneself and other people, within the different affective relationships;
3. know the main sexual differences, develop and promote the recognition of equal dignity between genders and respect for every person, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity, countering all forms of discrimination and violence;
4. start a reflection and discussion with experts on the consequences of personal choices and behaviors, favoring the sense of responsibility concerning: one's generative potential, the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies and the different forms of abuse and violation of rights within interpersonal relationships - is developing and will be included in the folder once completed.

It is the first time that a public program of sexuality and affectivity education has included concepts such as the recognition and management of emotions, education in consent and assertiveness, the recognition of gender equity, and various forms of discrimination.

Perfection doesn't exist but it would be really reassuring if the institutions realized how much still needs to be done to have a real taste of the entire sexual and affective vision that everyone can develop. In this list of information there are still unfortunately missing concepts such as, for example, masturbation and pleasure, sexting and the dangers that can be incurred (such as the non-consensual spread of intimate material, which today unfortunately represents normality), the concept of sexual identity and heteronormativity, relational orientations (monogamy, polyamory, relational anarchy...), sex and disability.

Complexity can be frightening but becomes necessary when the theme is complex and varied.



The Evolving Market of Sextoys

5

History of Sextoys

5.1 Introduction

As we have already seen in previous chapters, sexuality and the issues related to it still suffer from large taboos and many moral laws. This happens not only to the talk about sexual pleasure but also to the objects related to it, enclosed under the macro category of sextoys.

These products do not suffer the same negative judgment as women's bodies and their pleasure, including the sexual pleasure of people belonging to minorities, but are a category that until a couple of decades ago was closely related to pornography, useful to satisfy mainly the male gaze, and that today are still undervalued as products and commercially stigmatized. Just think that although they are built like any electronic product, we can certainly not find them among the electric shavers or blenders inside a shopping center.

In this section we will then talk about how these objects were born, what was their development over time and where they arrived today. Before starting the chapter, I would like to say that all the research related to the history and development of sextoys as industrial products has been discussed in and come from Judith Glover's Doctoral Thesis "Taboo to Mainstream: An Industrial Design Solution to Sex Toy Production"

(Glover, 2013), which I had the honor to discuss with at the beginning of my thesis research. Dr Judith Glover, from RMIT's Industrial Design program, specializes in design and sexual health innovation. She has contributed and worked on many projects related to the topic of sexuality for disabled people, for ageing people and not only. Today she is considered the leading expert in the field and she run the first course on how to make sex toys in Melbourne's RMIT University⁵⁴. The sex toy industry was unmapped from a design perspective when she became interested in product genre in the late 1990s in her honours year of industrial design. Ten years later her PhD thesis highlighted how the topic was a mix of social, technological and historical history (Glover, 2019).



Fig. 36 Glover, left, and fellow teacher of her Future Sex design studio, Victoria Cullen. (source: Sydney Morning Herald), <https://www.core77.com/posts/46447/Meet-the-Jury-for-the-1HDC-Judith-Glover-on-Improving-the-Sex-Toy-Industry>, Last consultation 22/04/2022. became interested in product genre in the late 1990s in her honours year of industrial design. Ten years later her PhD thesis highlighted how the topic was a mix of social, technological and historical history (Glover, 2019).

Another really useful book I read to trace the history of sextoys is *The Technology of Orgasm: Hysteria, the Vibrator and Women's Sexual Satisfaction* (Maines, 1999). Maines is an independent scholar and a technical processing assistant at Cornell University's Hotel School Library. She is also the author of numerous articles in scholarly and popular publications.



Fig. 37 Rachel P. Maines, <https://independent.academia.edu/RachelMaines>, Last consultation 26/04/2022.

Maines, a historian of needlecraft, became interested in documenting the Victorian vibrator industry when began to notice the commercials of vibrators at the edges of needlecraft magazines on which he did research in the 80's.

When Maines saw vibrator advertisement as early as 1906 during her needlework research, she noticed they were strongly resembling the devices sold to women as masturbation aids, and she thought it wasn't the purpose of the appliances sold in the pages of the *Companion*⁵⁵. (Maines, 1999) So why a product that was still so socially taboo at the end of the 20th century would appear for sale alongside other domestic goods one hundred years earlier, in a period known for its strong socio-sexual taboos? (Glover, 2013)

5.2 From Prehistory to the Victorian Age

The first dildo that has ever been found is 28,000 years old and comes from a cave in Germany. It is 3 cm wide and 20 cm long, and was buried in the cave of Hohle Fels. It has been recomposed from 14 fragments of siltitis and is believed to have been used as an aid in sex but not only: in fact, judging by the obvious scratches on its surface is thought to have been also used as a hammer.



Fig. 38 Stone dildo dating back to the Paleolithic (29,000 BC) discovered in the caves of Hohle Fels, Germany., <https://www.thesexsalad.it/la-storia-dei-sex-toys-in-10-immagini>, Last consultation 22/04/2022.

In ancient Greece, women loved to dabble with a olisbos, term that comes from the word olisbein and literally means “slip, slip inside”.



Fig. 39 A Greek vase on which is represented a scene of everyday life: you see a man tinkering with a basket full of olisbokollix, or dildos made of cooked and hardened bread dough, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bread_dildo, Last consultation 22/04/2022.

Legend has it that in ancient Egypt, Queen Cleopatra was the first in history to use a vibrator: an empty pumpkin filled with buzzing bees⁵⁶.

The dildo, according to some scholars, is the rarest and oldest representation of the male sex so far found. From these discoveries we can define the dildo (different from the vibrator as it lacks motor) an artificial penis, representation of the male penis.

When it came to vibrators, the first one was developed to perfect and automate a function that doctors had long performed for their female patients. In the Western medical tradition genital massage to orgasm by a physician or midwives was a standard treatment for hysteria, an ailment considered common and chronic in women. (Maines, 1999) The symptoms of female arousal were in fact relegated to medical treatment, which defined female orgasm under clinical conditions as the crisis of an illness, the “hysterical paroxysm”. In fact, it was doctors who gave women orgasms because it was a job that nobody wanted to do. There is no evidence that they liked this work, in fact they replaced any other tool to their fingers, such as the attentions of husbands, the replacement of work by midwives or some impersonal mechanisms. (Maines, 1999)

5.3 Hysteria: safeguarding Man’s sexual Adequacy

The term Hysteria comes from the Greek Hystera, which means uterus: it was thought in fact that the disease was caused by a displacement of the uterus itself in female bodies.

In addition to the use of opium and marriage (which facilitated high sexual activity) many doctors began to practice a “pelvic massage”, in a nutshell masturbation. The relief of physical, emotional and sexual tension through external pelvic massage was a treatment for a disease that appeared for the last time on the diagnostic manual of mental disorders in 1952 and was removed from the group of mental disorders in 1987 by the American Psychiatric Association⁵⁷. Only 35 years ago today.

In the nineteenth-century version, hysteria manifested itself with symptoms similar to epilepsy⁵⁸, such as paralysis of the limbs, momentary blindness, loss of consciousness and the ability to speak. After the attack followed a very intense emotional phase, very deep feelings usually expressed with words and gestures in a semi-hallucinatory state. It has to be said that many

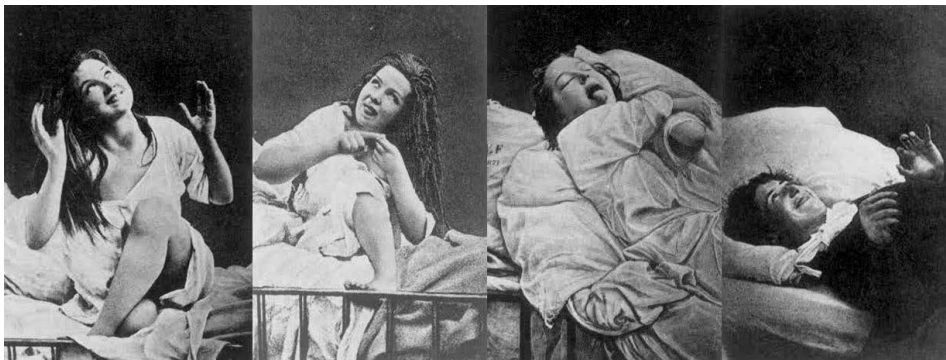


Fig. 40 A hysterical attack in the "Iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière", https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storia_dell%27isteria, Last consultation 22/04/2022.

of its classic symptoms are those of chronic arousal: anxiety, sleepiness, irritability, nervousness, erotic fantasy, sensations of heaviness in the abdomen, lower pelvic edema, and vaginal lubrication. During the syncope some hysterics were observed to experience, the subject's apparent loss of consciousness was associated with flushing of the skin, "voluptuous sensations", embarrassment and confusion after recovering of a brief loss of control. The paralytic states described by Freud and a few others are rarely mentioned by physicians before the late nineteenth century, (Maines, 1999) but hysterics did not become incontinent during their "crisis" as epileptics did, and apparently felt much better afterward, so this led some physicians to suspect their patients of malingering.

After the second half of the twentieth century these symptoms did not disappear but the change of theoretical paradigms in psychology and medicine have led to new interpretations. Today attacks of this type are considered manifestations of depressive states or crises that the person expresses, more or less consciously.

The androcentric definitions of sexuality explain both why such treatments were socially acceptable for doctors and why women required them. To deny women native erotic desires was to safeguard man's sexual adequacy. As Maines (1099) says:

The role of clitoris was systematically misunderstood by most physicians, cause its function contradicted the androcentric principle that only an erect penis

could provide pleasure to a healthy adult female.

The fact that two-thirds to three-quarter of the female population did not enjoy penetration alone was not accepted as a problem to be solved but was relegated to a pathological condition.

This androcentric views shaped the development not only of the concept of female sexual illnesses but also of the instruments designed to cope with them. (Maines, 1999)

5.4 The first Vibrator

As I wrote in paragraph 5.2, the first vibrator was born to facilitate the work of doctors and physicians who performed pelvic massage manually to their patients, massaging by mechanical means the female genitals.

Other treatments or advice included vibrating chairs, water pressure to the pelvic region, swinging in a hammock, horseback riding. (Maines, 1999)

Hydrotherapy or water pressure techniques (for instance water pressure to the pelvic region, fig. 41) were popular from Middle Ages to the advent of electricity and steam powered devices in the mid-19th century. These were also used for a range of male and female diseases and symptoms. (Glover, 2013)

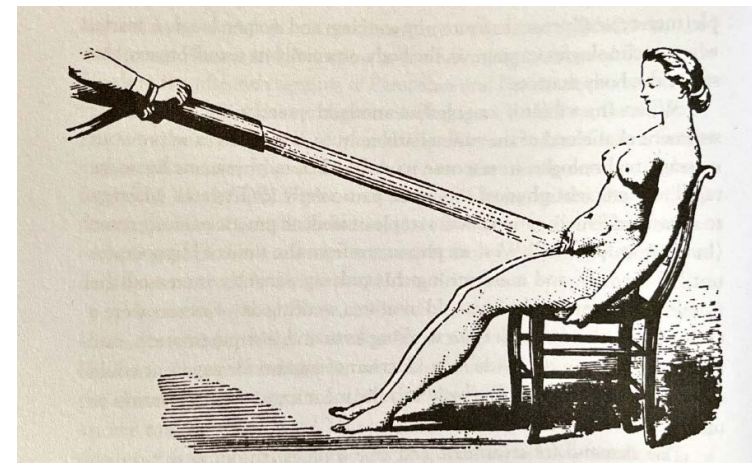


Fig. 41 French pelvic douche of about 1860 from Fleury, reproduced from Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), *The technology of orgasm*, p. 4, Rachel P. Maines.

The electromechanical vibrator, invented in the 1880s by a British physician, represented the last of a long series of solutions to a huge problem: the effective therapeutic massage that neither fatigued the therapist nor demanded skills that were time consuming and difficult to acquire. (Maines, 1999)

Physicians Joseph Mortimer Granville designed the device patented in the early 1880s (fig. 42), which was battery powered and, like the modern version, equipped with several interchangeable vibratodes⁵⁹.

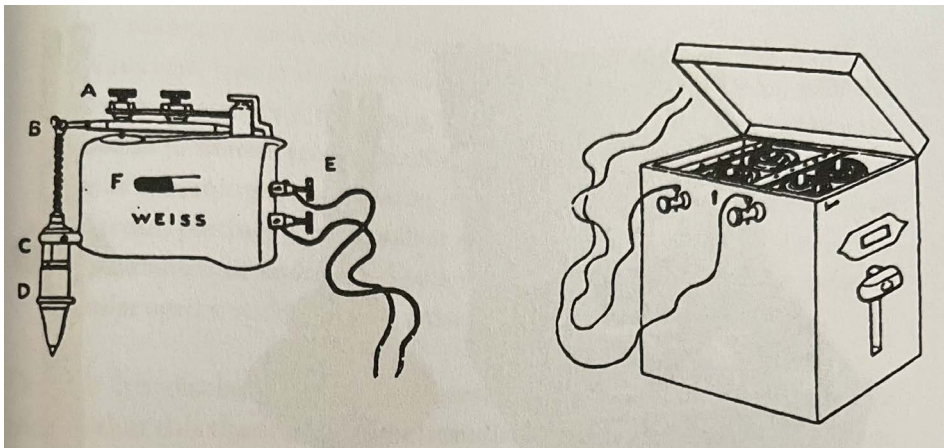


Fig. 46 Mortimer Granville's battery-powered vibrator, manufactured by Weiss, 1883, *The technology of orgasm*, p. 97, Rachel P. Maines.

Mortimer Granville, however, was firmly opposed to the use of his masseur for the treatment of women, especially female hysteria, and recommended its use only for the treatment of male skeletal muscles. (Maines, 1999) As Hallie Lieberman, *Sex Historian and Journalist*, affirms, it was female consumers who embraced their erotic potential⁶⁰. This happened covertly at first, until the early 1970s, when Betty Dodson began openly using vibrators as sexual devices in her masturbation workshops (fig. 43). Betty Dodson, a feminist sexologist and evangelist of self-pleasure, taught generations of women how to masturbate in workshops, books and videos, seeing the do-it-yourself climax as a liberating social force.



Fig. 42 Ms. Dodson at a sexuality conference in 1973. Credit..., Betty Lane/Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University (<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/03/style/betty-dodson-dead.html>), Last consultation 27/04/2022.

“Within fifteen years of the introduction of the first Weiss model in the late 1880s, more than a dozen manufacturers were producing both battery-powered vibrators and models operated with line electricity.” states Maines. Mechanized speed and efficiency improved clinical productivity, especially in the treatment of chronic disorders such as hysteria, which required a series of treatments over time. Not only did the clinical production of the “hysterical paroxysm” (orgasm) make patients feel better by decreasing their complaints, but it also resolved the dissonance of reality with the androcentric sexual model. (Maines, 1999)

The first medical vibrator didn't look like a penis so there was no connotation with the androcentric sex model. (Glover, 2013) Maines states that probably this connotation was lacking because the medical profession didn't recognize or even ignored the role of clitoral orgasm in a normal conceptual framework of female sexuality. Even though the exact job of the vibrator was to bring the patient to climax was acceptable (despite self-masturbation wasn't) because the act had become medicalized and was performed by physicians. (Glover, 2013)

The movie “Hysteria”, a 2011 British period biographical romantic comedy

(fig. 44), representing a very romanticized history is not extremely faithful to historical facts but can give an idea of how a doctor-patient meeting could take place during the treatment of the disease itself.



Fig. 43 Frame from the movie *Hysteria*, 2011, <https://quinlan.it/2011/11/04/hysteria/>, Last consultation 21/04/2022.

Roller-type devices (fig. 45) were sold in the popular market that combined massage with electrotherapy, these were sold to both genres and were advertised as especially effective for renewing sexual vigor in men. (Maines, 1999)

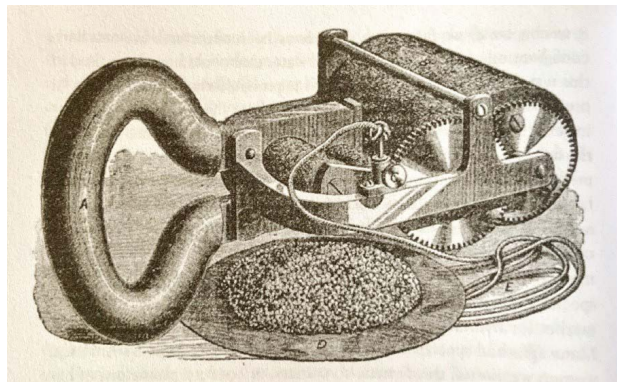


Fig. 45 Butler's Electro-massage Machine, from *Dr. John Butler's Electro-massage Machine* (New York: Butler Electro-massage, 1888), *The technology of orgasm*, p. 14, Rachel P. Maines.

By 1905 convenient portable models were available, with impressive arrays of vibrating motors, permitting use on house calls (fig. 46).



Fig. 44 Early twentieth-century medical vibrator at the Bakken Library and Museum of Electricity in Life, *The technology of orgasm*, p. 18, Rachel P. Maines.

Since mechanical and electromechanical devices could produce multiple orgasms in women in a relatively short period of time, the innovation in massage tools allowed women to have a richer exploration and discovery of their physiological powers. (Maines, 1999)

5.5 Consumer Purchase of Vibrators after 1900

The vibrator began to be advertised as a household appliance in various periodicals on home furnishings and home activities. The device was advertised to women as an object for their health and relaxation, with ambiguous sentences like "all the pleasures of youth...will throb within you." When advertised to men the sentences referred to the vibrator as device to gift to their woman, who would benefit the male givers by restoring bright eyes and pink check to their female consorts. (Maines, 1999).

Fig. 47 "Aids That Every Woman Appreciates", Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1918, The technology of orgasm, p. 105, Rachel P. Maines.

availability of home electricity must also have contributed to the popularity of the electromechanical vibrator.

Mail order was a standard method of marketing vibrators between 1900 and 1920. Sears, Roebuck and Company published an Electrical Goods catalog in 1918 that emphasized the modernity and efficiency of electrical appliances for the home (fig. 47). Among these were present, besides coffee urns, toasters, irons, electromedical apparatus, also vibrators.

For buyers the advantage was to save money on medical examinations but also to be able to make massages in the privacy of the house. (Maines, 1999)

5.6 1970s: the Sexual Revolution

Judith Glover states that after Maines work historical references to the development of sextoys after the 1920s are very rare. But he found a visual collection of Good Vibrations, founder Joani Blank (fig. 48), sex educator and therapist, which exists in the form of a catalog on their site. Blank founded one of the first female-centric sex shops in the 1970s but was also author of many guidebooks to buy sextoys.

This and a lot more incentives made it more appealing for consumers to purchase vibrators for self-treatment at home than to visit a doctor's office regularly. As Maines states:

The most obvious was cost: even a very good vibrator cost no more than four or five office visits, and it was available at all times, with no additional expenditure other than for electrical power. [...] electromechanical devices, especially those with batteries, could be used anywhere. Increasingly

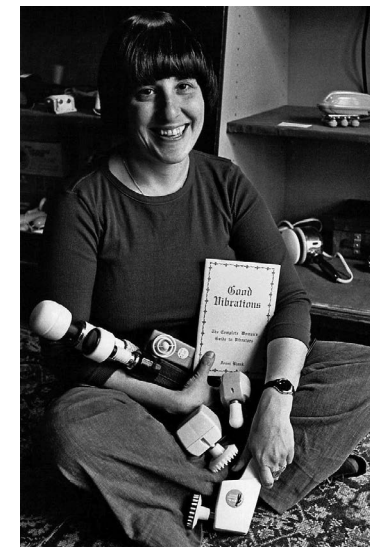


Fig. 48 Joani Blank, 1977 circa, <https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/remembering-good-vibrations-founder-joani-blank-1937-2016>, Last consultation: 28/04/2022.

There was a transition from medical device to personal beauty device in the early part of the 20th century (Glover, 2013). Good Vibration site says vibrators were sold as massagers and marketed to improve the beauty of women, including weight loss, until the 1970s, starting to produce what we now call sextoys (fig. 49).

These aids were the direct precursors of the mainstream of the mainstream adult industry product from 1970 onwards.



Fig. 49 Vibrosage, Beauty Appliance Corp. United States. circa 1944. Photo Violet Blue. Retrieved September 28, 2009, from Good Vibrations Website (2009) Antique Vibrator Museum 1921-1930. How to articles. <http://www.goodvibes.com/content.html?id=363>., (Figure 4.11 from "Taboo to Mainstream: An Industrial Design Solution to Sex Toy Production"), Judith Glover.

While these types of store, that were female centric and developed by female entrepreneurs from outside the adult industry, were the result of second wave feminism, Glover argue that the adult industry did not integrate the social changes and sexual knowledge around female rights and bodies.

Comparing the adult industry products of the late 20th century to the Victorian vibrator industry it is evident that the two types of product are based on the same identical values of the Victorian era, despite all the changes that have occurred thanks to the wins of the Sexual Revolution (Glover, 2013).

5.7 Pornography: setting of the Rules

From robust products and the industrial aesthetic of the Victorian era, we move on to smaller and compact devices in the age of adult industry. (Glover, 2013)

Glover states that the sex toy industry came to be associated with the greater adult industry from the 1970s onwards.

[...] the selling of sex toys from adult bookstores started in the 1960s. At the same time, two new companies formed in the United States in the mid-70s, Doc Johnson and Topco, growing to be two of the biggest sex toy manufacturers globally. [...] sex toy manufacturers use the same retail and distribution networks as the greater adult industry [...].

The porn industry, however, reflects the need for androcentric sexuality, recycling its symbols and historical conventions. These symbols are strongly embed in the visual language of sextoys produced by adult industry aligned companies. What the design should be concerned with is in fact the design of devices increasingly geared towards consumption by female users, who currently are the people who most buy and use sextoys. (Glover, 2013)

In paragraph 3.1 I have spoken of how much the male gaze is present not only in filmography, as studied by Mulvey, but also in other contexts. One of them is definitely pornography. Not only in the POV category (POV means Point of View, as if the video was filmed directly from the spectator) but in most mainstream porn aimed at satisfying men sexual appetite.

From a 2021 study conducted on an Italian sample of 12,590 people (38.2% male, 61.3% female, 0.2% transgender and 0.3% other genre), for the question "What is the most frequent topic of pornographic material you use?" 11.9 % (the highest percentage) answered "Lesbian", followed by the 9.2 % that answered "18 years old/Teenagers/Young". (di Mauro et al., 2021)

The "directing" present in the porn videos we can find on the biggest free porn platforms (for example Pornhub) is almost always the following: is represent an intercourse between white heterosexual people in which the framing is focused on women, while people can barely see the penis of the man (or men) involved.

This representation of the woman, as well as underlining the objectification of the female body and the gain that derive from it, supported the development of a category of sextoys mainly representing dildos or vibrators penis shaped (so there's also objectification of the male body, usually white) or sextoys for men representing white women's bodies or part of them (fig. 50, 51).



"Fig. 50 From left to right: Hard Rammer, Manufacturer, Doc Johnson, United States. Retrieved September 18, 2009 from <http://www.docjohnson.com/products/show?series=70&name=Doc+Johnson%27s+Reserve;>

Hot Latin Love, Manufacturer, Anonymous. Retrieved September 18, 2009 from <http://www.pabo.com/shopping/39813/Hot+Latin+Lover-237229320000.html?mid=1782&action=einzel&nPos=24&cid=204&svAffiliate=902&VID=2lt637rgtm15vhpcmtlq90n9g1;>

Veiny Trojan, Manufacturer, Anonymous. Retrieved September 18, 2009 from <http://www.pabo.com/shopping/39810/Veiny+Trojan-237228570000.html?mid=1782&action=einzel&nPos=96&cid=204&svAffiliate=902&VID=2lt637rgtm15vhpcmtlq90n9g1>

, (part of Figure 3.6 from ""Taboo to Mainstream: An Industrial Design Solution to Sex Toy Production""), Judith Glover."



"Fig. 51 From left to right: Jill Kelly- Haven's Pocket Pussy, CyberSkin®, Manufacturer, Topco, United States. Retrieved September 18, 2009 from http://www.topcosales.us/product_detail.asp?PID=J5409-7&LID=0;

Penthouse® Melissa Jacobs Vibrating CyberSkin® Pet Pussy & Ass, Manufacturer, Topco, United States. Retrieved September 18, 2009 from http://www.topcosales.us/product_detail.asp?PID=P9705-7&LID=0;

Plenty'o'titty, Manufacturer, Anonymous. Retrieved September 18, 2009 from

<http://www.pabo.com/shopping/56291/Plenty+o26prime3Btitty-220227800000.html?mid=1782&action=einzel&nPos=12&cid=204&svAffiliate=902&VID=qp4bja96q3a7r8vkpnl8ai3s41>

, (part of Figure 3.8 from ""Taboo to Mainstream: An Industrial Design Solution to Sex Toy Production""), Judith Glover."

There's nothing wrong with having pleasure with objects like the one represented above, but objects of this kind have been the standard for decades and, symbolically and functionally, suggest the mistaken belief that the penis is fundamental to bring pleasure to women (Glover, 2013), and in general to stimulate areas of the body, regardless of gender, in which penetration is necessary. Moreover, the adult industry is so male-focused that it lacked the most basic knowledge of female sexual physiology that may have developed product more suitable to bring pleasure to female bodies. (Glover, 2013)

The vagina in fact has very little overall nerve endings in comparison with the clitoris and areas such as the CUV zone (which means Clito-Urethro-Vaginal complex, already explained

in paragraph 2.6.3, the ex G-spot) which causes a more pleasant stimulation in some women therefore need a different shaped product. (Glover, 2013)
The vagina in fact has very little overall nerve endings in comparison with the clitoris and areas such as the CUV zone (which means Clito-Urethro-Vaginal complex, already explained in paragraph 2.6.3, the ex G-spot) which causes a more pleasant stimulation in some women therefore need a different shaped product. (Glover, 2013)

5.7.1 Taboo affects the quality

Glover states:

embedding of the sex toy industry within the adult industry has created not only a state of taboo around sex toys as products but has also affected the type and quality of products produced. They have taken on the pornography aesthetic and certain conventions of the adult industry [...].

The adult industry has always been socially marginalized and consequently also the sextoys industry. The taboo that afflicts these industries, and consequently their products, has had consequences on their production, negatively affecting their quality, censorship, and illegality in many states. The values of the porn industry dominated sex toy product until the design industry got involved in the first years of the twenty-first century. In fact the values and practices of industrial designers of that time started to change sex toy production, which opens the industry to more mainstream consumer acceptance. In those years product innovation and companies competition finally come to the market and thus pushed companies to produce better designed and more differentiated products (Glover 2013).
Glover states:

[...] the sociocultural meanings around the sex toy industry at the end of the twentieth century, rather than a lack of contemporary technological manufacturing capability, was inhibiting a mainstream commercial acceptance of this product genre and the creation of products more closely aligned with what contemporary female consumers needed or wanted.

In fact the perception of sextoys with the adult industry is also affected

by long-standing legal definitions still present in some jurisdictions that continue to define these objects as obscene and where is illegal to bring them there⁶¹.

This social and legal marginalization have allowed manufacturers of substandard products to use unsafe materials and not be prosecuted for this. Since there are no precise regulations, they have not been obliged to correctly label the products indicating the materials and the correct use. (Glover, 2019) Glover also states:

Female customers wanted quality, beauty, pleasure, something that worked well and lasted a long time. They want to be educated and access information about sex and sexuality. The long-standing embedding of sex toy production in the adult industry created the problem of the mismatch of standards, values and expectations between the biggest users and consumers of sex toys – Western females and the adult industry producers.

There was in fact no concern about the real and varied sexual needs and desires of Western women (Glover, 2013). The surveys analyzed by Glover showed there's a greater use of sextoys among women than men, an increase in use comparative to increase of education level and income, and an increase in total consumption numbers over the last 20 years. (Glover, 2019)

The mismatch of brand values and in their product communication was so jarring because it still represented women as “sluts, vixens, wannabe porn stars and naughty-nurse-type characters”, and there were also a lack of quality, safety, ergonomics and innovation. Compared to today, there was no study regarding how women really achieved pleasure, so the products were not designed to truly satisfy women.

5.7.2 Ethical Porn

Today we can say that the world of porn has really started to change. The most popular streaming sites will continue to exist and unfortunately the control of the uploaded content always remains difficult to guarantee⁶². Pornography literally means “writing about prostitutes, representing prostitutes”. So far it has been porn to suggest which sexualities are socially legitimate or discouraged, which are the acceptable practices and which are

the representable subjects worthy of being sexually desirable. (Valentine aka Fluida Wolf, 2020)

Heterosexuality has always been the norm, with exasperated sexualized bodies and well-defined roles.

Pornography since it was born has always been a product OF MEN FOR MEN: the search for pleasure is not imagined and is cut off from any narration and representation. (Valentine aka Fluida Wolf, 2020)

In the 1980s, some feminists openly protested against the industry, but it was a mistake as the protests ended with abolitionism and content censorship. In fact, the female sexual representation by the mainstream media, defined as the promotion of gender-based violence and the sexual and political subjugation of women, was condemned. As a result, there was censorship of many pornographic films, but this censorship also led to the rejection of viewing of sexual minorities, particularly lesbians for the use of dildos, specifically the lesbian masochism considered humiliating and too violent example. (Valentine aka Fluida Wolf, 2020)

There were many pro-sex activists such as Annie Sprinkle, who in 1976 experimented with extreme enjoyment techniques by interpreting sexuality as a boundless field to explore in a multitude of different approaches (Valentine aka Fluida Wolf, 2020), or as Betty Dodson (cited in paragraph 5.4) who with his activism fought for the liberation of masturbation.

In 1982, Sprinkle directed and wrote her first film, and for the first time changed the female representation in porn. In 1984 Candida Royalle founded her first production company Femme Productions (fig. 52), creating sexually appreciable films also by women representing bodies of all kinds, in which there was a real script and dialogues, the explication of the sweetness of a non-dominant male sensitivity, moments of after-care post orgasm, the use of protections and in general the will to give a positive representation of sex (Valentine aka Fluida Wolf, 2020), spurning what she called a misogynistic “wham, bam, thank you, ma’am” genre⁶³.



Fig. 52 Candida Royalle in her office in New York City in 1990, after she turned to making films. Source: Jim Estrin/The New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/movies/candida-royalle-maker-of-x-rated-films-dies-at-64.html>, Last consultation: 29/04/2022.

To date porn has come to a multitude of representations that allow people to have a wide range of genres to explore and feel comfortable in. As Valentina aka Fluid Wolf explains in her essay “POSTPORN”, mainly from the 80s to today have developed movements such as feminist porn, aligned with the more conventional porn industry, commercial, which has its own means of distribution and dissemination as its own web pages, and the postporn, whose productions enhance anonymity at the expense of the customization of specific figures. Postporn is intrinsically political, and for its radical politics it is impossible to find material online, apart from things not yet censored.

5.7.3 Feminist Porn

When we talk about feminist porn, on the other hand, we mean a political pornography that gives visibility to the pleasure and self-determination of all those subjects who have always been oppressed by patriarchy, therefore not only women but also minorities such as people from the LGBTQI+ community, disabled people, people of non-Caucasian ethnic origin. The legacy of today’s feminist porn resides in several production houses such as Lust Cinema, founded by Erika Lust in 2010 (after Lust Films in

2005): online erotic cinema that promotes films directed by women who:

- Represent realistic sex situations;
- Are equipped with cinematic quality;
- Promote a sex-positive perspective.

The project XConfessions aims to represent real anonymous confessions of sexual fantasies left by users who become real explicit shorts. This allows to infinitely expand the spectrum of representations and desires. (Valentine aka Fluida Wolf, 2020)

Users can enjoy the amount of content they want, just subscribe to the site. Paying allows actors to get paid. Independent feminist porn claims the right to compensation for what is in effect a job done.

The costs and the people involved are innumerable, those who deal with ethical porn have as their main goal to destroy exploitation, a great rift of modern times.

Those who deal with queer and feminist porn today have the goal of “educating” sexuality and pornography (Valentine aka Fluida Wolf, 2020).



Fig. 53 Erika Lust on set, <https://www.davidgos.fr/cinema-et-plaisir/porno-femme-cas-erika-lust/>, Last consultation: 03/05/2022.

5.7.4 Is Feminist Porn known Today?

I asked the sample of women who responded to my survey if they had ever heard of feminist porn or inclusive porn (Attachment 1, question 2.e). The majority of the sample, 60%, replied that they had never heard of it, while 25% knew about it but never watched any video of this kind. 19% know LustCinema, which is in fact the most well-known feminist porn company, and they also know other producers such as Angie Rowntree's Sssh⁶⁴ and Cindy Gallop's MakeLoveNotPorn⁶⁵.

The feminist porn industry is struggling to take off because the notion that porn is made by working women is hard to eradicate, while the reference to mainstream and free films is definitely more immediate for people who do not spontaneously become passionate about these issues. It is also for this reason that a sex education would lead to a deeper knowledge of this world of which values are little questioned.

5.8 When Design met the Sex Industry

“By the 1970s, mass-manufacturing technologies had moved to be produced with advanced plastic injection and silicon moulded parts, which were common and of high quality across consumer electronics industries” states Glover. The design products began to be extremely sophisticated, aesthetically elegant, very functional and of excellent quality. For sextoys it wasn't the same cause they had poor quality, unsafe material, crass designs, and a lack of innovation. (Glover, 2019)

A small number of porn entrepreneurs created a global network of manufacturing and retailing, making vast profits out of magazine and video pornography and poor-quality sextoys with huge mark-ups because nobody else would make them (Glover, 2013).

The industry harnessed the loosening of sexual morals during the Sexual Revolution to make more profits but they completely missed the second wave feminism of the twentieth century. (Glover, 2019)

The products of that time while technologically different still exhibited Victorian values to female sexuality, having a profound effect on the way women sexually practiced. (Glover, 2013)

The sextoy genre of the late twentieth century could be divided in different

sub-genres.

A quick list:

- Phallus objects
- Literal interpretations of genitalia, both male and female
- Animal forms (rabbit and dolphins were popular)
- Blow up dolls
- Sextoys disguised as other objects as lipsticks.

The most significant innovation came in the early 1990s when American company Doc Johnson created the Pocket-Rocket (fig. 54), which focused on clitoris stimulation. It was a product that finally set off a new sub-genre of smaller clitoral devices. (Glover, 2019)

By the turn of the millennium, there was an opportunity in the market, a large gap in the market placed: adult industries were not producing products for the Western women who had achieved with the feminist revolutions higher job gains, the right to a higher education and the possibility of a growing career (Glover, 2019).

At the end of the 1990s a small number of niche producers appeared to provide female-centric brands. By 2002, Myla, a British start-up lingerie



Fig. 54 The Original Pocket Rocket - White, <https://www.docjohnson.com/theoriginal-pocketrocket-white.html>, Last consultation: 02/05/2022.

company, released a small range of sextoys designed by Marc Newson and Tom Dixon (fig. 55, 56), two internationally renowned designers (Glover, 2019). The products were not particularly functional to reach orgasm but challenged the aesthetic of the genre, moreover, the famous name of the designers allowed the products to obtain a new and high exposure, promoting a new type of design-led product (Glover, 2019).

This was the breaking point for a more conscious design of sextoys. From this moment many of the brands still on the market were born, some of the most reliable and most famous.

Sexual Health brand Emotional Bliss started in 2002, Lelo in 2003, Jimmyjane in 2004, the Durex Play range was launched in 2005 using consultancy Seymour Powell, Goldfrau, OhMiBod, N-Joy and Jejoue all launched in 2006, WeVibe in 2007 and finally the decade closed with an interesting development as Philips Sound and Vision launched two vibrators onto the European market in 2008. The Hewson Group report (2009) on what they labelled the Erotic Economy discussed the potential for the high-quality, design-led side of the market if companies properly tapped into the needs and desires of their female consumers who were used to the aspirational and lifestyle marketing used by industries such as perfume and fashion (Glover, 2019).



Fig. 56 Mojo by Marc Newson for Myla, (Figure 6.4 from "Taboo to Mainstream: An Industrial Design Solution to Sex Toy Production"), Judith Glover.



Fig. 55 Bone by Tom Dixon for Myla, <https://www.designindaba.com/articles/creative-work/oh-so-hip-bone>, Last consultation: 02/05/2022.

Some of these brands have remained very popular, others have remained niche such as, for example, the jewelry sextoy line of Bethony Vernon (fig. 57), some brands have failed as in the case of Philip Play and Jimmyjane, for example, was sold to adult industry companies (Glover, 2019). What these brands initially brought to the market was a new perspective on female consumers out of the porn industry and new standards and ethics for safer design.



Fig. 57 Bethony Vernon "Double Sphere Dumortierite Massage Ring" Sterling Silver 925, https://www.1stdibs.com/jewelry/rings/cocktail-rings/betony-vernon-double-sphere-dumortierite-massage-ring-sterling-silver-925/id_i_10872602/, Last consultation: 02/05/2022.

6

Female Sextoys, the Odiern Market

6.1 Types

In this section I will explain which are the main types of sextoys on the market, explaining their various characteristics to give the right tools of understanding the work that has been done subsequently.

6.1.1 Rabbit Vibrator

I decided to put the rabbit first because it had a huge spread after being in 1998 the protagonist of an episode of the famous TV series Sex and The City. In the episode Charlotte, one of the 4 friends protagonists of the series, discovers this type of vibrator and remains addicted. That particular episode has really cleared the use of that type of vibrator that at that time sold like never before (fig. 58).



Fig. 58 Charlotte and her Rabbit Vibrator, <https://www.ruthwalker.me/post/am-i-a-pervert-pandemic-foot-peel-is-like-the-sex-and-the-city-rabbit-episode>, Last consultation: 03/05/2022.

The rabbit is a vibrator for internal stimulation, so for penetration, with a smaller part, always vibrating, to externally stimulate the clitoris (fig. 59). It is called rabbit because initially the external part was represented exactly like a small bunny (fig.60).



Fig. 59 Lovehoney Jessica Rabbit 10 Function Rabbit Vibrator, <https://www.lovehoney.com/sex-toys/vibrators/rabbit-vibrators/p/lovehoney-jessica-rabbit-10-function-rabbit-vibrator/a14099g14850.html>, Last consultation: 03/05/2022.

6.1.2 Wand Massager

Another toy in Sex and the City is the Wand Massager (fig. 60). Samantha, another protagonist of the series, complains to a salesman at the store where she bought it saying that her vibrator does not go⁶⁶. The shopkeeper says that's not a vibrator, but a neck massager. A short scene follows where the customers around them make it clear with their eloquent expressions that none of them uses that neck massager.

The wand massager is the external vibrator par excellence that began to spread in the late 90's. Its distinctive feature is the large head that contains the vibrating motor, while the handle contains the rest of the components.



Fig. 60 Magic Wand Rechargeable Extra Powerful Cordless Vibrator, <https://www.lovehoney.com/sex-toys/vibrators/massage-wand-vibrators/p/magic-wand-rechargeable-extra-powerful-cordless-vibrator/a34101g61141.html>, Last consultation: 03/05/2022.

The Magic Wand by Lovehoney (fig. 60) is certainly the most successful model.

Manufactured by Hitachi and distributed under the Vibratex name, it is an update to the original Magic Wand vibrator first sold in the early '70s. It adds more power settings, vibration patterns, a silicone head, and, most importantly, freedom from the wall socket, while keeping the original's beloved power and industrial design.

The big surprise of this toy is that it is modular. The bottom half of the case holds a standard Sanyo 18650 li-ion cell housed in its own plastic enclosure and connected to the main board in the top half with a crimped connector, glued lightly in place. This is extremely surprising, not only because the connector adds significant cost over simple solder joints but also because it will likely be more prone to failure in a vibrating device like this⁶⁷.

6.1.3 Dildo

A dildo is nothing but a vibrator, but without the vibrating function. It does not include electronic components, it can be produced using only one material (silicone, glass, ceramic, wood...) and is designed for penetrative stimulation in the vagina. You can find many types on the market, the Bouncer of Fun Factory for example is very particular because it contains balls useful for further stimulation to the vaginal walls (fig. 61).



Fig. 61 Bouncer by Fun Factory, <https://www.shopfunfactory.it/bouncer.html>, Last consultation 04/04/2022.

6.1.4 Vibrators

The classic vibrator does not stimulate the clitoris but is designed especially for the internal stimulation of the vagina. Some are just penis shaped and come in a wide array of colors and materials. While others are very clever in

their appearance. Still others don't try to disguise anything at all, they look like an actual penis complete with skin coloring, veins and even testicles. Another kind of vibrator is the G-Spot vibrator (fig. 62). These vibrators can look like or resemble curved penises or curved slim line vibes. The curve at the end is intended to stimulate the g-spot when inserted. It works best when inserted with the curve facing up toward the stomach. These vibes are helpful during masturbatory play because for some, it seems impossible for women to stimulate her g-spot to orgasm by herself with hands.



Fig. 62 Arc by Dame, <https://www.dameproducts.com/products/arc>, Last consultation 04/04/2022.

Pretty much all vibrators work by swinging an unbalanced weight around, we'll see the different kind of motors in paragraph 6.4.

6.1.5 Vibrator for External Stimulation

This type of vibrator is also called lay-on because it is placed on the vulva. There are many types of external vibrators, with diffuse or punctual stimulation, such as the one in fig. 63.



Fig. 63 Fin by Dame, <https://www.dameproducts.com/products/fin>, Last consultation: 30/03/2022

6.1.6 Clitoris Sucker

The clitoris sucker uses pulsating air technology: just like the effect of a roaring box under stage at a concert. The clitoris is enclosed in the opening, and is stimulated indirectly (fig. 64).



Fig. 64 Pro 2 by Satisfyer, <https://www.vice.com/en/article/wxdb74/best-vibrators-for-international-womens-day>, Last consultation 04/04/2022

6.1.7 Vibrator with Clitoris Sucker

This sextoy includes both internal vibration stimulation and clitoral stimulation with clitoral sucker. Imitating the double function of the rabbit, it replaces the vibration on the clitoris with the pulsed air (fig. 65).



Fig. 65 Enigma by Lelo, <https://www.lelo.com/it/enigma>, Last consultation: 25/03/2022

6.1.8 Anal Plug and Anal Beads

Butt Plugs are the kind of anal toy a person would use if she have the desire to be penetrated but not thrust. Butt plugs are inserted into the anus and left in, while the wearer engages in other types of play and stimulation. Once a butt plug is inserted a person can move into any position they want and the plug will stay in. The most important feature about butt plugs is the flared base. This flared base acts like a stopper, so the plug doesn't get sucked completely into the rectum (fig. 66).

Anal beads look like a string of pearls that get inserted into the anus one at a time. The beads can be as small as large pearls and as big as baseballs. Anal beads are very popular because the sensation of each bead being popped into and being pulled out of the anus can be very pleasurable. It's also very enjoyable for one partner to do to another (fig. 67).



Fig. 66 Glow in the dark anal plug blue xs by Nsnovelties, <https://wovostore.com/products/glow-in-the-dark-anal-plug-blue-xsst-plug0014?variant=42295966925018>, Last consultation 21/04/2022.



Fig. 67 Anal Beads Purple by Calextotics, <https://wovostore.com/products/anal-beads-purplest-bead0038?variant=42295879631066>, Last consultation 21/04/2022.

6.1.9 Kegel Balls

The vaginal balls, also known as kegel balls, are balls that can be single, double or triple. Inside them there may also be balls of metal or rubber that, during the movements that can normally be done with the body as simply walking, move by stimulating the vaginal walls and the pelvic floor, in order to increase tone (fig. 68). They are therefore the perfect ally to train the pelvic floor and increase the pleasure and sexual well-being, when it is

really necessary to use them. In recent years e-shops of sextoys, including the most famous, have advertised them describing them as an object for everyday use, but you need to know that the pelvic floor is tonic in itself, and it is not always healthy to use them. In cases of pregnancy or pelvic floor prolapse are very useful as an aid to train your vaginal muscles but it is always useful to hear the advice of a doctor.



Fig. 68 Geisha Balls with vertical reliefs by Easytoys, <https://www.easytoy.it/easytoys-geisha-balls-con-rilievi-verticali-rosa-p-24102/>, Last consultation 21/04/2022.

6.1.10 Toys for Couple Penetrative Sex

Couples-toys are mostly wearable toys, which can stimulate the vagina, penis, clitoris, testicles, or even more than one part. They are vibrating devices that are inserted into the vagina and whose shape allows them to stay in place during sexual intercourse.

In fig. 69 and fig. 70 are shown two different kind of couple-toys. The first type is the most widespread, one part is inserted into the vagina and the other remains outside to stimulate the clitoris, and both vibrate.

The second is a less traditional model, which is positioned in a completely different way. Eva nestles between the lips and remains in position.



Fig. 69 Double Joy by Satisfyer, [https://www.satisfyer.com/it/satisfyer-double-joy-connect-app/?num-ber=](https://www.satisfyer.com/it/satisfyer-double-joy-connect-app/?number=), Last consultation 21/04/2022.



Fig. 70 Eva by Dame, <https://www.dameproducts.com/collections/all/products/eva-ii>, Last consultation 04/05/2022.

6.2 Meanings and objects of identity

6.2.1 Toys to be showed-off

Product design is a combination of many things. It is about value creation and those values must match the expectations or lifestyle aspirations of the consumers you want to attract to your products or brand. The objects we create as designers embody many layers of meaning (Glover, 2019). Every time people talk about sextoys they link the meaning to masturbation and sexual activities. But it's not only about this. It's about how everyone feel about it and why they use it.

Owning or showing a sextoy today, also given the advancement that design has made in the field in the last 20 years, has in many cases become an identity behavior. In my survey (Attachment 1), in question 5.a 12,1% of girls affirmed they like sextoys aesthetically and they collect them, and 2,1% leave them visible in the house, they want to show them and make them visible for people. This means finally today sextoys are no longer just objects to hide because they are deeply linked to intimacy but are also considered by people as objects that talk about them, their values, the multiple types of personality that can exist.

6.2.2 Non-sexual Objects branded as Sextoys

There are also kind of objects targeted as sextoys but not really related to sex. A perfect example is packers for trans people. A packer is not intended to be used during sexual acts but is an object trans people use to fight gender dysphoria (Döring & Poeschl, 2020).

Gender dysphoria occurs when the inconsistency between one's gender identity (one's perception of one's own feeling male or female) and the gender assigned at birth (and the role associated with that gender and/or those primary or secondary sexual characteristics) is accompanied by suffering, malaise and stress (Tornese et al., 2016).

There are packers of various types, such as those to urinate and feel more comfortable with your body even a common and daily activity such as urination (fig. 71), or one to wear in your swimsuit or underwear to simulate the presence of a penis.



Fig. 71 Stand-to-pee packer in pink silicone, <https://wovostore.com/products/stand-to-pee-packer-silicone-pinkbs-stp0004?variant=42295864787162>, Last consultation 04/05/2022.

6.3 Materials

6.3.1 Jelly

Jelly is a commercial term for a very soft plastic, and unfortunately indicates that the toy made from this material may not be safe. As we will see later, the regulation for sextoys has never been defined precisely, the market has huge flaws because people can easily run into the purchase of a product that is unsafe and even can be harmful. This term is used when the plastic used is extremely soft, often sticky and a repository for bacteria cause the material is very porous. For rigid plastics such as ABS, in fact, the material is usually declared by the seller or by the manufacturer in case the production is for safe objects.

Usually this material contains a large amount of phthalates. Phthalates are defined by the scientific community as «endocrine disrupting and carcinogenic». They are substances that usually present themselves as colorless liquids, they are also used to make the plastic more foldable (that's

why they are used for sextoys) but for their dangerousness the production of products with a concentration greater than 0.1% has been banned. Jelly toys typically are inexpensive, translucent, can feel almost “slimy”, melts in high heat (fig. 72).



Fig. 72 Ripple T-Plug by Jelly Rancher, <https://www.amazon.it/Toys-JELLY-RANCHER-T-PLUG-RIPPLE/dp/B00VU6R2HW>, Last consultation 05/04/2022

6.3.2 Medical Grade Silicone

Medical grade silicones are silicones tested for biocompatibility and are appropriate to be used for medical applications. Probably, if you don't think about sextoys (like the ones in fig. 63), the first medical grade silicone application that can come to mind is breast implants. In the medical environment, silicones are used for many purposes and objects such as tubing, drains, valves (fig. 73), feeding tubes, catheters, implants for long- and short-term use, seals and gaskets, syringe pistons⁶⁸...

Silicone rubbers are formulated polymer masses that with the addition of appropriate catalyst or curing agent. They are called HTV (High Temperature Vulcanizing) if they vulcanize at high temperature, and RTV (Room Temperature Vulcanizing) if they vulcanize at room temperature.



Fig. 73 Medical grade silicone valve, <https://www.amazon.it/Toys-JELLY-RANCHER-T-PLUG-RIPPLE/dp/B00VU6R2HW>, Last consultation 05/04/2022

Liquid silicone rubber (LSR) are liquid silicone rubbers that are particularly suitable, due to their low viscosity, to be injected into a mould and are generally made up of two components to be mixed at the time of processing. The curing time of these products varies according to the type of catalyst or curing agent and the process temperature⁶⁹.

Silicone and fluoro-silicone elastomers have long chains of linked O-Si-O-Si- groups (replacing the -C-C-C-C- chains in carbon-based elastomers), with methyl or fluorine side chains. They have poor strength, but can be used over an exceptional range of temperature (-100 C t +300 C), have great chemical stability, and an unusual combination of properties.

Depending on the length of the siloxane chain, its branching and the functional groups, numerous materials with various characteristics can be obtained.

On the market there are silicones of the most varied consistency, from oily to rubbery, which can be divided into various classes of application, such as:

- liquids
- emulsions
- compounds
- lubricants
- resins
- elastomers
- plastics.

In fact, lubricants for sexual use can also be silicone-based. They cannot be

used with silicone sextoys because they would cause damage.

6.3.3 Plastic (ABS...)

ABS is one of the most common materials belonging to the class of toughened polymers, a particular type of mixture in which rigid polymer matrices (amorphous glassy or semi-crystalline polymers) are modified by the addition of a certain percentage of rubbery polymer. It is obtained by mixing the copolymer Styrene-Acrylonitrile (SAN) with polybutadiene (PB), in a ratio of 80/20.

ABS is a tough polymer, and its main uses in industry are for the bodies of household appliances, furniture and toys. It is in fact a bodysafe material that finds in the sextoys industry a wide use for toys of different types, such as rigid vibrators or clitoral suckers (fig. 74).



Fig. 74 Premium 2 by Womanizer, <https://www.womanizer.com/it/premium-2#color=71>, Last consultation 05/04/2022

6.3.4 Glass

Glass is a hypoallergenic material, resistant, durable (even for life if well cared for) and particularly elegant. The glass used to make the safest toys is borosilicate glass (fig. 72), also known as Pyrex, which has good chemical resistance and excellent resistance to thermal shock, due to the low

coefficient of thermal expansion.

It is literally the same type of glass used to make ovenproof ovens, in fact the toys in this material can be safely washed in the dishwasher.

Glass sextoys are interesting because, in addition to being robust and having good strength, they have excellent thermal conductivity. This means that they can be heated or cooled (in hot or cold water or in the refrigerator) depending on your needs of the moment.

The Lalleri brand has created products in this material that particularly enhance the aesthetic characteristics (fig. 75).



Fig. 75 Olé Torchon by Lalleri, <https://www.lalleri.it/prodotto/ole-torchon/>, Last consultation 05/04/2022

6.3.5 Ceramic

White ceramics represent a wide class of white-looking products that frequently contain glass components. They consist of clay, silica and feldspar. In particular, the type of clay used for the production of white ceramics of excellent quality is kaolin, because it gives the material a white, translucent and vitreous appearance particularly appreciated from the aesthetic point of view.

White ceramic products are divided into three main classes, depending on

the degree of vitrification (and the resulting porosity):

- glassy
- semivitreous
- porous.

White ceramics are completely glassy porcelain. Thanks to the high glass content, they can be used unglazed, have a high strength and toughness and low water absorption (Cigada et al., 2008).

For sextoys (fig. 76) the simplicity of the form allows for more complex ornamentation, so allows for graphical variations that expand consumer choice. The use of ceramics also allows to enrich the object with decorations with processes not usable on other materials (Glover, 2013). One of the downsides is that ceramic has a connotation of fragility, because it refers to porcelain made of very delicate materials. Ceramic, however, is a very resistant material if made in a proper way, for Glover in fact the greatest obstacle has been to overcome this consumers perception. A product made with glazed ceramic has very low friction, so it's super comfortable on skin and live tissue.

Glover could test the forces required to break the product were substantially higher than the maximum muscle strength of the vaginal muscles, so it's super safe to use. Another safety issue is the composition of the decal and its potential ability to wear off over time. Glover resolved this resolved by a use of a food safety decal, which has an extra layer over the decal ink that prevents wear or degradation (Glover, 2013).



Fig. 76 Goldfrau ceramic dildo by Judith Glover, <https://www.core77.com/posts/46447/Meet-the-Jury-for-the-1HDC-Judith-Glover-on-Improving-the-Sex-Toy-Industry>, Last consultation 04/04/2022

6.3.6 Wood

Wooden sextoys, such as ceramic sextoys, are not suitable for industrial production but are produced by hand in small batches.

This is the case of Silvia Picari (fig. 77), a young architect who decided to work with cherry wood to produce sextoys that are unique in their shapes and colours (fig. 78), taking inspiration from the art world⁷⁰.

Wood is a strongly anisotropic material, that is its properties, in particular the mechanical ones, as well as its appearance, vary depending on which direction is considered (Cigada et al., 2008).

The density of wood is directly related to its mechanical strength, as it is related to the thickness of the cell wall. A particular wood is classified according to its resistance.

Silvia Picari has chosen for her toys cherry wood, which works at the lathe in her laboratory.

The solid wood used is made of cherry wood and is covered with several layers of non-toxic food paint that make it completely waterproof, totally safe (all their paints are food, non-toxic and certified) and compatible with the use of water-based and silicone lubricants. Wood is a durable and warm material, which can give unexpected sensations.

Picari emphasizes the importance of enhancing craftsmanship as an alternative to the serial model, the disposable one that certainly leads to serious consequences for the planet⁷¹. It would certainly be much better if mass-produced products were also examples of awareness in a world that is changing faster and faster.



Fig. 77 Silvia Picari al lavoro nel suo laboratorio di Torino, <https://eco-a-porter.com/2018/05/09/i-sex-toys-di-silvia-picari-i-tanti-piaceri-del-legno/>,



Fig. 78 Love Toys by Silvia Picari, <https://www.silviapicari.com/it/about/>, Last consultation 05/05/2022.

6.3.7 Metal

For the production of sextoys is mainly used stainless steel. It is one of the steel classes of greatest technological interest given their corrosion resistance, guaranteed by the presence of a minimum chromium content of 12% which gives the material an excellent passivability, this means that on the surface of the metal is formed a film of very thin and invisible oxide that protects the material from corrosion. They are ferro-carbon-chromium alloys (often also containing nickel) that find various applications including that of sextoys. There are companies like Njoy⁷² which essentially produces stainless steel toy (fig. 79). In their case it is AISI 316 austenitic stainless steel, which contains molybdenum and a higher percentage of nickel than other similar steels, such as AISI 304. This allows to have a greater resistance to corrosion, a deep and lustrous finish, and added strength and toughness.

In the field of objects, stainless steel is often used also for its property of maintaining its appearance in many natural and non natural environments (Cigada et al., 2008).



Fig. 79 Pure Wand by Njoy, <https://www.easytoy.it/njoy-pure-wand-p-31193/>, Last consultation 04/05/2022.

6.3.8 Biodegradable materials

Iroha, the women's line of the Japanese brand Tenga, was released in 2021 with a 98% water-based sextoy. This is Iroha Petit (fig. 80-82), it has a complete different texture and consistency. It can be cooled in the refrigerator or heated in a hot bath or in your hands, to bring it to the desired temperature.

The iroha petit is a small, portable product so it can always be with you. It is easy to dispose of, with a body made of biodegradable material.

It is an object that costs very little, currently costs 8€, so it can be a valid alternative for yourself, when you want to try something new without then leaving it forever in a drawer, or as an alternative gift to low-priced sextoys that often for goliardia are given away. In this way, in addition to an original choice, a conscious choice is made.



Fig. 80 Iroha Petite Lily, Shell and Plum, <https://iroha-tenga.com/en/petit/>, Last consultation 05/05/2022.



Fig. 81 Iroha Petite Plum, <https://iroha-tenga.com/en/petit/>, Last consultation 05/05/2022.



Fig. 82 Iroha Petite packaging, <https://iroha-tenga.com/en/petit/>, Last consultation 05/05/2022.

6.3.9 Material comparison

In this graph (fig. 83) I want to compare materials specific stiffness and strength. Specific properties are properties that have been divided by the material density. This chart is useful for identifying materials for components which require high stiffness and/or strength combined with low weight. It's notable that the majority of the materials have a very high young's modulus, so they're very rigid. The only materials that allows for a safe elastic deformation are silicones.

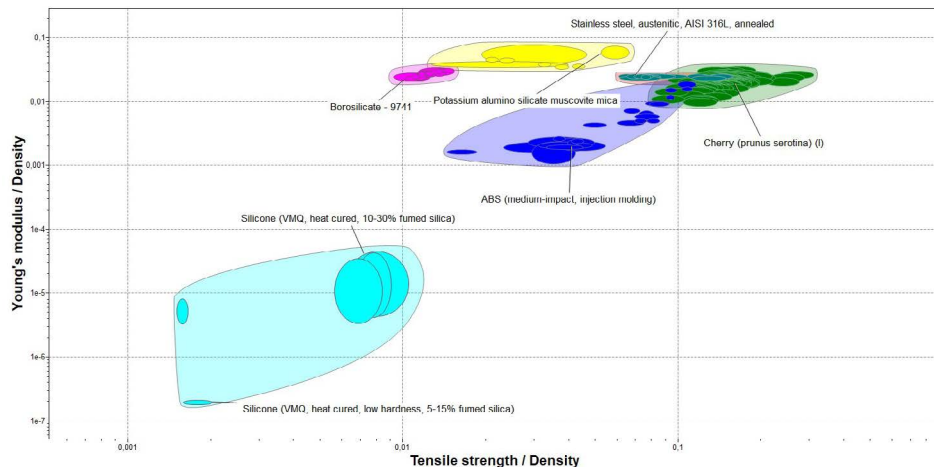


Fig. 83 Graph: Young's modulus/Density and Tensile strength/Density, Granta Edupack, 2021.

From the following graph (fig. 84) we can see that as expected medical silicone is the least stiff material and the lightest material is wood. The selected woods are those with medium density with longitudinal fibers (in which there is cherry wood, used by Picari), so despite being light, a balanced shape and this kind of rigidity are able to give to the products a particular composition.

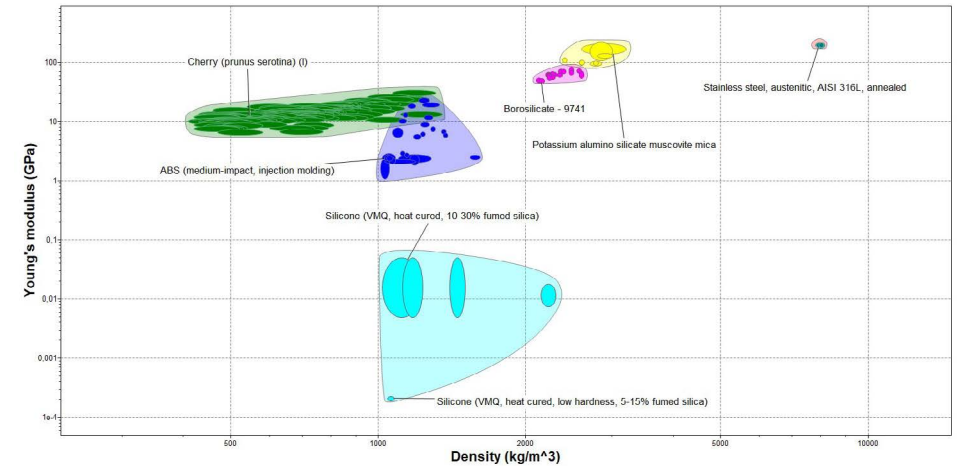


Fig. 84 Graph: Young's modulus and Density, Granta Edupack, 2021.

Comparing the prices of the various materials according to their density, we see that wood is the cheapest material when analyzed in this comparison, while glass, stainless steel searcher and sheath are the most expensive (fig. 85).

This graph only serves to give an idea of the cost of the raw material, because it is to be taken into account that the prices of the final products vary in a consistent way. Glass, clay and wood are almost always handcrafted, so having no additional components the cost is calculated on the fact that they are made one by one in small batch sizes. On the contrary, silicone, Abs and stainless steel are manufactured industrially. Many of the products made with elastomers and hard plastics are vibrators that therefore contain additional components, such as motor, battery, pcb, which therefore give an additional cost depending on the components chosen.

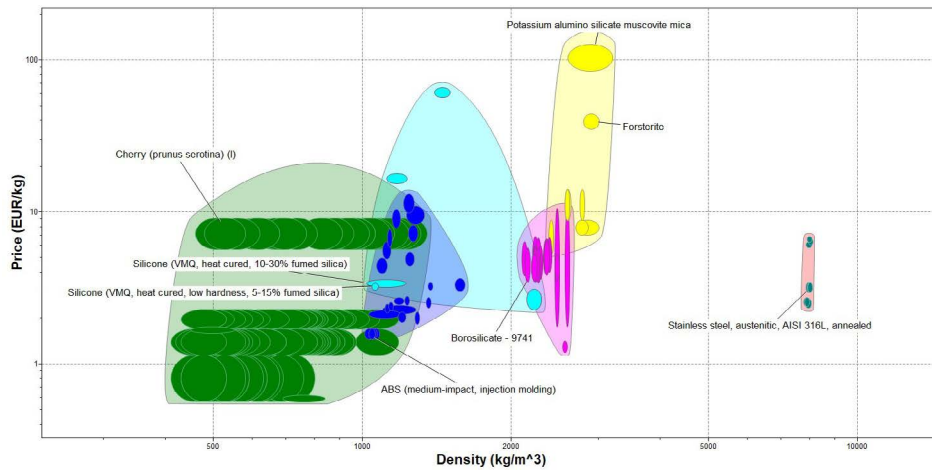


Fig. 85 Graph: Price and Density, Granta Edupack, 2021.

6.4 Technologies

6.4.1 Motors

Vibration is the soul of a sextoy, finding the right stimulation for yourself is crucial.

A vibration is a relatively small and rapid mechanical oscillation; it is the displacement that repeatedly makes a moving body around a point of equilibrium to move away and back to the starting position. To describe a vibration, amplitude and frequency are necessary. Amplitude is the maximum displacement that the body, vibrating, performs with respect to the starting point when it is at rest, while the frequency indicates in Hertz when oscillations occur in a second. Vibration generally has a relatively small amplitude and a relatively high frequency.

To understand what kind of vibration you want in the purchase of a vibrator you need to know the two categories of engines on the market: buzzy motors and rumbly motors.

The **buzzy vibration** have a very high frequency and a very small amplitude, emit a sound similar to a very noisy hum, similar to that of an electric

shaver. These vibrations can generate a numbing sensation on the part of the body where they are applied, sometimes even on the hand holding the vibrator if this is very small. They are perceived very much on the surface and very little in depth. It is very likely to find this type of vibration in inexpensive toys not rechargeable and running on batteries. Vibration is more bearable in the vagina, because externally it can lead to a temporary numbness and desensitization of the clitoris if it is used for a prolonged time.

The **rumbly motors** have a lower frequency and a greater amplitude, they generate a very wide vibration that is deep on the body, releasing a feeling that can hardly be annoying even for people with greater sensitivity. These characteristics make the vibration even more visible when held at the lowest power. Rumbly vibrations can move more mass and stimulate the body deeper, not only superficially, so the perceived sensation is more intense but generally not annoying. (Messinese & Nerri, 2020)

6.4.2 Air Pulse Technology

Clitoris suckers works with this kind of stimulation (paragraph 6.1.6). With air pulse technology the clitoris is stimulated without direct contact. Gentle vibrations caused by the air suck and massage the clitoris at the same time, propagating the sensation also indirectly to the inner parts of the clitoris. The concept is exactly that of the roaring effect that has on the bodies a concert chest. Your hair is flying but you feel the chest pulsating in your stomach as well. This is exactly what happens to your clitoris. Womanizer is a brand that has mastered the creation of toys with this technology, together with Satisfyer⁷³ and Lelo. Being a toy with a very punctual stimulation, which may not please everyone, it is not recommended as a first toy by sex counselors. Often the costs for a quality clitoral sucker are not low and it pays to choose something less focused for the first experiences.

6.4.2 Air Pulse Technology

The simple definition of teledildonics is sex toys that utilize an internet connection to provide a physical sensation. So, for example, if the toy works

with an app that controls the toy through a slider, the vibrator buzzes more intensely. So, they can be controlled from anywhere by sending data back and forth between a device and a controller. That means that you can control a sex toy your partner is using and vice versa, thus creating a long-distance version of the kind of physical intimacy that has so far only existed when all partners are in the same location.

This kind of technology has been so important during Covid-19 Pandemic, or it can be thrilling and exciting when you go to the restaurant and you want to spice up the moment.

A lot of people however say that using a toy that works via app when you are on your own is frustrating because they are forced to use the device with one hand and the toy with the other, having to focus on two different devices while could also worsen the experience.

A good example is the Crescendo sextoy by MysteryVibe (fig. 86). The toy has is elongated and contains within 6 motors with 6 modes of vibration selectable. It can certainly surprise for the possibility of different stimulations, because it is the toy that probably contains more motors in absolute, is articulated, and lasts hours. But the effect obtained is opposite to the focus on your own pleasure because it places the user to focus on the endless possibilities, also it is difficult to exploit six engines very close to each other that vibrate differently during penetration⁷⁴.

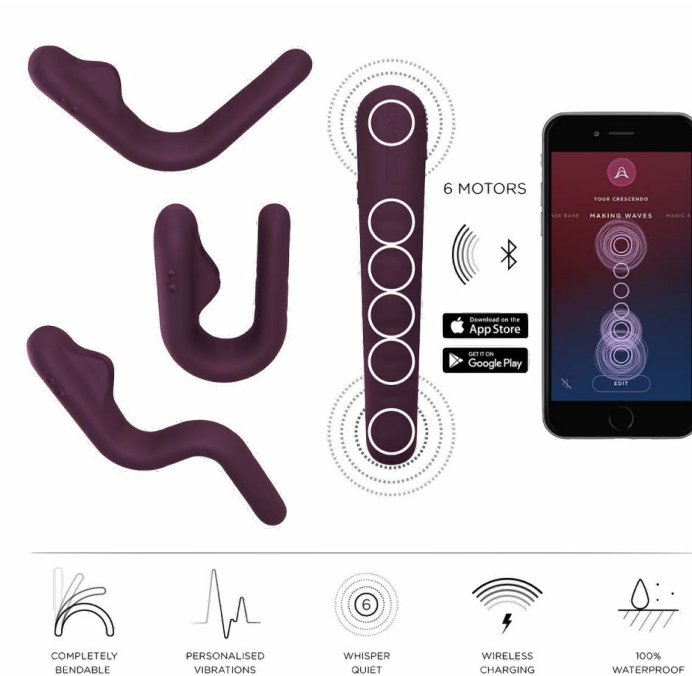


Fig. 86 Crescendo and its app by MysteryVibe, <https://missrubyreviews.com/review-mysteryvibe-crescendo/>, Last consultation 05/05/2022.

7

Brands changing Today's Perspectives on Sextoys

7.1 The more reliable

In this paragraph I will give an overview of which are the best-selling brands currently in stores and on e-shops which differ, totally or in part, from objects with explicit anatomical features.

For each brand I will write when and where it was born, what is their communication and what targets they refer to. I'll describe the kind of products they create and what technologies and materials they use to produce them.

7.1.1 Fun Factory

Where and when

Fun Factory was the first company to propose itself with a design that represented values far from those of the adult industry.

They're born in Bremen, Germany, in 1996. Every step of the production process, from design to packaging, takes place in their factory, today it is the only European company able to do this ⁷⁵.

Motto

Their slogan is "Have a Fun Day!", in fact they strongly believe in the combination of fun and pleasure.

Collaborations

They collaborated with designers such as Judith Glover and Karim Rashid for a branded Toybag.

Materials

Their sextoys are made from 100% body-safe materials, and since 1996 they employ eco-friendly methods and fair working policies to produce their products⁷⁶.

They have rechargeable products or sextoys working with batteries. Some of them can be recharged in both ways.

Products

Most of their sextoys are for penetration. In addition they have also created stimulators for the penis and for the vulva, for example Laya (fig.87). One of their iconic products is Patchy Paul, created for the stimulation of the CUV area.

Stronic G is their first product to have a thrusting movement, so it's head move back and forth to stimulate the CUV area even if the sextoy is not moved by hands.

7.1.2 Iroha

Where and when

Iroha is the name of the line of women's products of Tenga, a Japanese brand very famous in Italy. A brand created by women, for women, to provide a delectable experience unlike any other.

Motto

Redefining Pleasure is the rule of Iroha. For them, eating well, being active, and getting enough rest are the cornerstones of good health, and for them self-care is very important. They believe that the pleasure our bodies seek is something to be valued as a key element of self-care.

Collaborations

Tenga has on its website a section where there are products made in collaboration with other brands⁷⁷. These include the Tenga Egg x Keith Haring and the Tenga Cup x Ripndip.

Materials

The body of the iroha products is made of bodysafe Silicone.

With iroha's splashproof design, it can be washed with water for easy maintenance. Iroha also produces Iroha Petit, a line of biodegradable products composed of 99% water.

Products

Iroha products are designed for the external stimulation of the vulva. Some of them have elongated shapes that could also be used for penetration but mainly the type of density of the material and the texture of the products suggests possible multiple uses of the product.

7.1.3 Dame

Where and when

Founded in 2014 by sexologist Alexandra Fine and MIT engineer Janet Lieberman, Dame has always been about making an impact, inside and outside the bedroom. Eva was the most crowdfunded sextoy in history⁷⁸.

Motto

On their website the first thing that can be read is a question: "What's your pleasure?". They want to help people find the vibe they're looking for.

Materials

For each of their product they use medical grade silicone.

Products

Dame designs sextoys with multiple uses, with simple but recognizable lines. They sell external vibrators, CUV vibrators and sextoys for couple penetrative sex.

Award

They win the Most Innovative Wellness Companies of 2020, of FastCompany.

7.1.4 Crave

Where and when

In 2008, industrial designer, Ti Chang, founded INCOQNITO, a line of intimate accessories that double as fashionable jewelry, thus creating the category of sex jewelry. Soon after, Michael Topolovac, a serial entrepreneur, was in the early stages of founding Crave, working to bring modern products and an improved buying experience to the category. By serendipity, Michael and Ti met at a convention in 2010 and joined forces to bring Crave to life and grow it into the brand it is today.

Motto

YOUR PLEASURE, YOUR TERMS. CRAVE welcomes people on their website, where intimate pleasure meets self-expression to empower beautiful experiences.

Projects

Crave has carried on over time several projects, such as the Pleasure Tour: they transformed a 1961 Airstream into a mobile vibrator factory, showroom, and design studio. In 2018, they took it on the road, touring across the US in an effort to open up conversation around sex and pleasure.

Materials

Their products are made in combinations of high polish 316 stainless steel and medical grade silicon

Products

All the products are for external stimulation of the vulva.

7.1.5 Lelo

Where and when

The brand that would become LELO was born in 2003 in the living room of a house in Stockholm, where three designers found themselves with the right idea. It was an idea that, in the end, would reshape and transcend the boundaries of an entire sector, and it was born from a simple question: what if the objects of sexual pleasure were as beautiful as those that flaunt themselves with more pride?

Motto

Come Together!

Materials

LELO recreational devices are made of silicone and ABS thermoplastic polymers specially designed for the body, which make them both waterproof and heat resistant. Some of the devices also contain aluminum alloy and gold leaves.

Products

Lelo produces toys for female and male masturbation, both internal and external.

Awards

Among the various awards won are those of XBIZ Europa awards, as Luxury Brand of the Year, won in 2021 and of ADULTEX, as Best Range of Luxury Toys, in 2019.

7.1.6 Lora Di Carlo

Where and when

Lora DiCarlo started in 2017. Our premier device was inspired by the experience and persistence of our founder and CEO, Lora Haddock DiCarlo, and developed in partnership with Oregon State University's Robotics & Engineering Lab.

Collaborations

In 2021 the brand had actress, model, and activist Cara Delevingne join the team as a Co-Owner and Creative Advisor.

Materials

Lora DiCarlo products are made from high quality, body-safe materials, including premium silicone and ABS plastic. Their products are also phthalate and latex-free.

Products

The brand has in its catalog external vibrators for the clitoris, vibrators for the CUV area and products such as lubricants and massage oils.

Awards

In 2019 the annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas banned a Lora di Carlo sextoy from its halls, saying "The message Osé's banishment sends is that women's sexual pleasure has no place at CES". The CTA told the toy's manufacturer Lora DiCarlo that products "deemed by CTA in their sole discretion to be immoral, obscene, indecent, profane or not in keeping with CTA's image" were barred.

Fortunately the award was returned to Carlo Lora, who said that sexual health technology is gaining acceptance in the tech space.

7.1.7 Womanizer

Where and when

The story of the WOMANIZER™ begins in a southern Bavarian village in the Allgau. Michael Lenke and his wife decided that the outdated sex toy market was in urgent need of change. The couple's work had its debut in 2014, when the world's first WOMANIZER™ was launched.

Motto

Go. Love yourself! At WOMANIZER™ they believe that solo sex is self-love in best practice. That's why they say they promote talking openly about masturbation, also encouraging conversations through their blog.

Collaborations

Womanizer collaborated with famous pop singer Lily Allen to create a special edition of Liberty⁷⁹, a clitoral sucker with very bright pop colors that stimulates with the air vibrations of Pleasure Air Technology.

Materials

The products are all bodysafe ABS products, so they are rigid and designed to be held in the hand while the Air Technology works on the clitoris. In 2021 they launched on the market PREMIUM eco⁸⁰, an eco version of their bestseller. They talked about reducing as much plastic as possible. On their website they states "Biolene, a bio-based material, is largely made from renewable raw materials. It's an excellent eco-friendly alternative to plastic, avoiding environmentally damaging waste".

Products

Womanizer essentially produces clitoral suckers.

Awards

Womanizer has won several awards such as l'EAN Award for Best Luxury product Line and for Highest Mainstream Appeal in 2019, as the ETO Awards for Best Luxury Brand in 2020.

7.1.8 Yspot, early stage

Where and when

Yspot is an Italian brand born in Milan in 2020, so it really is at an early stage, from the idea of Aurelie Bellavigna and Daniele Brega.

Motto

Wellbeing For All. Yspot rethinks sexual and intimate well-being within a new positive and inclusive perimeter. The brand says that there is no well-being without sexual well-being. The approach to sexuality must be changed because the aura of shame must disappear. Their mission is to give all the tools to explore your body and your feelings without judgment or shame.

Materials

Yspot relied on the best vibratory material: medical grade silicone. Free of phthalates, rubber, gels and other cheap materials, with our toys you just have to indulge in a fantastic pleasure experience.

Products

The brand has adapted to today's sextoys market by creating products with very simple shapes and very light colors. It mainly produces vibrators and clitoral suckers but also products for sexual well-being and merchandise products.

8

Sexyshops: the State of the Art

8.1 Sexyshop: from their Beginnings to Today's Shops

Sex shops are taken for granted these days, a run-of-the-mill part of city centers and strip malls, but they are a fairly modern development.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the idea of a shop selling erotic devices was impossible. Condoms were sold in chemists or barbers' shops under euphemistic names ("something for the weekend, sir?")

Sex was generally not discussed in public or formally taught, the assumption being that people would just figure it out themselves. This of course didn't work⁸¹.

In 1945, a German woman named Beate Uhse found herself out of a job. She was 24 and widowed with a young son and had spent the war as a non-combat Luftwaffe pilot. Having been brought up in a progressive, liberated household, Uhse spotted a gap in the market. She set up a mail-order company selling any type of product related to sexuality, from lingerie to advice for a "marital hygiene"⁷⁷.

By 1962, her company was doing so well that she opened a store, the world's first modern sex shop, albeit one with the not-so-modern name The Institute For Marital Hygiene. It grew into a chain, and within a decade there were similar stores all over Europe and the US.

To open a sexy shop in Italy we unfortunately had to wait for 2001 with the Sexyshock (fig. 84). These sexy shops, although the objects were still strongly related to the world of porn, have managed to propose different imaginaries by expanding the political discourse on the use of sextoys with workshops, seminars, book presentations and DIY workshops.



Fig. 87 Sexyshock, First sexyshop for women in Italy, <http://www.betty-books.com/2018/01/15/sex-toys-design-e-comunicazione-una-lettura-femminista/>, Last consultation: 02/04/2022.

In recent years, many sexyshops have had to close following an e-shop boom⁸².

Among those who survived there are also the shops that propose a different, more inclusive and not stereotypical narration of sexuality, and are the shops that fortunately are proliferating. In the next two paragraphs we see the differences between these two types of shop.

8.2 Traditional Sexy Shops and the Representation of Women

If you do not understand what I mean by traditional sexyshop, just imagine those shops completely inscrutable from the outside, with little visible door or on the back, neon signs and placed at the edge of the suburbs or near the ring roads.

Personally, I only got into a place like this once, out of curiosity about the items on sale, how the store was organized, how the products were advertised, and curiosity to enter a place that in effect does not give the idea that wants to be visited. Like there's something wrong with getting in there.

What I saw was exactly what I expected. A place that, being obscured, eliminates any perception of an external light. It is obscured because it would be inconvenient to show the products outside, it would not be appropriate, for the perception that you have today of objects related to sexuality.

The main problem is that these types of stores are still tied to a patriarchal view of women. To advertise the products are represented thin, white, provocative women, so the idea of inclusion of multiple bodies, the representation of more reality is not taken into account. Women remain objects, used to sell and satisfy the male gaze (fig. 85-87).



Fig. 88 Inside of a mainstream sexy shop, <https://www.beforeafter.rs/drustvo/sex-shop/>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.



Fig. 89 Sexy shop Vasi snovi, <https://www.oglas-srbija.com/oglas/ostale-rubrike/razno/razno-razno/sexy-shop-vasi-snovi/>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

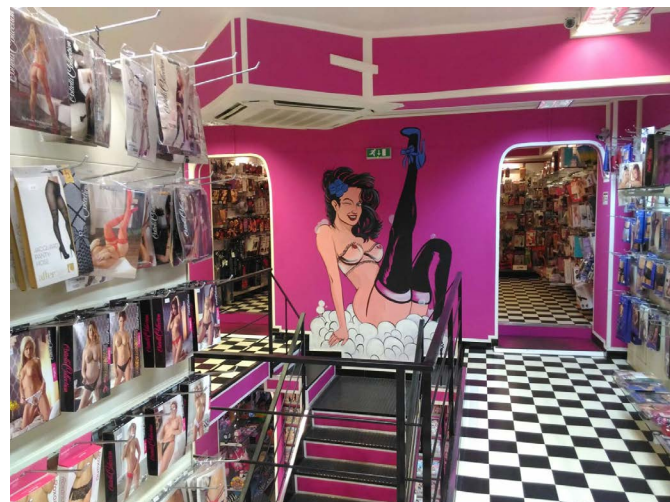


Fig. 90 Interior of an Italian sexyshop, <https://www.ecodiparma.it/2019/07/10/industria-del-sesso-cre-scita-boom-acquisto-gadget-tramite-sexy-shop-online/>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

8.3 Inclusive Sexy Shops

In recent years, fortunately, more respectful and generally more inclusive sex shops have also been created in Italy, despite this having happened well after the rest of Europe and beyond.

There are no images of thin and sexy women with skimpy nurse costumes, they do not hide behind stained glass windows, it is not difficult to understand where you enter. On the contrary, these shops are well lit and invite to enter, rather than intimidate.

8.3.1 WOVOSTore

One of these shops is definitely WOVO (fig. 88, 89), founded by Frida Affer.

At WOVO (and on their e-shop) you can find sextoys and lingerie for all tastes and a staff prepared to answer customers' questions.

Over the years he has managed to create a community that has made as its strengths inclusivity and a positive attitude towards sexuality.

WOVO is not just a store but has a lot of outreach projects (via social media and other platforms are not online but also physical) that can reach more people than those who would only attract with the store (banally also for the fact that being in Milan is not accessible by everyone).

They created an Instagram channel on which they post posts, videos and stories of dissemination and information both on topics related to sexuality and sextoys, and allow people to have video consultation to better understand what kind of toys to buy if they can't go directly to the store. One of their sex toys consultants is Andrea Sole, sex educator, who has been extremely helpful in helping me get to know some sextoys I didn't know.

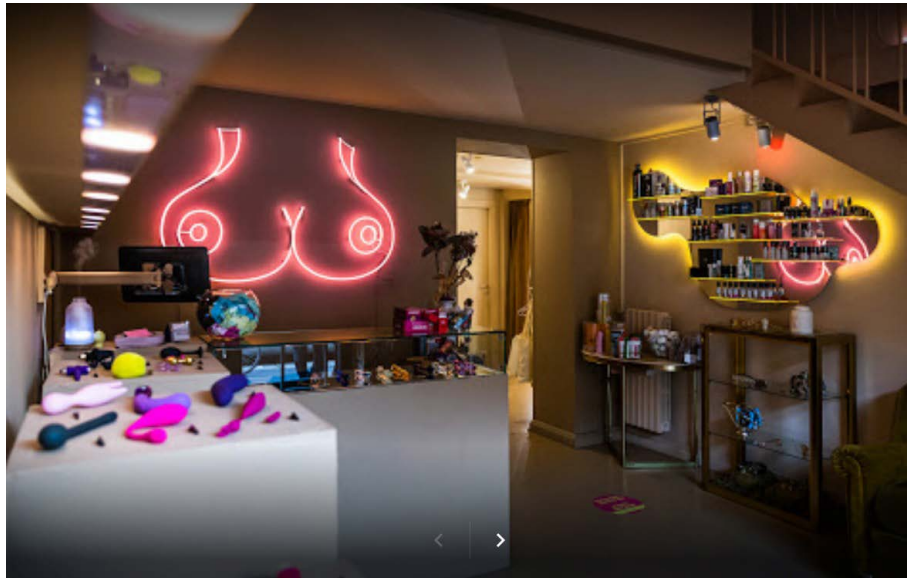


Fig. 91 WOVOstore interior (1), 2021, <https://www.google.com/maps/uv?pb=!1s0x4786c3e68b-b48d57%3A0x406ee922b710853d!3m1!7e115!4shhttps%3A%2F%2Fh5.googleusercontent.com%2Fp%2FAF1QipNsCkELWSUjSDP4LHM-dcg1v7nWmntWleOZP7Ep%3Dw240-h160-k-no!5swo-vostore%20-%20Cerca%20con%20Google!15sCglgAQ&imagekey=!1e10!2sAF1QipNsCkELWSUjSDP4LHM-dcg1v7nWmntWleOZP7Ep&hl=it&sa=X&sqj=2&ved=2ahUKEwiXoeby9s33AhVJHsOKHQitCBcl-Qoip6BAgvEAM>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

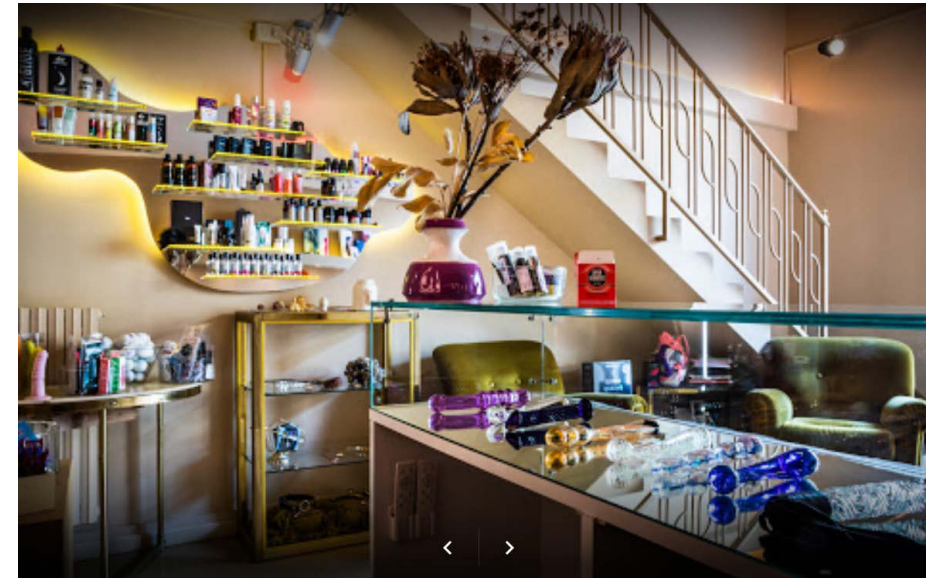


Fig. 92 WOVOstore interior (2), 2021, <https://www.google.com/maps/uv?pb=!1s0x4786c3e68b-b48d57%3A0x406ee922b710853d!3m1!7e115!4shhttps%3A%2F%2Fh5.googleusercontent.com%2Fp%2FAF1QipNsCkELWSUjSDP4LHM-dcg1v7nWmntWleOZP7Ep%3Dw240-h160-k-no!5swo-vostore%20-%20Cerca%20con%20Google!15sCglgAQ&imagekey=!1e10!2sAF1QipNsCkELWSUjSDP4LHM-dcg1v7nWmntWleOZP7Ep&hl=it&sa=X&sqj=2&ved=2ahUKEwiXoeby9s33AhVJHsOKHQitCBcl-Qoip6BAgvEAM>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

The credibility of the store has gained credibility thanks to the word of mouth of the people who visited the store and who then disclosed this idea of shop where you can find information, advice.

The idea that wants to be dismantled, in addition to the combination of sexuality-taboo, is also that a person who enters a sex shop must necessarily be prepared on the subject, instead you should be able to enter with their vulnerabilities and simply ask.

The shop window is the classic showcase that allows you to see inside the store, with the items on display. Frida and Federica claim that with that visibility and transparency of the shop window the shop is also in a position of vulnerability, because it has nothing to hide being a positive and inclusive environment.

The future of sexyshops will be observing, evolving, adapting (fig. 90). In this work there is a beautiful and very difficult mission: it is to help people to develop a consciousness of their own bodies and sexuality.



Fig. 93 WOVOSTore window, pic by Martina Caiazzo + Martina Castellaneta, 2019, <https://le-strade.com/wovo-store-a-milano/>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

8.3.2 Erotika

Erotika is another shop that I discovered walking through the streets of Porta Venezia in Milan (fig. . It has a very large window and its mint green walls brings out all the colors of the sextoys it contains.

The store is packed with different brands that all look good quality. The shapes are many, the colors range from bright to the most kept, and almost nothing is missing. They also have a basement, where there are all the explicit sextoys with bodypart shapes and objects for BDSM practices, as well as porn movies.

I understand that they decided to do this division inside the store, showing the main floor that is bright, varied, well recognizable from the outside as the first thing the customer can see.



Fig. 94 Erotika window, <https://bussola-pro.com/944229/erotika-sexy-boutique>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.



Fig. 95 Erotika interior (1), <https://zero.eu/it/persona/corrado-e-ilaria-erotika/>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

where out of stock so the single Iroha Temari was hidden cause it was the only one remained, but it would be really useful if modern sexyshops would seriously inform users about the actual presence of valid sextoys on the market, especially if the products are present in the store but for choices not understandable to me are kept out of sale.

What it's not clear to me is their choice of products displayed. I'll explain it better. On the first wall on the right as soon as you enter you can find a lot of products by Tenga, a very famous Japanese brand and among the best on the market now for innovation, cost, aesthetics, prices, efficiency. Tenga also has a female line, Iroha (which I went into in section 7.1.2), and I couldn't any of their products. His products are very recognizable and different from the others, I looked for them throughout the store and I did not find any (although almost all Tenga products were on display, so this actually made me so happy). I then asked the saleswoman if they had this brand, and they only had one Iroha product but they kept it in stock. It was Temari, one of the brand's most recognizable products. I wonder why a curious product like Temari, never seen in the European and American market, is kept hidden, contrary to men's products of the same brand exposed. The Iroha brand is very little known in Italy, in fact the girls who responded to my sample are mostly average knowledgeable about the world of sextoys, yet only 5 people out of 158 respondents knew him when they responded. Maybe in that moment the other Iroha products

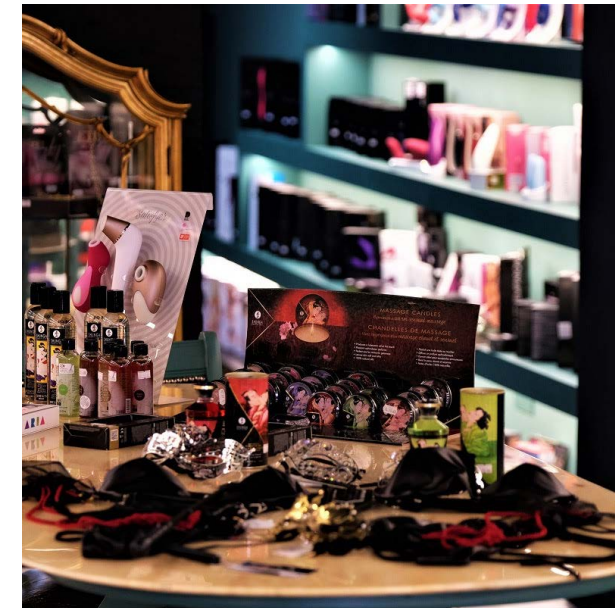


Fig. 96 Erotika interior (2), <https://bussola-pro.com/944229/erotika-sexy-boutique>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

8.4 The Perception of My Target

When in the survey (Attachment 1) I asked if the girls were ever been into a sexyshop (question 2.f), 54,9% said yes, the other half said no. In question 2.g I asked to describe their experience and I created a mapping of their answers, dividing positive and negative aspects and adding their interesting observations.



1.1 E-Commerces

8.5.1 Mysecretcase

As I said in paragraph 8.1 many of the traditional sexyshop sexists are disappearing, after the important advent of e-shops.

The first e-shop that has certainly reached important resonance peaks is MySecretCase.

MySecretCase was founded in 2014 and is positioned, in Italy, as the brand that has changed the imagination about sexuality and the first online shop for the pleasure of women and couples. On their website⁸³ they declare:

E-commerce has distinguished itself, since its inception, for its initiatives dedicated to the themes of diversity, inclusion and body positive and for its approach to sexuality as a cultural factor, through the organization of projects of pleasure education and sexual information, thematic online meetings on social channels and a constant dialogue and commitment to the community of reference that led it to realize, in the last year, over 1 million monthly interactions on instagram profile and hundreds of satisfied customers.

Their motto is “We want a world where women are not sexual objects but can have them all”. And that’s right: on their shop there is the largest variety of sextoys that can be found on a sex toy and sex object shop.

8.5.2 enby.

Enby. is a shop that proposes itself as “a safe place for people of all genders to explore pleasure beyond the binary”⁸⁴.

enby is your one stop shop for all things lusty. We are a Black/Trans owned company and believe that all bodies deserve affirmation and pleasure. We strive to create a safer, and more comfortable sex-toy shopping experience for the Queer community and more specifically gender non-conforming, trans and non-binary people.

On their website in fact there is a section called “affirmation⁸⁵” where non-binary or transgender people can purchase products for their sexual

affirmation such as binders to hide their breast (fig. 97), packers or other accessories.

On enby. you can really find toys of all kinds and for all kinds. They do not only sell products, but they are currently in the process of receiving our certified B-Corp status. 2% of all proceeds are donated to a rotating list of small, underfunded organizations focused on improving the lives of Queer/ Trans People of Color. They are also doing their part to fight climate change by way of carbon neutrality. This means that every sale funds renewable energy and forest conservation projects.

On their ecologi profile⁸⁶ you can see the tons of carbon reduction they have offset and the trees they could plant thanks to the projects they’ve supported through the orders people make on their e-shop.



Fig. 97 NYC binder on enby shop, <https://shopenby.com/collections/binders/products/binder-mid-length-by-new-york-toy-collective>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022. NYC binder on enby shop.jpg

9

Communication: different Cases

9.1 MySecretCase

In 2017 MySecretCase was positioned as a first mover making the first ever commercial on sex toys in Italy⁸⁷, launched on Mediaset, Discovery, Sky, Paramount, and in 2019 made the first TV commercial, dedicated to couples, broadcast for the first time in day time⁸⁸.

In 2020 the company launched “Disabled desirable” (fig. 95), the campaign beyond taboos with which it wanted to give voice to wishes, testimonies and stories of people with disabilities and caregivers.

In 2021, finally, the company created a toys collection with Tommaso Zorzi influencer and winner of the GFVIP, and was ranked among the 20 most inclusive companies according to the Diversity Brand Index 2021⁸⁹.



Fig. 98 Max Olivieri for Disabile DesiderAbile by MySecretCase, <https://www.pianetasaluteonline.com/2020/08/26/mysecretcase-presenta-disabile-desiderabile/>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

9.2 Lelo: Bad Marketing Choices

Lelo, the Swedish sextoy company we've already met in paragraph 7.1.5, has developed a condom with hexagonal-shaped cells that the company claims will tear less than others on the market.

Its structural integrity and added grip comes from the addition of a hexagonal netting, which means the product can endure more stress than a regular condom, even though it is still made of latex⁹⁰.

It's a really interesting approach designing a new condom in my opinion, it seems to satisfy the need of many men who complain about how much condoms make their penis numb during sex.

What happened during the promotion of the product, however, has caused a sensation and disappointment on the part of users. Lelo has signed up actor Charlie Sheen as the brand ambassador for its new condom product.

Unfortunately, they chose to use a celebrity who has been charged with domestic abuse on partners time and time again.

For 20 years, Charlie Sheen has allegedly harassed, assaulted, threatened and in once case, shot a woman. In 2010, he assaulted then-wife Brooke Mueller in their home, brandishing a knife and threatening to kill her⁹¹. In this case Lelo chose a person who could represent anything but a positive example for people who see their spot and buy their product. Lelo is a company that has always fought for equality in pleasure and the importance of female pleasure but making a choice of this kind shows how sometimes pink washing⁹² is more harmful than ever.

9.3 Dame and Unbound CEO fights Singular Narrative in Advertising

Polly Rodriguez and Alexandra Fine, respectively CEOs of Unbound Babes and Dame Products, have launched a campaign to raise awareness about the bias selection process of adverts, which outbreaks female-focused sexual wellness companies⁹³.

The Approved, Not Approved campaign⁹⁴ and online quiz aims to help users understand how ad guidelines are selectively enforced when it comes to sex-related content – particularly those targeted at women.

Platforms like Facebook and Instagram, which have the same owner, and like Pinterest, are the perfect examples of how this process manifests itself, promoting content that sell non-sexual products through sensuality and banning not-explicit advertisements of sex-products.

The duo believe that this limits people' access to solutions, education, and engagement from and with brands that are offering sex-related products for cis and trans women.

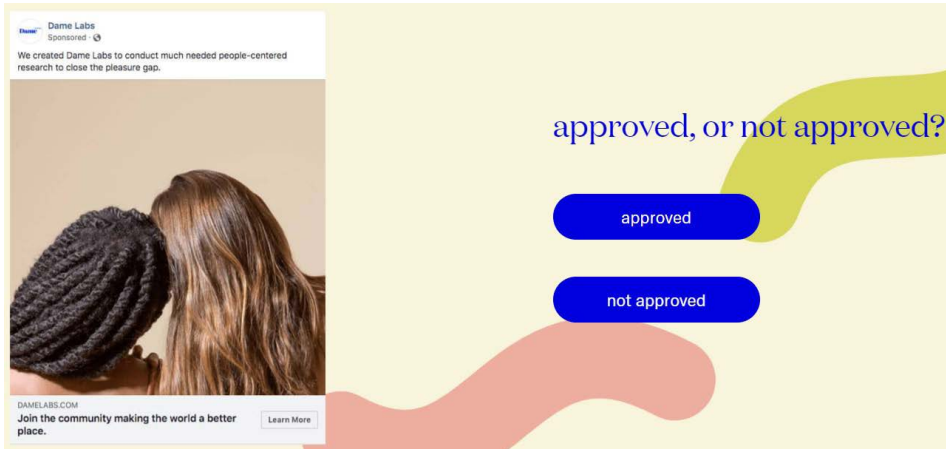


Fig. 99 Frame from the Approved, Not Approved campaign (1), <https://approvednotapproved.com/>, Last consultation: 09/05/2022.

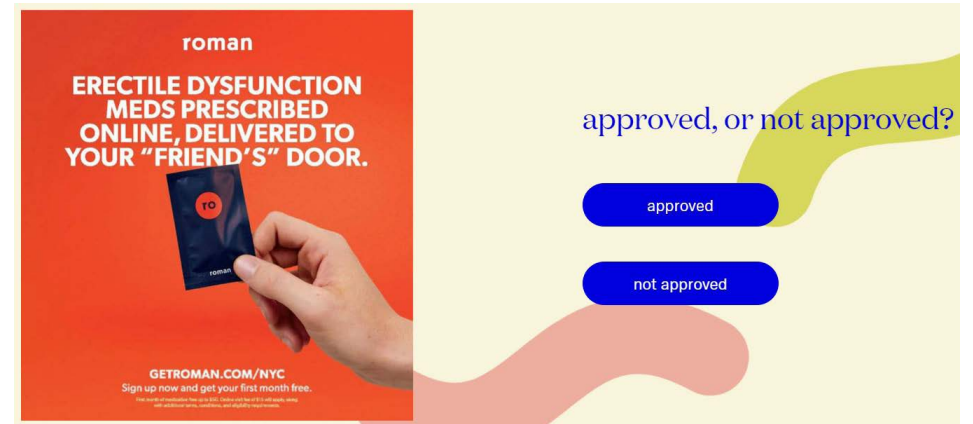


Fig. 101 Frame from the Approved, Not Approved campaign (3), <https://approvednotapproved.com/>, Last consultation: 09/05/2022.

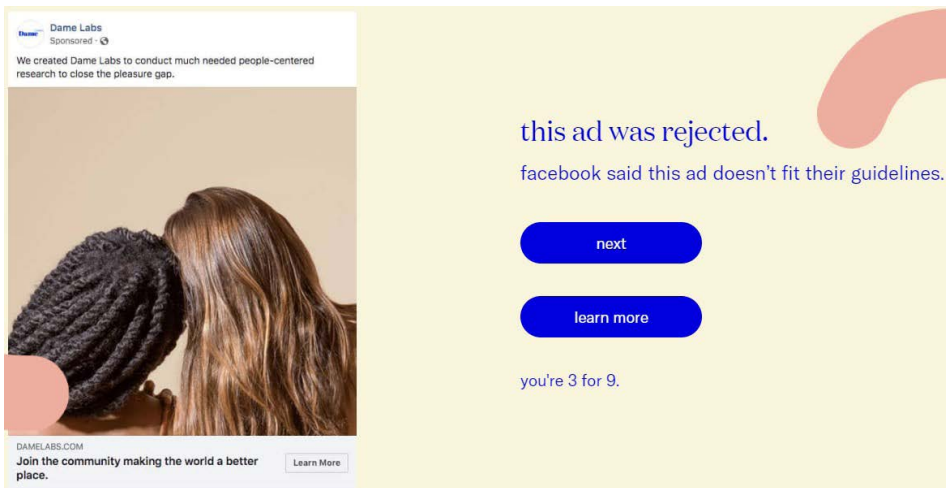


Fig. 100 Frame from the Approved, Not Approved campaign (2), <https://approvednotapproved.com/>, Last consultation: 09/05/2022.

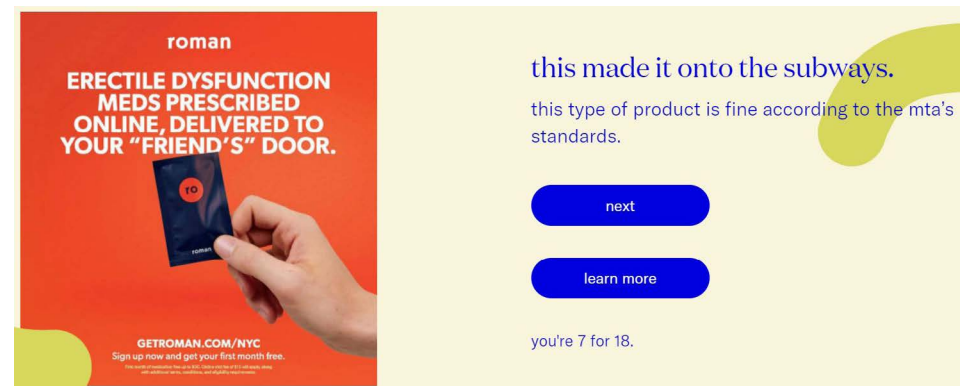


Fig. 102 Frame from the Approved, Not Approved campaign (4), <https://approvednotapproved.com/>, Last consultation: 09/05/2022.

9.4 Milan doesn't approve Sex Education Season 3 Campaign

For the release of the third season of Sex Education, acclaimed TV series and sex positive teen drama Netflix, Milan has been covered with advertising with images of plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables that represented the variety of shapes, sizes and colors of sexual organs: If the/ we see it in different forms is because there is not only one. Each one is perfect. Yours too» (fig. 103, 104).

This slogan refers to the episode in which Aimee, one of the girls involved in the series, talks with Jean, the sexologist, discussing how embarrassment and misinformation circulate among teenagers. Jean advises Aimee to look at the All-Vulvas-Are-Beautiful website to get an idea of the many differences that exist.

The campaign, however, was not perceived by some areas of Italian politics, so the posters hung by Netflix would be removed as “obscene content”. Among the controversies is that of Barbara Mazzali, regional councillor of Lombardy with Fratelli d'Italia: “Is it acceptable that similar posters are under the eyes of everyone, including children and teenagers? Sex education must be managed in the family”.

However, families do not have all the necessary skills to manage the sex education of their children. This is also why campaigns like Netflix also serve as an opening for a sex education that starts from society as a community, for the idea that everyone, regardless of age.

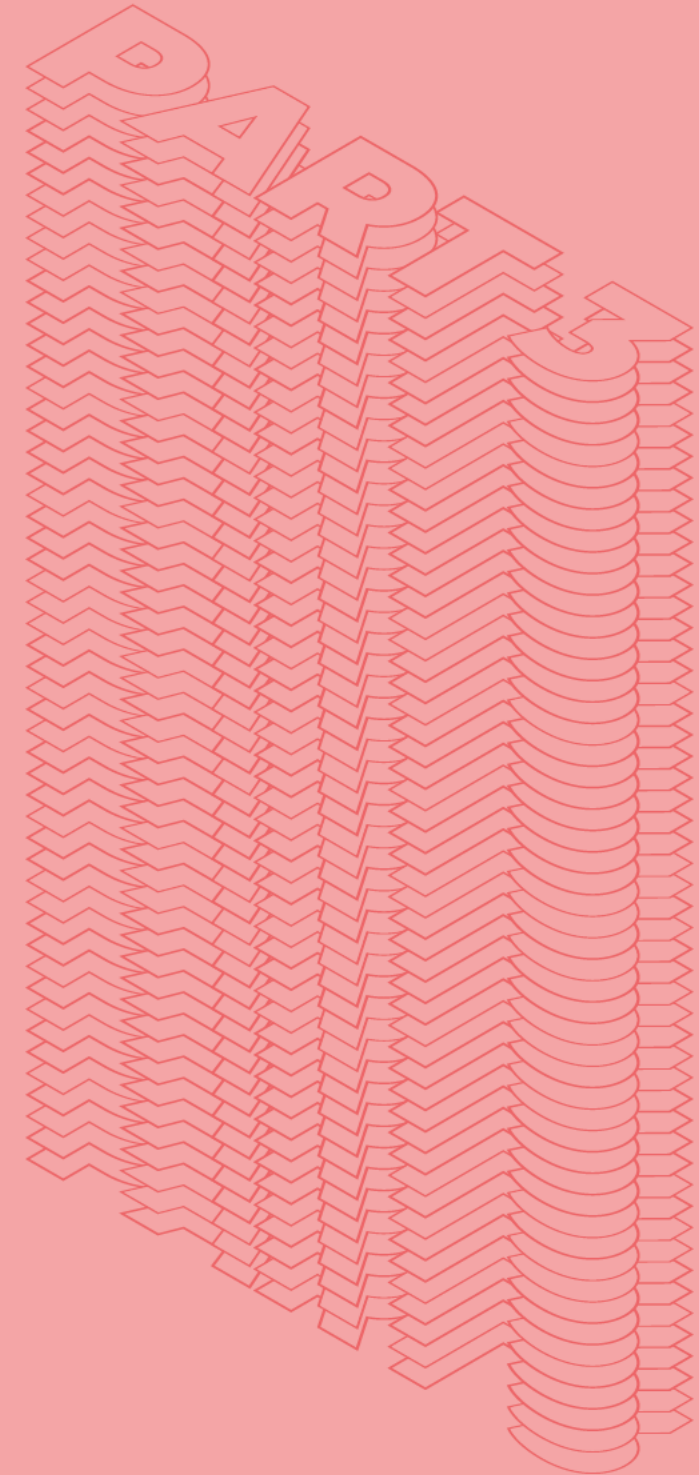


Fig. 103 Sex Education Milan campaign (1), https://milano.repubblica.it/cronaca/2021/09/21/news/netflix_la_terza_stagione_di_sex_education_fa_discutere_fdi_e_pro_vita_troppa_ambiguita_radicali_giusto_parlare_di-318799162/, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.



Fig. 104 Sex Education Milan campaign (2), <https://www.insidemarketing.it/promozione-sex-education-netflix-campagna-sociale/>, Last consultation: 07/05/2022.

A Proposal for a Sextoy for Female Pleasure



10

User Definition, Habits and Analysis

10.1 Young Women

When I discussed this with Judith Glover, we talked about how important this issue was and how to best address it. Initially my will was to study women's perception of sextoys and I wanted to design a tool that would help women explore their bodies.

We started talking about the perception of the female target on sextoys, trying to understand which brands were best analyzed to immediately identify the best toys designed, which were actually changing the perception of people on sextoys, to create an appropriate benchmark for analysis.

Sextoy industry doesn't operate like any other industry, with a high-end, middle and low-end market.

A lot is still missing.

Glover and I discussed about how sexual wellbeing changes across women life. For example, when a woman gets older loose sensibility and vagina lubrication changes and often decreases.

There's a myth that after menopause women don't feel like sex. This is not true in most cases.

Since the topic of female sexuality is vast and multifaceted, we agreed that

I would work on a target of young women, between 18 and 30 years old, who would be close to me as experiences and access to information. They would also be easier to interview, to better understand their needs and expectations.

In the questionnaire I administered to them (in total 269 young women) I ask first that I am collecting data of girls of maximum 30 years (indicatively), possibly Italian or resident in Italy, saying that the answers will be anonymous and that it is not mandatory to answer everything if you are not comfortable, some questions therefore have less than 269 answers.

10.2 Personal Data

In section 1 of the survey I ask for the personal data of the girls and with whom they live.

I collected the data in the diagram in fig. 105.

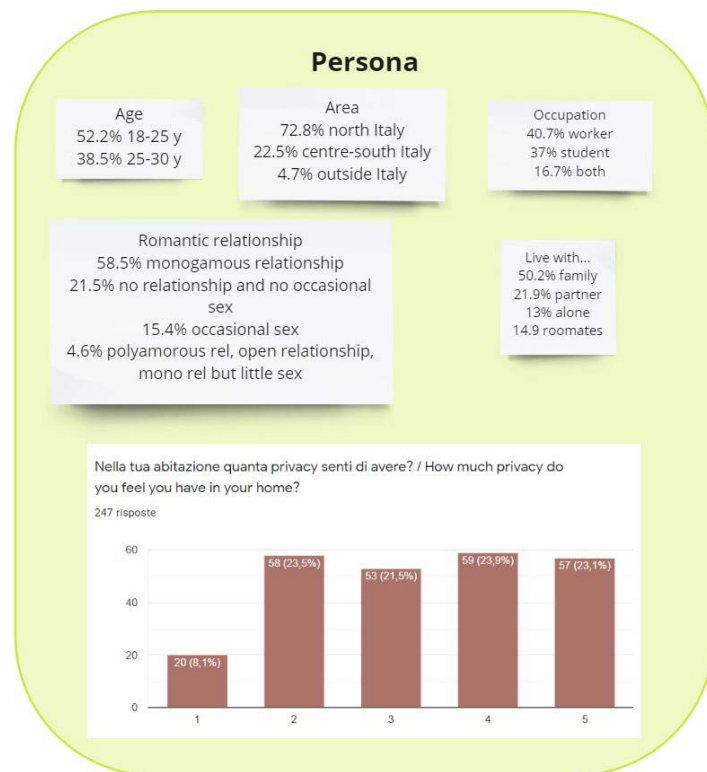


Fig. 105 Persona anagraphic, personal image, Miro board.

So, most of the girl have between 18 and 25 years, are residents in northern Italy and work (of which 16% also study). Most have a romantic monogamous relationship, and overall most have sex in the relationship or without being in the relationship. Asking how much privacy they feel they have at home, living mostly with the family of origin, the answers have been very balanced, and indeed this data can depend on many factors such as the type of housing or the number of family members.

10.3 Masturbation Habits

10.3.1 Girls who masturbate

Most of the girls who responded to my survey masturbate regularly (91.8% of them masturbate, overall about 1-3 times a week). These data are visible in the survey in Annex 1 to Section 3. The answers are varied overall but can be shared, and vary from wanting to have a moment of fun or relaxation to wanting to drive away boredom and get some sleep. Some girls responded that thanks to a psychological path they learned to live better sexuality and masturbation and this brought them the benefits, physical and psychological.

Almost everyone masturbates in bed, being also the place with the most privacy that exists in the house, probably. Others take advantage of the shower, as a moment of relaxation and well-being.

I asked them if they ever used sextoys, and most responded positively. A good part of them have never used them, others have made use of them but had not a pleasant experience.

The analysis of the data is in fig. 106.

10.3.2 Girls who don't masturbate

In section 4 of the survey, 20 girls affirmed they've never masturbated. The majority of them talked about little condifence, a bad relationship with their body and a sense of guilty. They think that girls who masturbate are brave and the envy them. 2 of them said they would feel betrayed if they discover their partner/s masturbate, and some affirmed that girls who masturbates don't have just values, that masturbation is just for men. All of this answers and statements derive from the sex-negative cultural heritage I mentioned in the first chapter. (fig. 107)

10.4 Sextoys use

10.4.1 Girls who use them

In section 5 of the survey (attachment 1) I asked the girls about the sextoys they have or have used. The answers to question 5.b, which asked the types owned by them, were balanced (fig. 108).

The material of which the sextoys are mostly used by them is medical silicone. This is not a surprising answer since in general it is the material of which the toys bought first are made, as it comes to other types of material (such as wood, ceramic or metal) usually after first use of vibrating sextoys. Half of the users bought the toys online, while the rest is divided between in-store purchases and toys received as gifts.

In question 5.e I wrote some statements and asked the users how much they agreed. I was amazed by several answers: many girls use toys because the resulting stimulation would be unattainable with only the use of the hands and many of them appreciate them aesthetically and like to keep them in sight in the house. This is linked to paragraph 6.2.1, in which I addressed the issue of the sextoy as an object of identity in which are contained values that are personally sharable and that reflect the person. I then asked the girls what they would change about their toys. In fig. 109 I collected and analyzed their answers. Red stamps indicate the number of times the same response has been given.

10.4.1 Girls who use them

Girls who do not use sextoys, as you can see in fig. 110, claim that they do not have them because they would be ashamed to buy them or even to use them. A person also claims that he does not know why he has never taken one, as if he had never actually thought of it before, which is legitimate but also denotes how little we are inclined to analyze as a society the motivations behind important choices like these.

Two girls who claimed not to masturbate however said they would like to try using sextoys. This means that there are potentially girls who, despite certain personal limitations, would like to overcome them and better understand their sexuality.

10.4.3 Negative experience with sextoys

The girls who had a negative experience with sextoys said that mainly it was because of their shape, not adequate to their body, and because the indications on their functioning were wrong.

The description of toys is also closely linked to the existing regulations in this regard. Since there is no real regulation that regulates the production and destruction, it is not always said that the toy bought corresponds to its description. (fig. 111)

10.4.4 How much the target knows about this topic?

In section 8 of the survey (attachment 1), I asked the girls when they are informed about sextoys. I asked about types, materials and brands. All types are known about evenly, the most known are dildos, rabbit and anal plugs. Not surprisingly, they are also the toys most used in mainstream porn, which can certainly affect people's sexuality and the subsequent purchase of sextoys.

The greatest curiosity is aroused by vibrators for external use. The vulva, the external part of the female genital organ, has always been snubbed by pornography and in general is a part of the body that is not thought rationally immediately when you think about masturbation, because the thought goes directly to penetration, as it has been for decades because of male centric pornography.

The most famous brands are Lelo, Fun Factory, Dame and Satisfyer. They are all American brands, except Fun Factory which as we have seen is located in Bremen, Germany. They are also the ones that for their iconic products have been most discussed and spread in Italy.

In section 9 I suggested a quiz. Proposing different types of sextoys of the same type compared, I asked what was the favorite, without asking the reason and let the girls respond as instinctively as possible.

In section 10 I proposed the same quiz, but instead of sextoys I compared design chairs, mostly by Italian designers.

This comparison helped me to understand that today people are not afraid to dare to choose curious objects and, if you want, even fun. And that was the case with chairs. In the choices of sextoys instead the answers were much more conservative and related to products that were closer to those most seen in online shops.

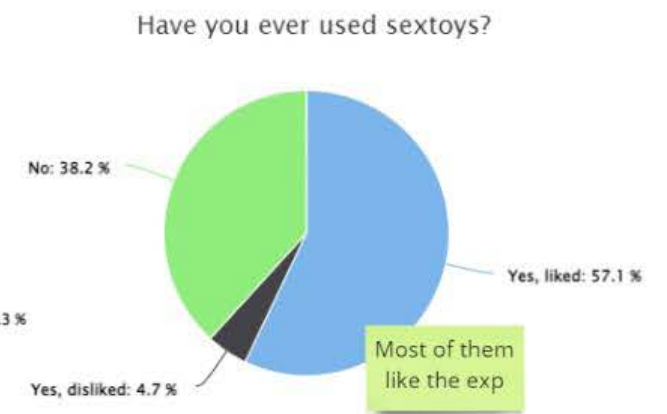
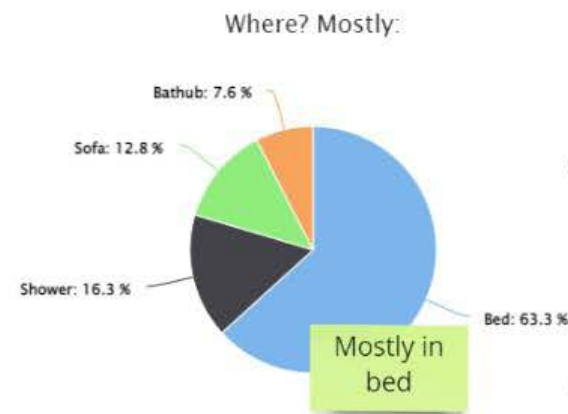
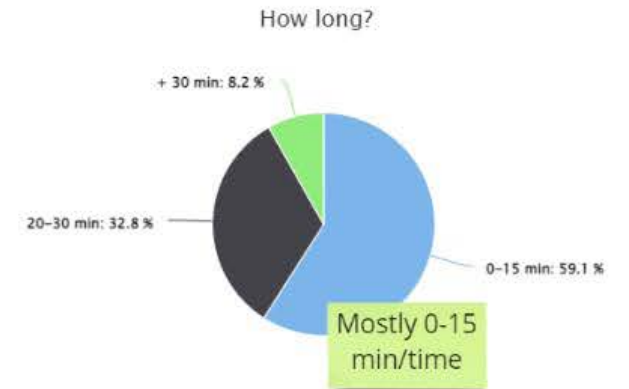
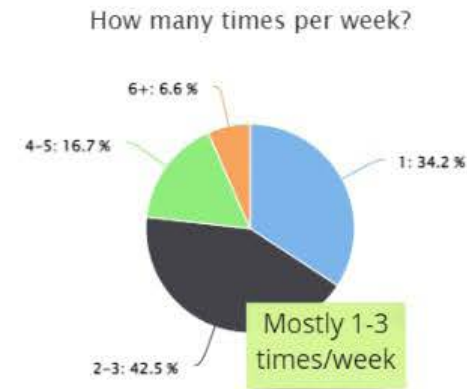
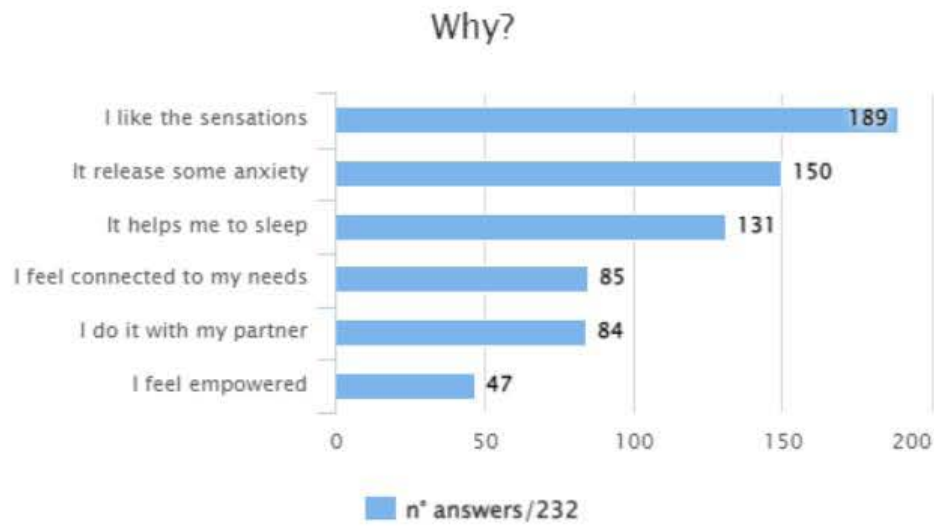


Fig. 106 Thought of users who masturbate, personal image.

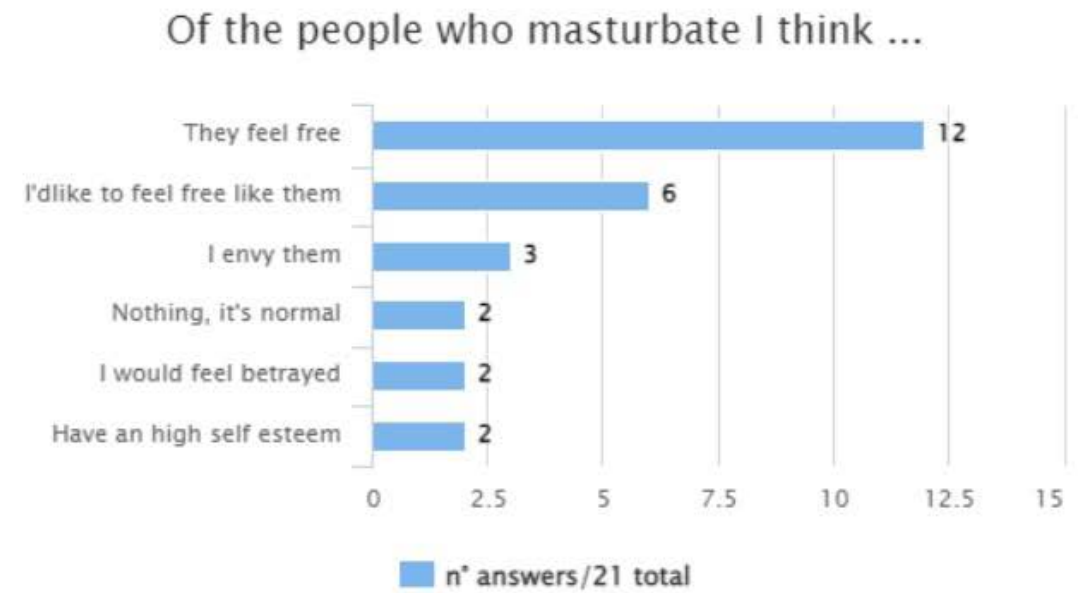
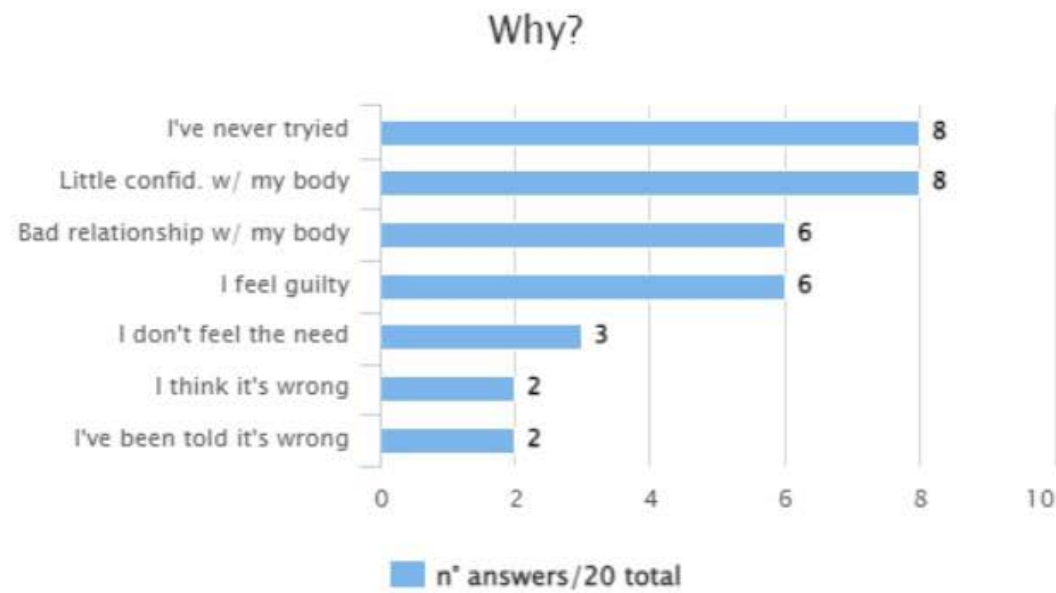
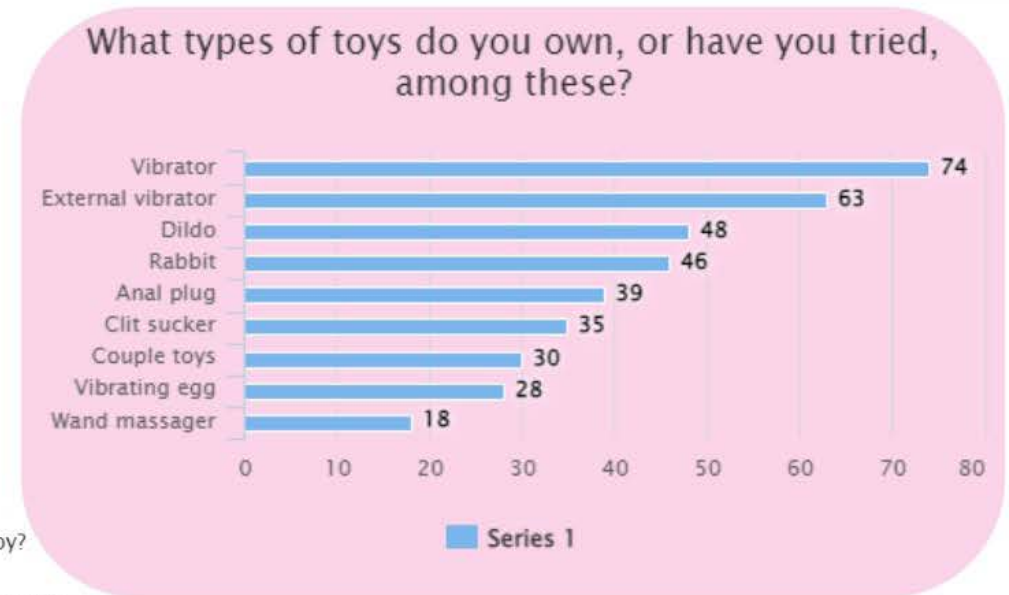


Fig. 107 Thought of users who don't masturbate, personal image.



How did you get the sextoy?

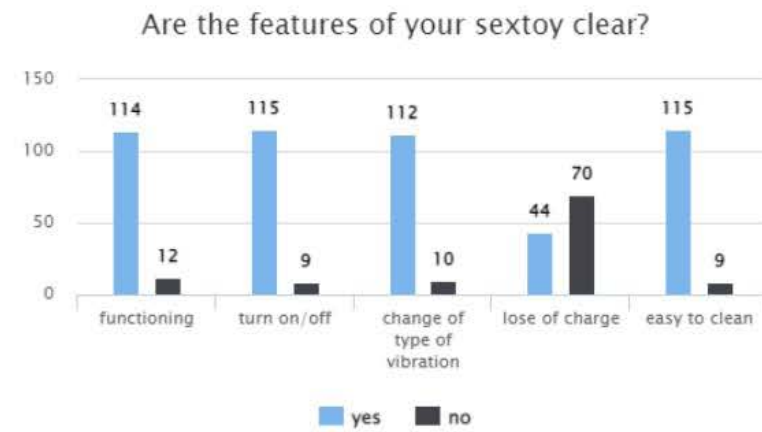
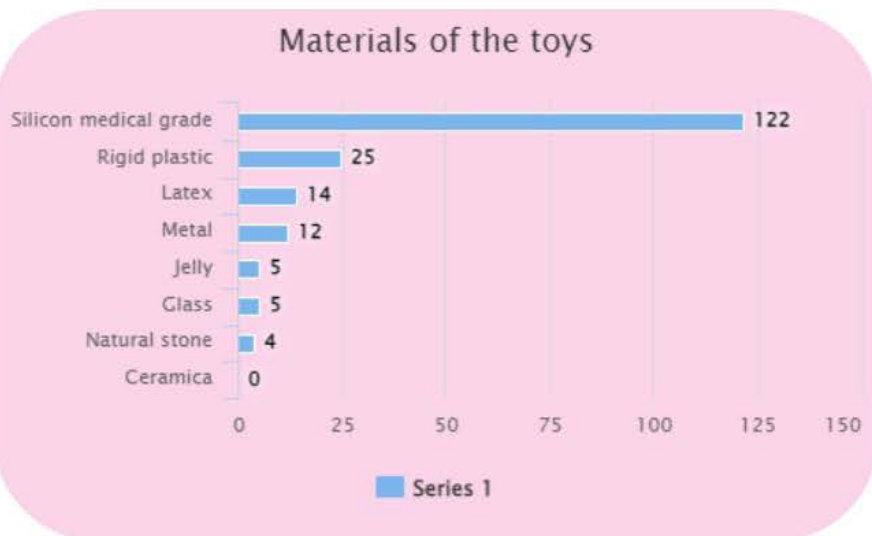
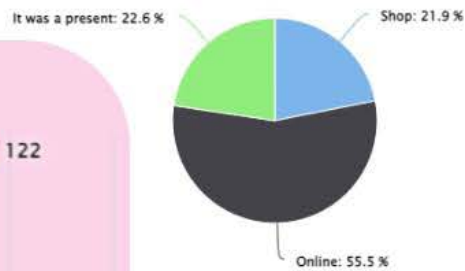


Fig. 108 Users who use sextoys, personal image.

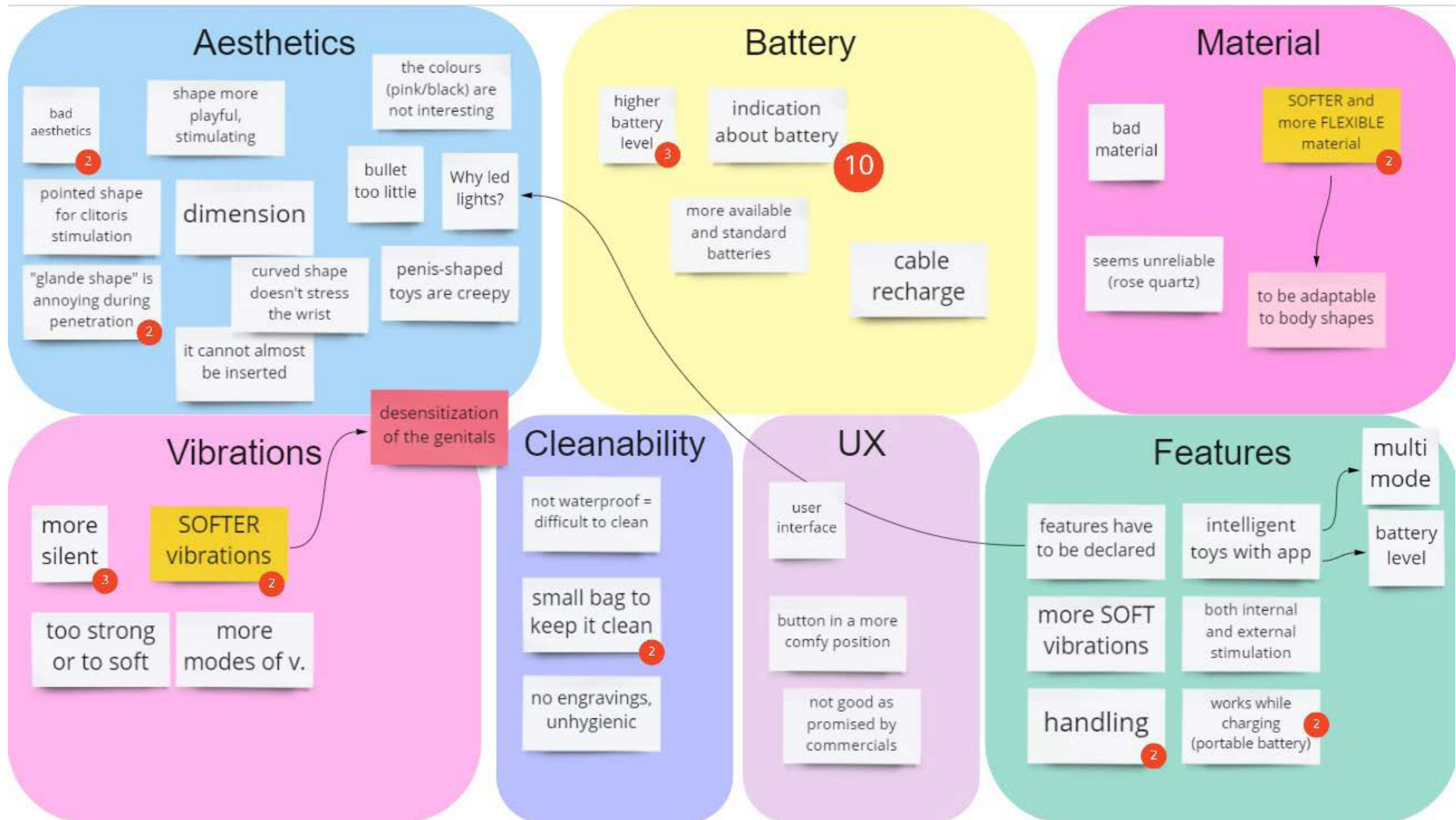


Fig. 109 Insights from users who use sextoys, personal image.

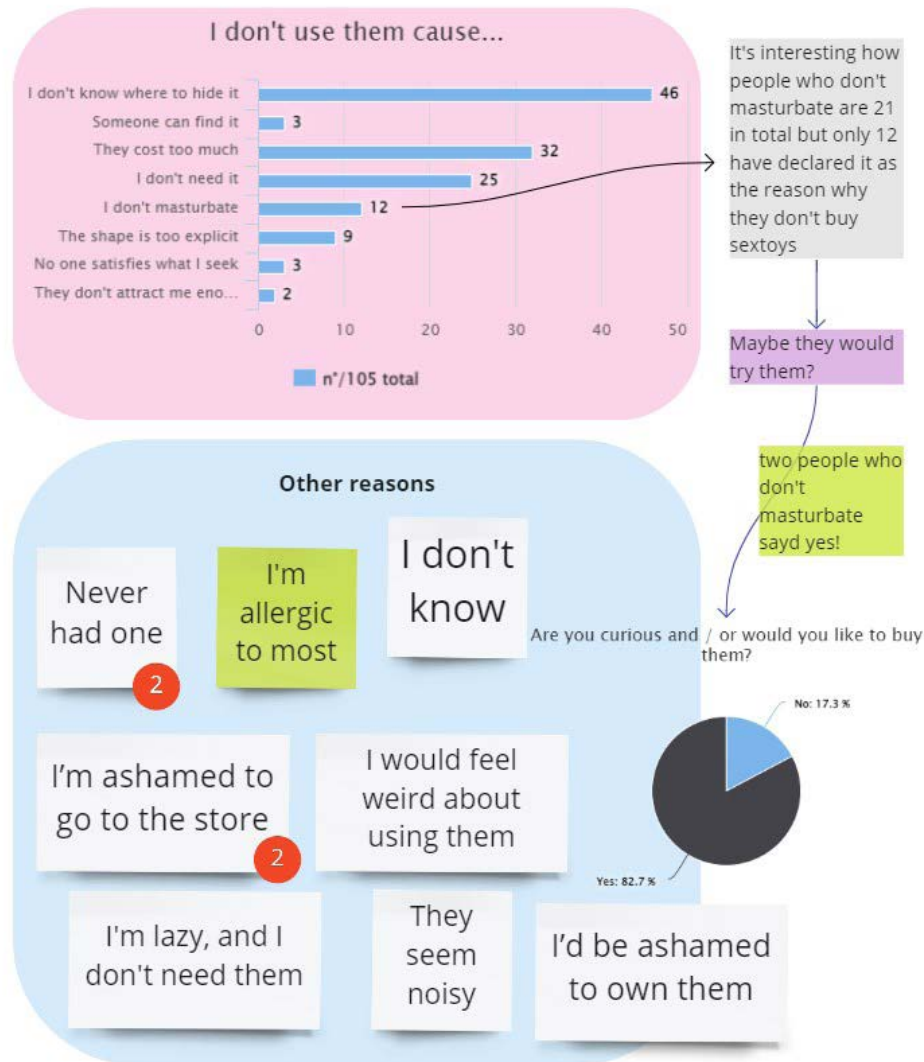


Fig. 110 Users who don't use sextoys, personal image.

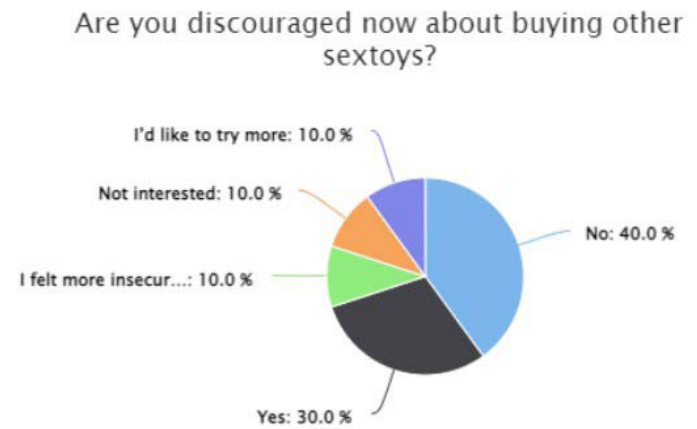


Fig. 111 Users who had negative experiences using sextoys, personal image.

11

Benchmark

11.1 How a sextoy is really made?

Thanks to Frida of WOVOSTore I could have Enigma by Lelo to be able to disassemble it and understand how it was actually done inside (fig. 112-115). It was no mystery that it contained motors, a battery and a pcb, but I wanted to understand how the shock was produced and how the components were assembled.

Disassembling it was extremely difficult, since all pins are irreversible. First I had to detach the plastic plate. To keep it in place there was no snap but plenty of glue. The glue has served not only to glue the plate but also to glue the open edges of the silicone component that covers the whole toy. The silicone part is printed separately and then glued to all the internal components (the two bodies containing the motors and the flexible silicone-carved component).

After having removed the violet silicone, I opened the shells with an electrician's scissors, the only tool that allowed me to open them without breaking them excessively. The pins broke to reveal the inside. The components are protected from water (the sextoy is waterproof) thanks to the double lip and groove that runs along the edges of the bodies. This would be enough to ensure the water resistance of the toy.

The motors are held in place thanks to two brackets screwed to the holes in the poppets of the body, while the battery and cables are held in place with plenty of silicone. I couldn't preserve the integrity of the cables, but before removing the internal components I could turn on the toy to understand how the rumble motor vibrated without the body. Vibration is powerful and having an ambitious wavelength it was difficult to hold it in place due to excessive movement. At the same time, though powerful vibration was sweet and not disturbing.



Fig. 112 Lelo Enigma skeleton, personal image.

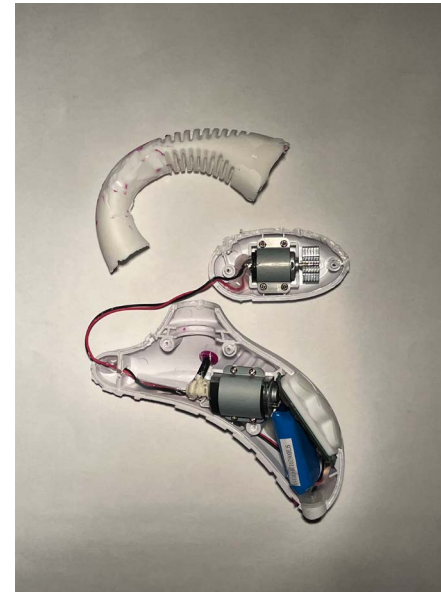


Fig. 113 Lelo Enigma disassembled, personal image.

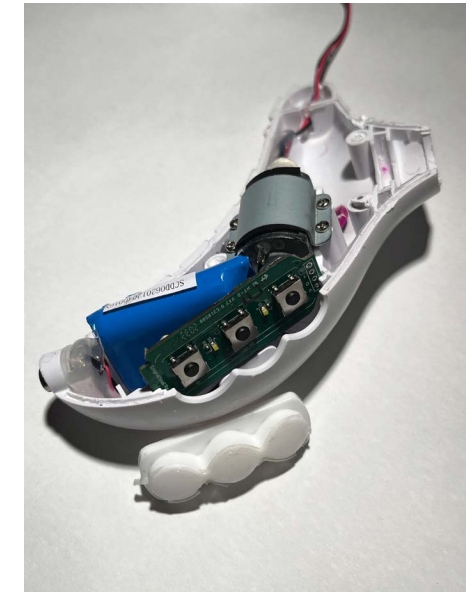


Fig. 114 Lelo Enigma button view, personal image.



Fig. 115 Lelo Enigma components, personal image.

11.2 Products analysed

In this paragraph I'll show the products I analysed based on the research I made on safe and well designed sextoys and on the quiz result of the user I interviewed with my survey. I choose to analyse a lot of sextoys, as the ones (and more) in the survey quiz. Then I focused on the users that are more curious about vulva stimulation, cause external vibrators were one of the most loved types, and some girls wanted to try a sextoys for the first time and penetrative toys are not the best choice as a first time.

All the toys are made in medical grade silicon, except Vesper by Crave that is made in stainless steel. I choose to have it in my analysis cause it was very appreciated by the girls interviewed.



Fig. 118 Vesper by Crave, <https://advisor.virtuusa-lute.com/dispositivi/tutte-pazze-per-il-vesper-crave.html>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 119 Dito Vibrante High Fly by Satisfyer, <https://www.satisfyer.com/it/satisfyer-high-fly/>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 116 Fin by Dame, <https://www.dameproducts.com/products/fin>, Last consultation: 30/03/2022



Fig. 117 Pom by Dame, Pom (Flexible Vibrator) by Dame Products, Last consultation: 30/03/2022



Fig. 120 Yumi by Yspot, <https://yspot.co/stimolatori-clitoridei/massaggiatore-clitoride-yumi/>, Last consultation 04/04/2022

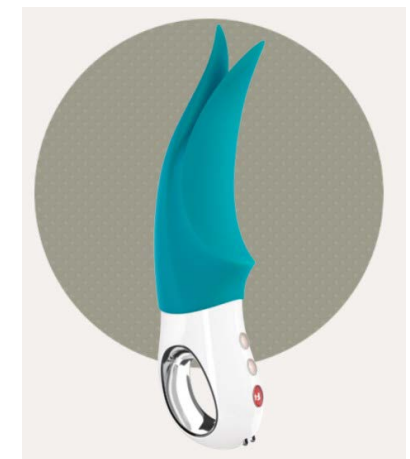


Fig. 121 Volta by Fun Factory, <https://www.shopfunfactory.it/volta-petrolio.html>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 122 Laya II by Fun Factory, <https://www.shopfunfactory.it/laya-ii-black-line.html>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 123 Rin Akané by Iroha, <https://itstore.tenga.co/products/iroha-rin-akane>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 126 Ora 3 by Lelo, <https://www.lelo.com/it/ora-3>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 127 Carezza by Lora DiCarlo, <https://loradicarlo.com/carezza/>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 124 Yoru by Iroha, <https://itstore.tenga.co/collections/iroha-plus-series/products/hmp-03>, Last consultation: 11/05/2022.



Fig. 125 Temari by Iroha, <https://iroha-tenga.com/en/temari/>, Last consultation 04/04/2022

11.3 Market Positioning

What I want to analyze with these diagrams is the aesthetic difference that exists between toys, as shapes and as colors, and how is their type of stimulation, whether punctual or widespread. This is to understand if the products on the market actually meet all types of stimulation sought and are made so as not to direct the user to a single use but to more ways to stimulate and know themselves.

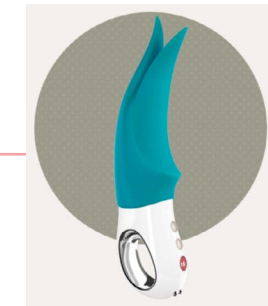
11.3.1 Colour and Shape Comparison



11.3.2 Type of stimulation and Affordance

HANDLE

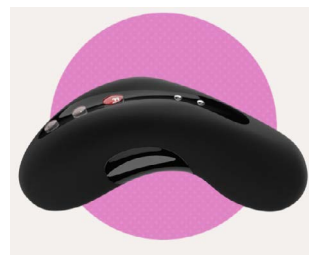
reddit winner 2020



DIFFUSE
STIMULATION



PRECISE
STIMULATION



LAY-ON

11.4 Legal regulation: ISO 3533

In September 2021, the sex toy industry took a small step forward. The first standard for the production of sextoys has been drawn up and published. It has long been complaining about a lack of regulation within the sextoys world, because any company could produce and market a lot of toxic products, harmful to the body, with a lot of consequences. Finally, the Standard ISO 3533 “ISO 3533-2020, Design and safety requirements for products in direct contact with genitalia, the anus, or both” has been drawn up. It contains a list of guidelines and requirements that applies to all devices that come into contact with the genitals and anus or both. In this regulation a sextoy is defined as “a manufactured product intended for sexual stimulation or to enhance sexual pleasure, excluded: products classified as medical devices, cosmetics or assistive products; for example, lubricants, massage oil, intimate gels/sprays, and food supplements.” This regulation is not a law, but a standard that companies can decide to follow or not. The hope is that most companies decide to develop their products according to this legislation that examines materials, design and usage information to attach, and that users become increasingly aware in choosing sextoys products with criteria and therefore safe.

12

Concept Definition

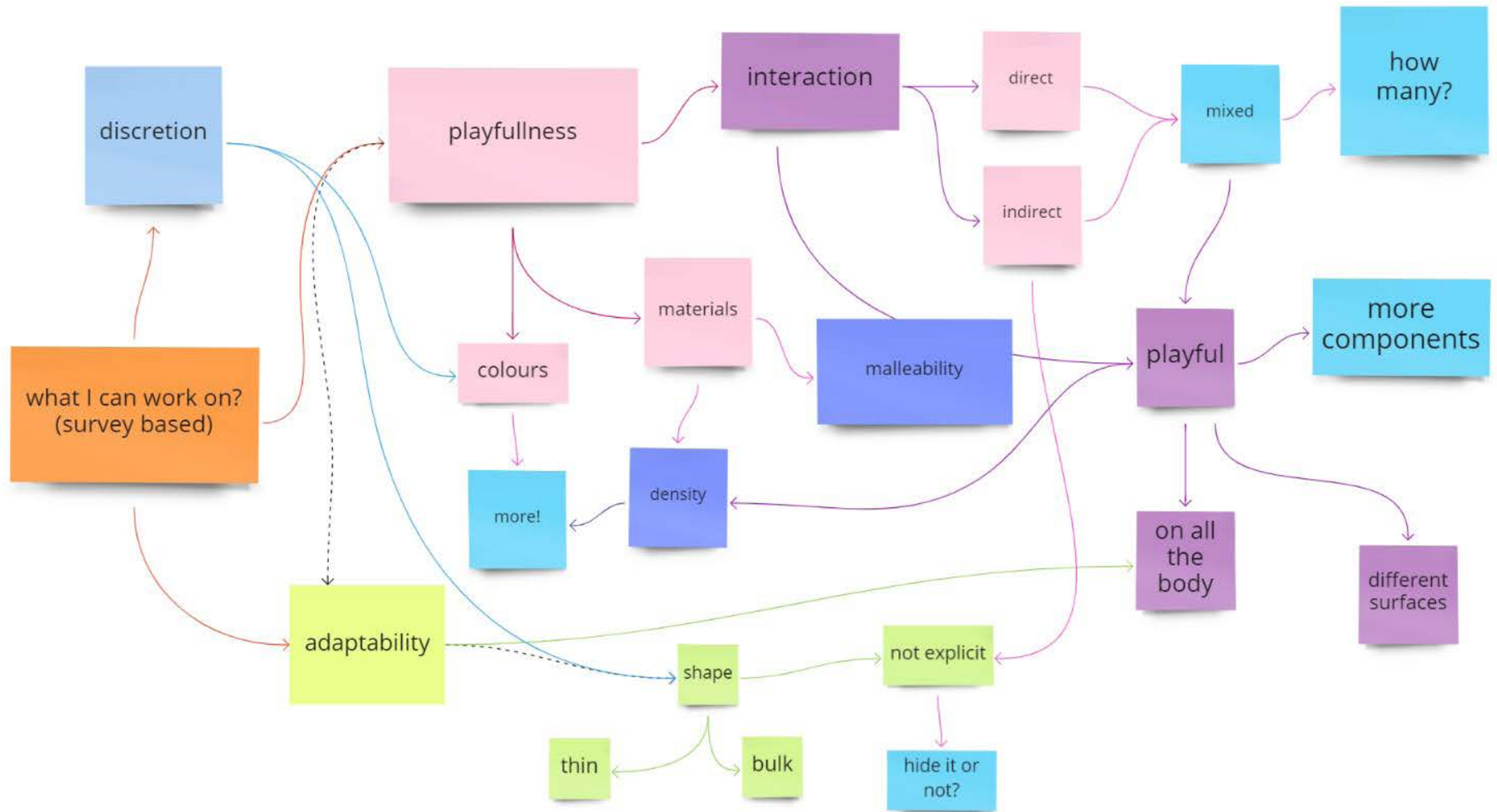
12.1 Brief

From the questionnaire I could collect a lot of really useful information about the habits of the girls interviewed, especially from the girls who demand something more from the sextoys they regularly find in stores or online. Most of them have expressed the need to find sextoys that stimulate their curiosity and desire to approach their body in ways that with the most popular toys cannot reach.

The answers about exploring one's own body were fundamental: many said they had experienced new sensations thanks to sextoys. No matter whether it is a voluntary goal, toys are often used in ways not even predictable by manufacturers (as is the case with many other types of product).

What then emerged is definitely the theme of **exploration** and **variability of stimulation**, especially for people who are using a sextoy for the **first time**. That's why I focused on the kind of **interaction** that a person can have with a toy. How she approaches it, how she holds it, how she uses it on her body. From this starting point I outlined some requirements that I wish the sextoy I designed had.

12.2 Concept Generation



12.2.1 First Ideas

Direct or indirect use

Initially I wondered if it was better for this concept to think about a toy for direct use, like most toys that are held in the hand, or an indirect use, without the use of hands, like VibePad (fig. 128) or Enby 2 (fig. 129). I opted for a lay-on toy, a type of toy that rests on the vulva, since indirect use I thought might inhibit self exploration.



Fig. 128 VibePad by Orion, <https://www.orion.de/product/vibepad-05947330000>, Last consultation 04/04/2022



Fig. 129 Enby 2 by Wildflower, <https://wildflowersex.com/products/enby-2>, Last consultation 04/04/2022

Bulk or thin shape

Always thinking about the shape, I tried to understand if there were toys thin enough to transmit the touch of the hand through the silicone, although of course every vibrating sextoy has a shell containing the engine and other components. I found many toys, like those of Iroha, with a very soft and velvety silicone to the touch, but few that had both thin and thick shape characteristics, to give different sensations.

Pressure control

This point could be linked to the previous point. There are some clitoral suckers equipped with Cruise control, a power adjustment based on the pressure that the user exerts by pushing the product on the clitoris. This type of system works for the clitoral sucking motors, which are motors that produce the pulsation of air through the vibration of a buzzer motor bound to a rod that moves very quickly. I thought I could get the same result by taking advantage of more silicone thicknesses, so as to get a more intense vibration when you press more the sextoy on your body.

Two parts

The sextoys are not disassembled always consist entirely of parts that are not divisible with each other, unless they are loaded with batteries and the cover is the only component that can be removed (then of course be put back in its place).

Toys that have add-ons with different shapes are in turn composed of silicone, the add-ons add a different shape, usually more complex, to change stimulation. What if the sextoy is disassemblable?

12.2.2 Moodboard

In this moodboard I collected images that gave me the idea of the sensations that I had in my head. Through these images I was able to give shape to what has become the final concept.

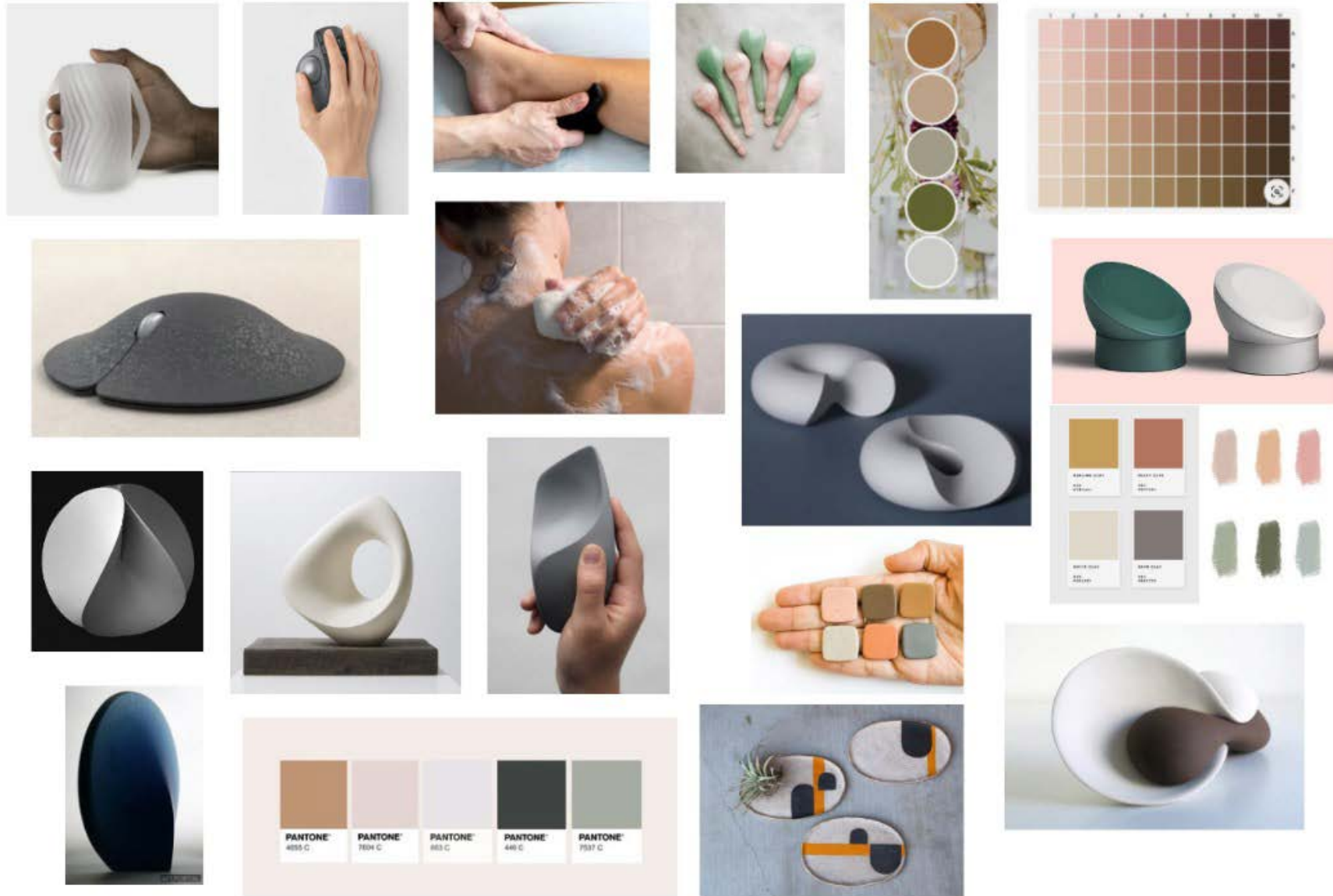


Fig. 130 Moodboard.

12.3 Final concept

12.3.1 Idea Exploration

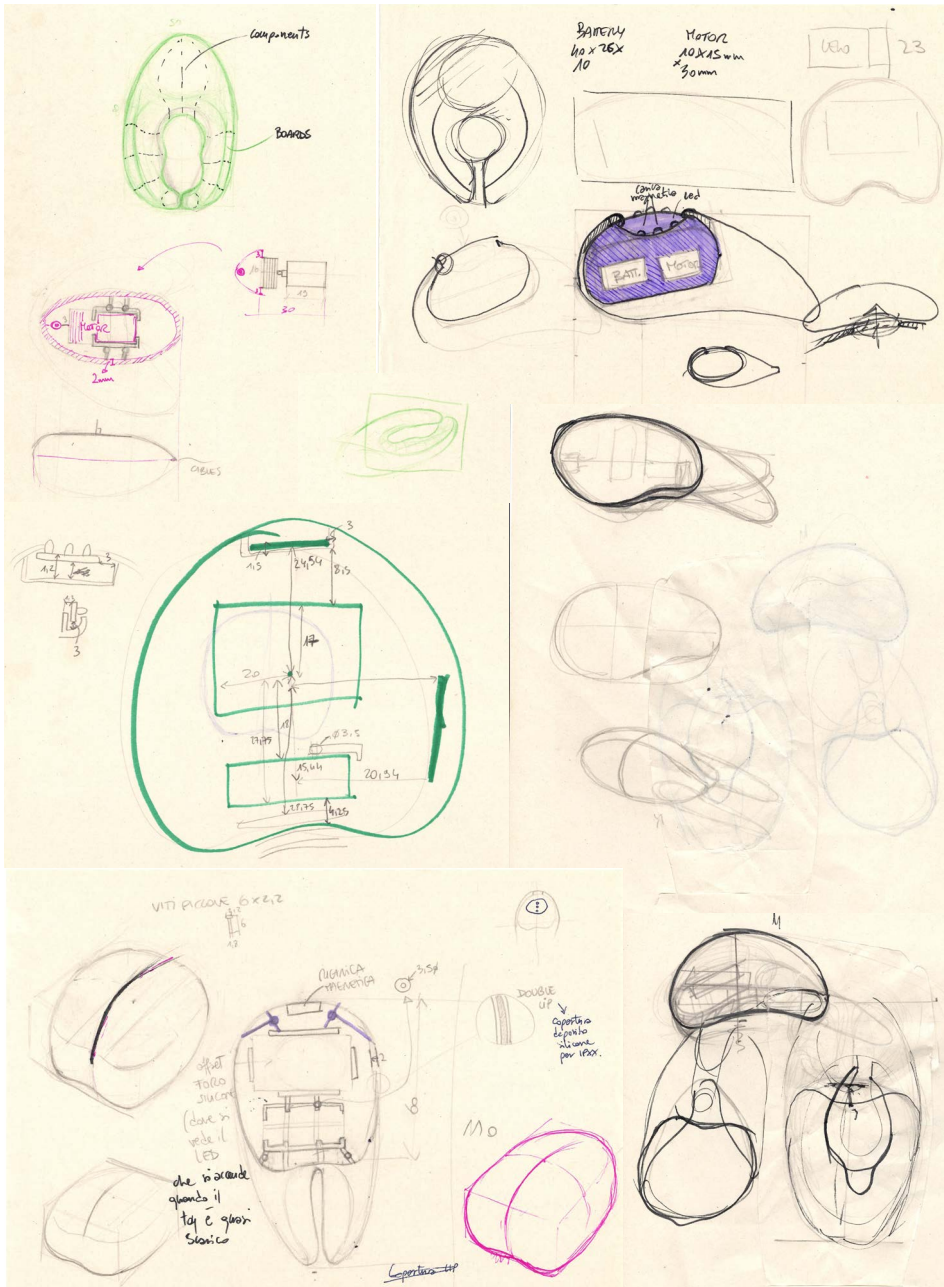


Fig. 131 Sketches, personal image.

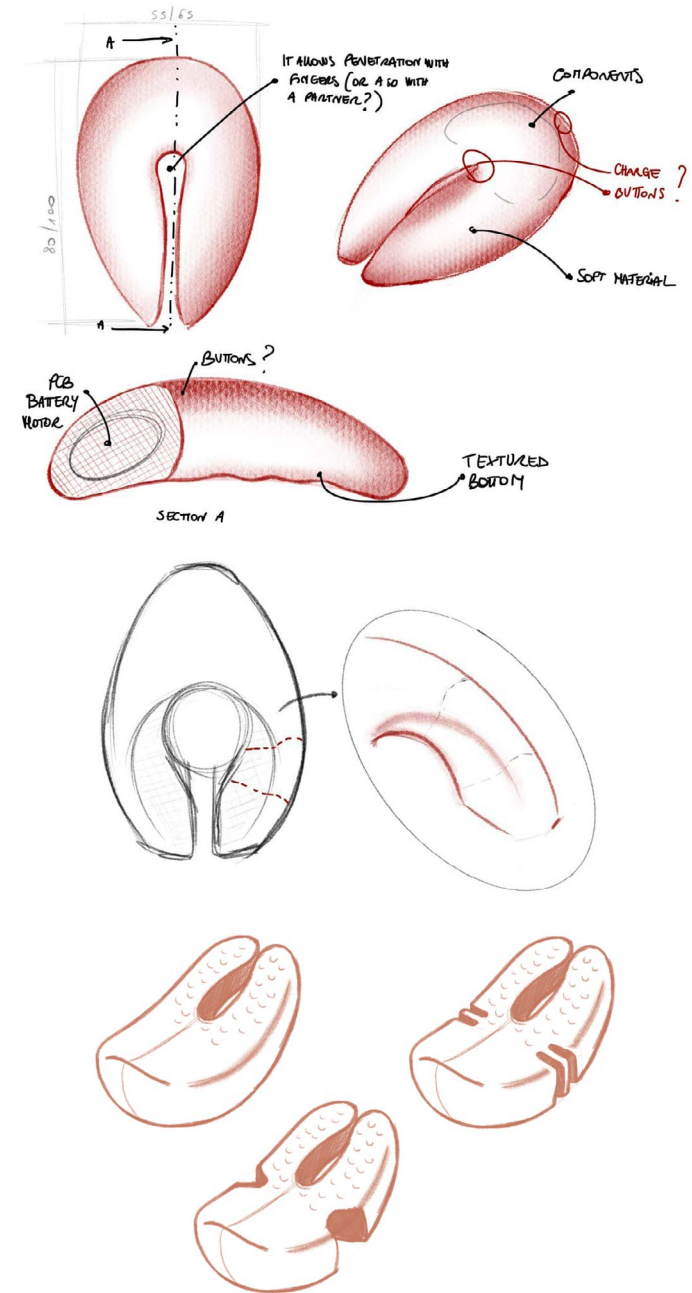


Fig. 132 Sketches, personal image.

12.3.2 Interaction

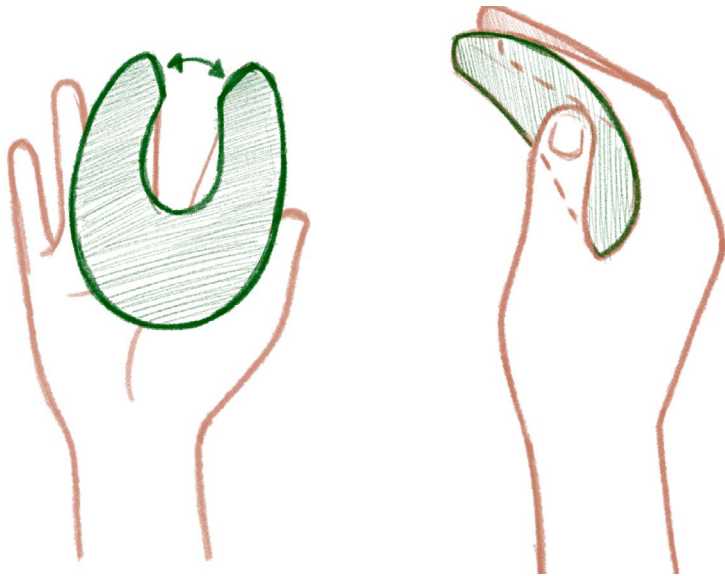


Fig. 133 Sketches, personal image.

The way the object is held determines the interaction. Most external stimulation toys need to be taken in hand to be used, then holding the object with your fingers and placing it on the area you want to stimulate. I wanted to create an object that would facilitate the user in the placement of the hand to be able to lay it on the object itself instead of using it to hold the toy. The result is an object with an ergonomic shape that adapts to the palm of the hand to be held without the use of fingers (fig. 133). The fingers instead leaning on the front flexible ends of the product and give the possibility to touch, move, press, interact with be to interact with your body accordingly.

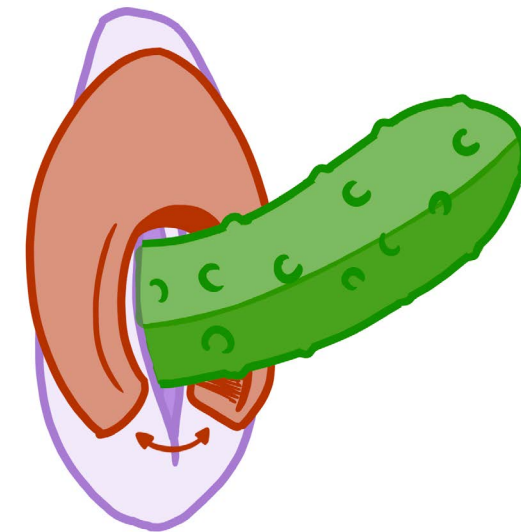


Fig. 134 Sketches, personal image.

At the beginning I thought of a closed shape, maybe from a silicone membrane that gave the possibility to touch through it. Talking to Kristy Stahlberg of Fun Factory, they reasoned that the toy could also be used at other times as a couple's toy, so as toys that could improve sex and external stimulation even during a penetration (fig. 134).

12.3.3 Final Concept

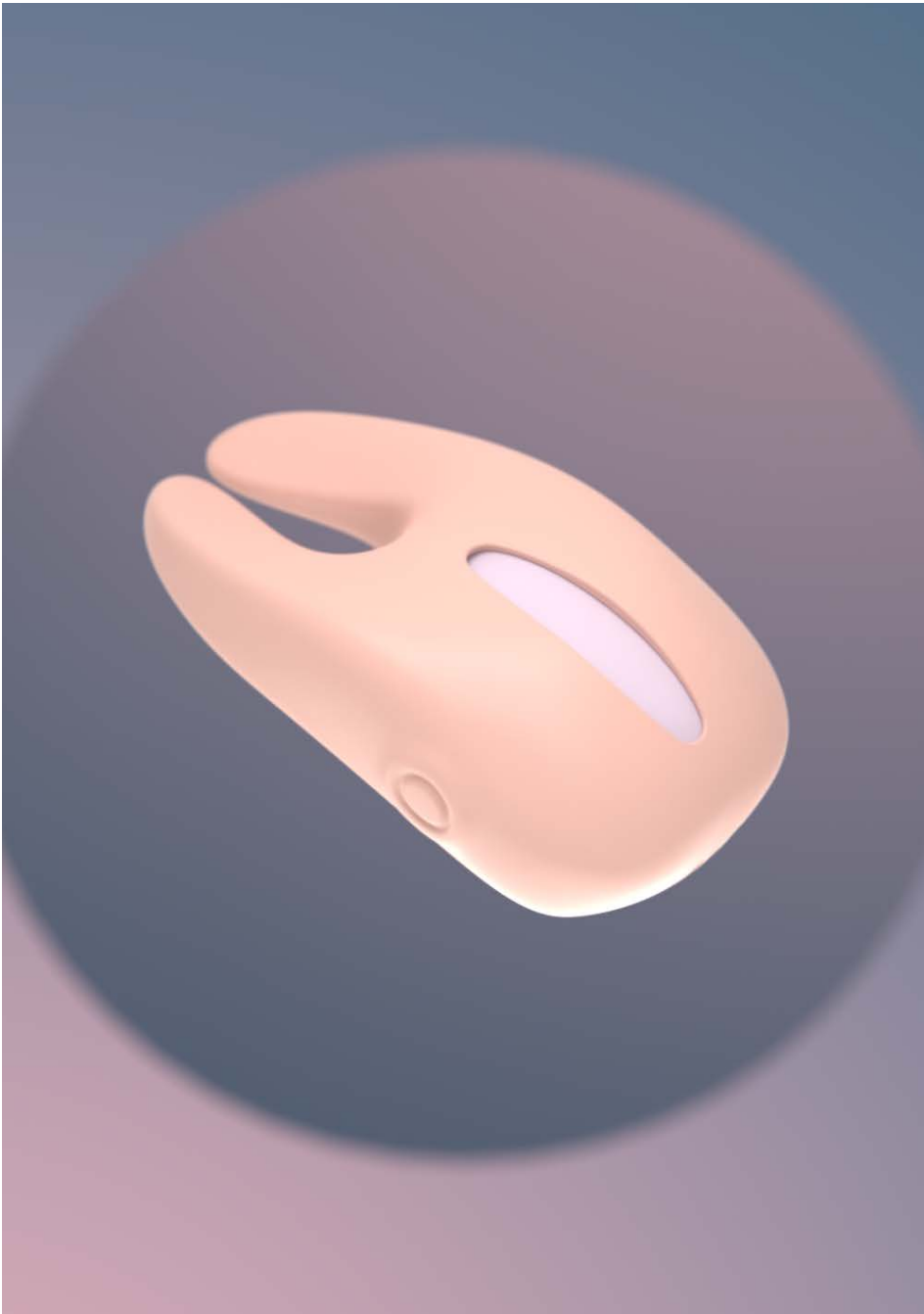


Fig. 135 Peach version, render, personal image.

The final object is a sextoy composed of a rigid shell, which contains all the electronic and mechanical components, and an outer part in silicone that covers it almost entirely. The rigid box is removable, so it can be used with or without the silicone part, and so you can wash and sanitize the toy in the best way after use. This also allows an easy disposal of the various components, when the body is not sealed irreversibly but closed with 4 screws. This also determines a simple maintenance, which could happen for example for the change of components.

The silicone part has a thickening in the lower part at the height of the motor: this allows the user to press as much as you want to reach the intensity of the desired vibration.

The two ends are entirely flexible and do not contain any rigid bodies: this allows them to be pressed, moved, joined, inserted, or to make use of them as the user prefers.



Fig. 136 Ambient set, render, personal image.

13

Engineering

In this last chapter I will describe in detail the components that are part of this product.

13.1 Exploded view

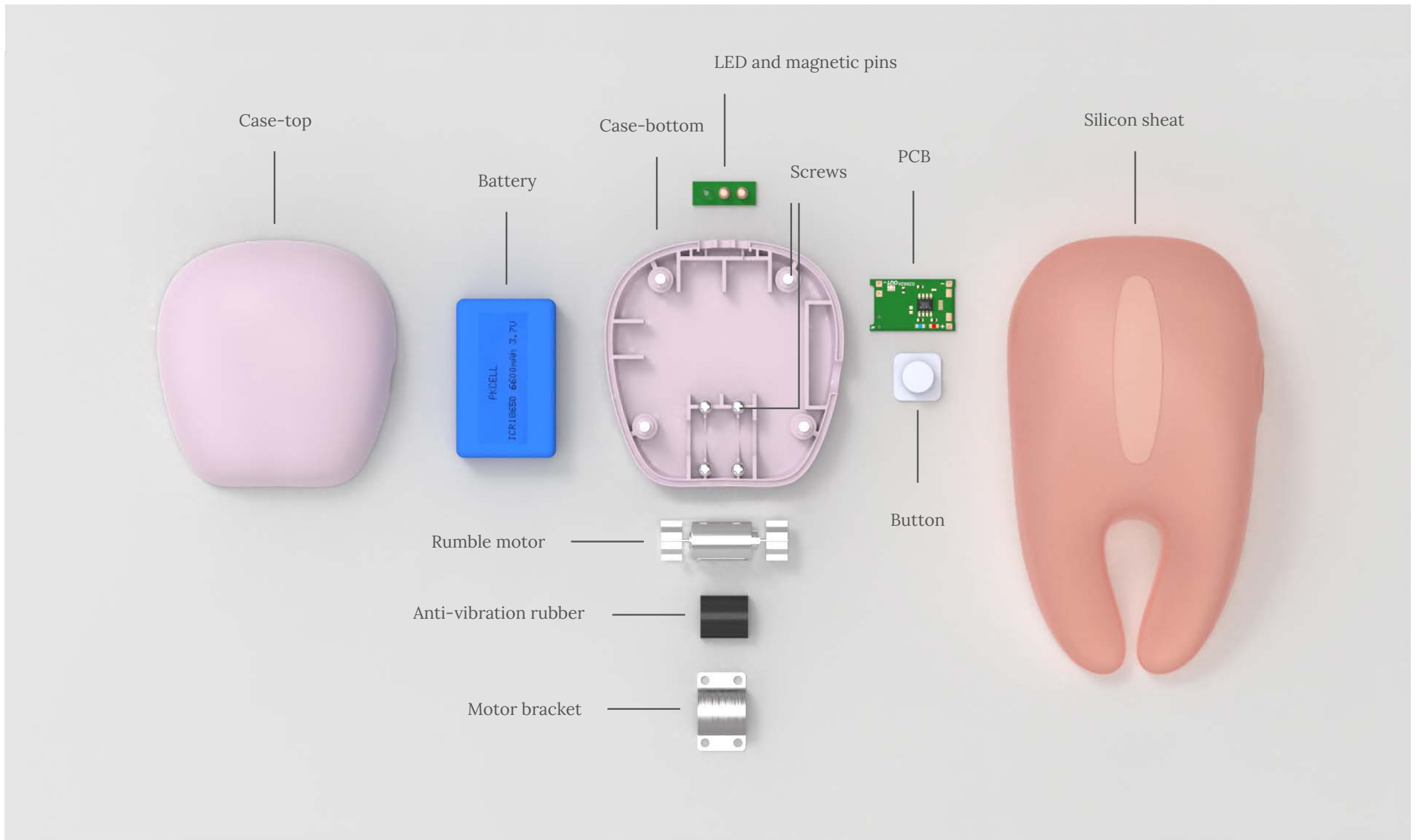


Fig. 137 Sextoy components, render, personal image.

13.2 Case

The case is the rigid injected moulded ABS shell that contains the electronic components. The case consists of two parts: one upper and one lower.



Fig. 138 3D printed Case, personal image.

13.1.1 Top

The top part close the case and keep the internal components in place. As the bottom part has holes to allow magnetic pins, led and button to escape keeping the inside intact and dry, since it closes with a double lip and groove. Obviously, the waterproofing should be tested to understand how to improve the modeling of these components and to keep the electronics intact.

The top is important because it is the surface on which you rest your hand to use the toy. It is located inside the silicone part that follows the same internal profile to hold the case in place.



Fig. 139 Ergonomy of the case, personal image.

13.1.2 Bottom

The bottom part instead has a flat base, and contains all the useful ribs to hold the battery, the motor, the PCB and the board on which are soldered pins for magnetic charging and LED light. It also contains holes, such as the top part, too upper part, to join the two parts and then close the body. I choose to maintain the bottom surface flat because in this way the injection molding is more performing because the ribs all have the same length, the electronics and the internal components can be placed and fixed without difficulty, and finally also to place it more easily inside the external component made in medical silicone. The entire shape of the case has a small recess in the front, this makes visible two slight rounded ends. This serves too to place the case easily.

13.1.3 Static Analysis

During the design of the case I wondered if components made in a certain way, connected with the screws and equipped with double lip and groove could withstand an important pressure. So I decided to do a static analysis on the case, on the upper surface of the top part, including top part and bottom part in the analysis to see if the two components hold the weight. I

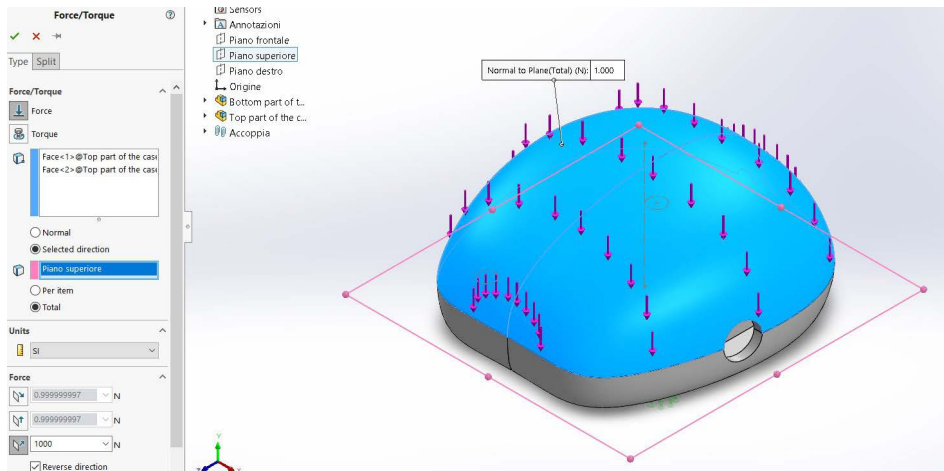


Fig. 140 Setting of the static analysis, personal image.

then applied a force of 1000N to test the case (fig. 140) and these were the results:

it is possible to see how much under a force of 1000N the stress of the material is minimal and the displacement in vertical is of only 0,2 mm (fig. 141, 142).

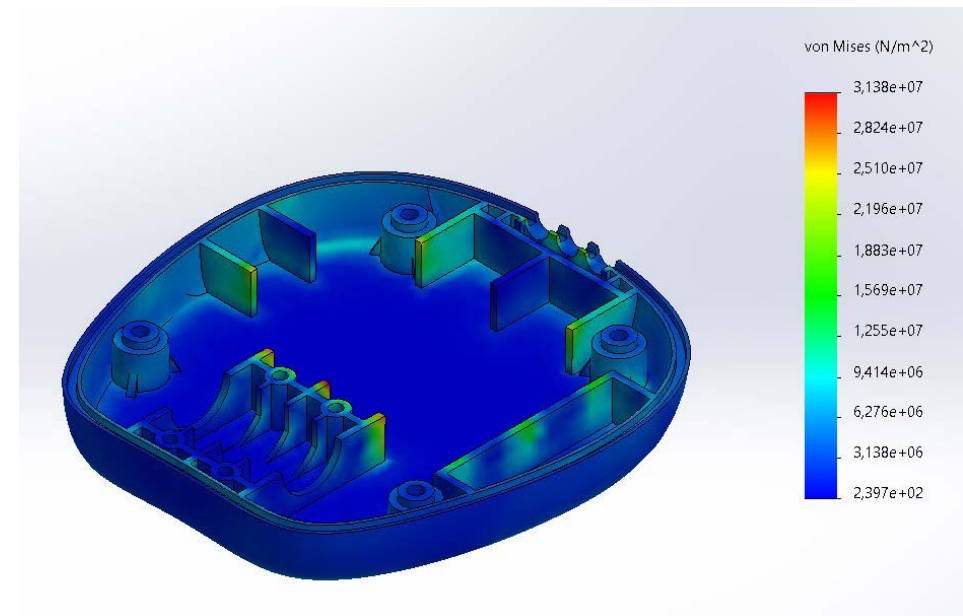


Fig. 141 Von Mises, personal image.

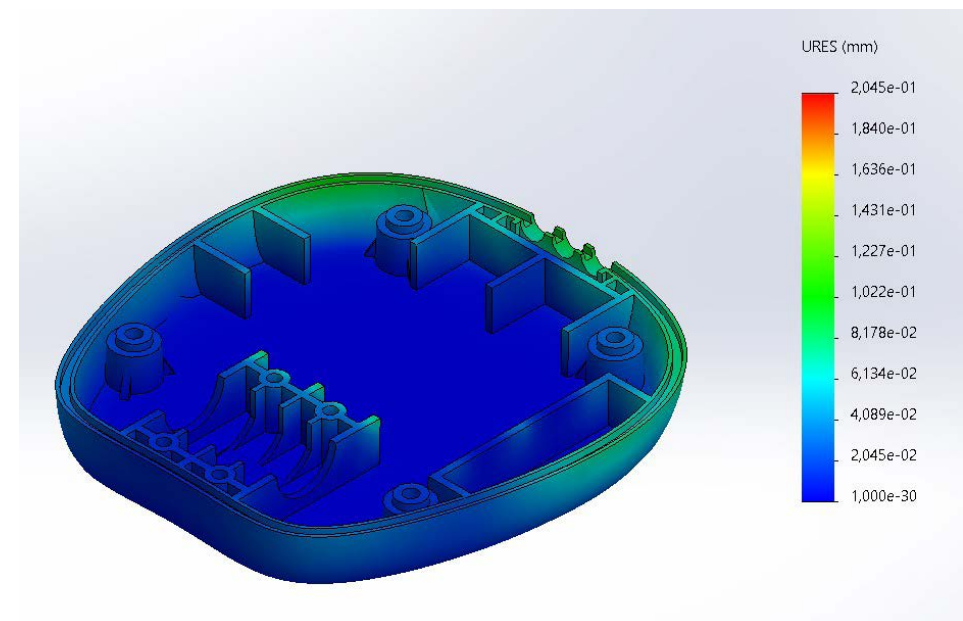


Fig. 142 Vertical displacement, personal image.

13.2 Button

The button is always made of medical silicone to make it safe for the body, also the silicone allows great flexibility given its very low Young module. Taking advantage of the flexibility of the material and its producibility in injection molding can be produced with a shape that allows the base of the button to remain firm and resting on the PCB, while its inner part can move when pressed to press in turn the real button located on the PCB.

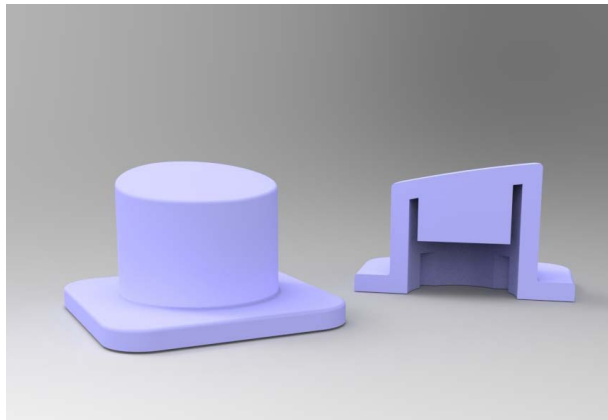


Fig. 143 Button and its section, render, personal image.

On the outer part of silicone, the button is indicated by a simple rounded edge that indicates the position below.

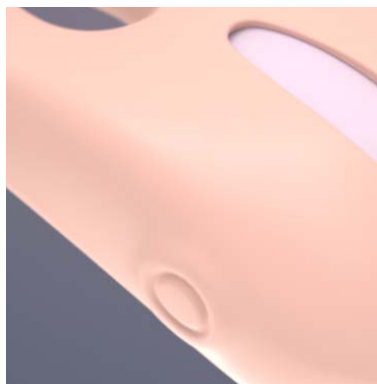


Fig. 144 Button edge detail, render, personal image.

To turn on the toy just hold the button and the same mode is used to turn it off. To change the type of vibration just press the button once: once you finish the mode the motor resumes vibrating from the first one.

13.3 Motor

The engine is rumble type. I chose this type of motor for the characteristics of its vibrations, since they have lower frequency and a greater amplitude, so they generate a very wide vibration that is deep on the body, releasing a pleasant feeling even for people with greater sensitivity.

Rumbly vibrations can stimulate the body deeper, not only superficially, so the perceived sensation is not annoying.

The motor I chose (the details are in Annex 2) has the double vibrating component (fig. 145). Using this motor compared to a motor with single vibrating part I can balance the vibration allowing both sides of the sextoy to cause the same sensations, also for its morphology I could place it in the most frontal part possible inside the case, thus being able to keep the battery horizontal and therefore have a case not too high.



Fig. 145 Double rumble motor, render, personal image.

The vibration modes are 2: a constant and a button. The constant vibration has 3 intensities, from the weakest to the most intense.



Fig. 136.

13.4 Silicone Sheath

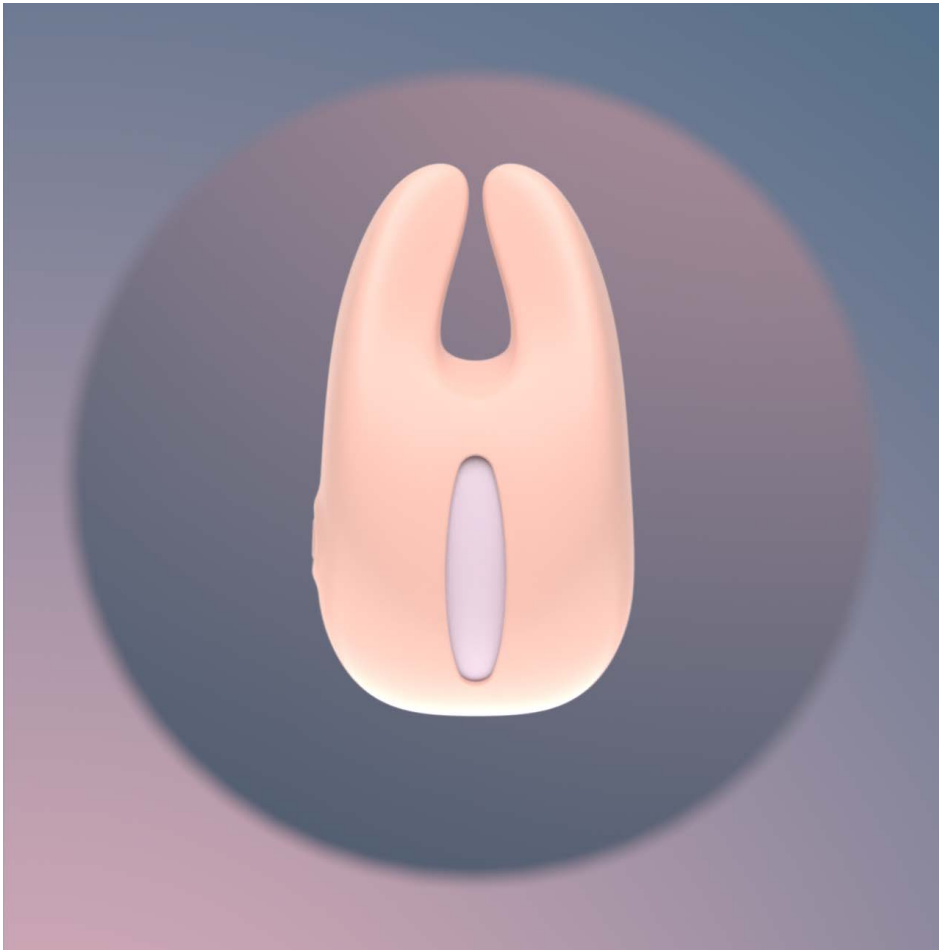


Fig. 148 Top view, render, personal image.

The outer part of silicone is the part that gives the final shape to the product. The silicone is medical grade, absolutely safe for skin contact, and is extremely soft and flexible. Its surface is also very smooth. This component is what allows the user to pick up the product and feel it in their own hands. thanks to its shape it adapts to the palm of the hand and the part of the two ends is made so that the fingers can be welcomed and find the necessary space to interact with the sextoy (fig. 149).

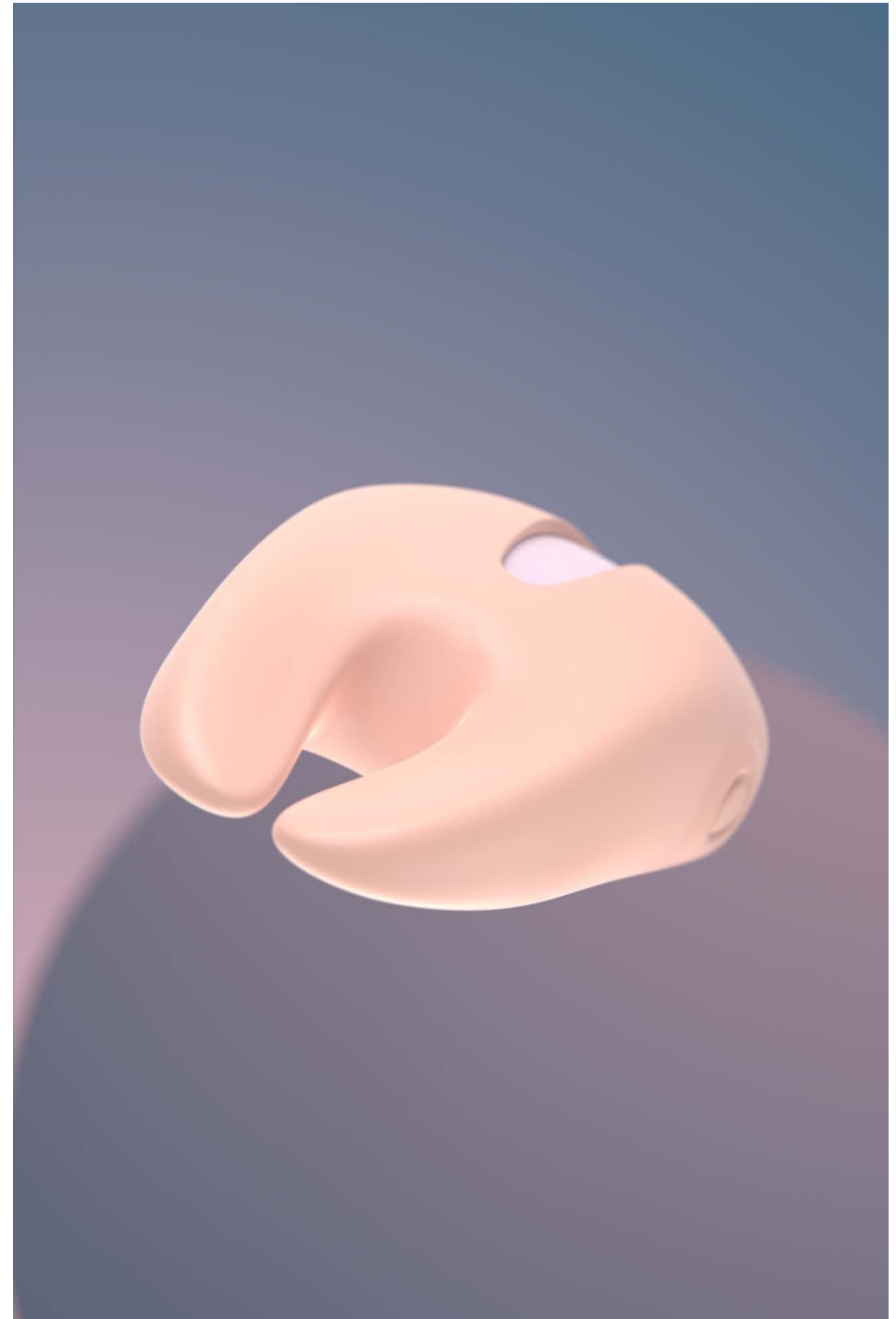


Fig. 149 Silicone ends, render, personal image.

The shape made in this way, and the front opening, allow two types of **interaction: direct and indirect**. The shape of the toy invites you to place your hand, but the slot invites you to insert your fingers, then use the toy as a mediation between your hand and your vulva and vagina (or other parts of the body). In addition, the two ends can be used directly to stimulate a part of the vulva, for example the clitoris, if you prefer a more punctual stimulation.

The shape, which is convex above and concave below, allows you to use the toy **actively or passively**. You can use it with your hands but also sit on it or insert it in the briefs for an alternative masturbation, maybe lying down.

The **opening** in the upper surface allows the toy to be extracted for a more correct cleaning and also to be used without silicone sheath, as well as to be recycled in a less impactful way at the end of its life.

As you can see, the **thickness** of the silicone part is greater than the thickness of the case. This is because, as you can also see from the upper hole in the silicone sheath, the case matches the upper inner surface of the silicone part. The silicone part below the case is thicker: this allows the user to adjust the intensity of the vibration not only thanks to the button but also thanks to the **pressure**: the more the toy is pressed against the body the more the vibration will be intense.

The **colors** I chose are 3:

- peach, a rosy orange (fig. 135);
- green, a cool tonality in pastel tones (fig. 151);
- light gray, to remember the feeling of purity of a smooth stone (fig. 152).

These colors want to deviate from the imagination of today's silicone sextoys to offer less pop and saturated colors but closer to the real colors that we can find in nature, and that better combine the different colors of the skintones.

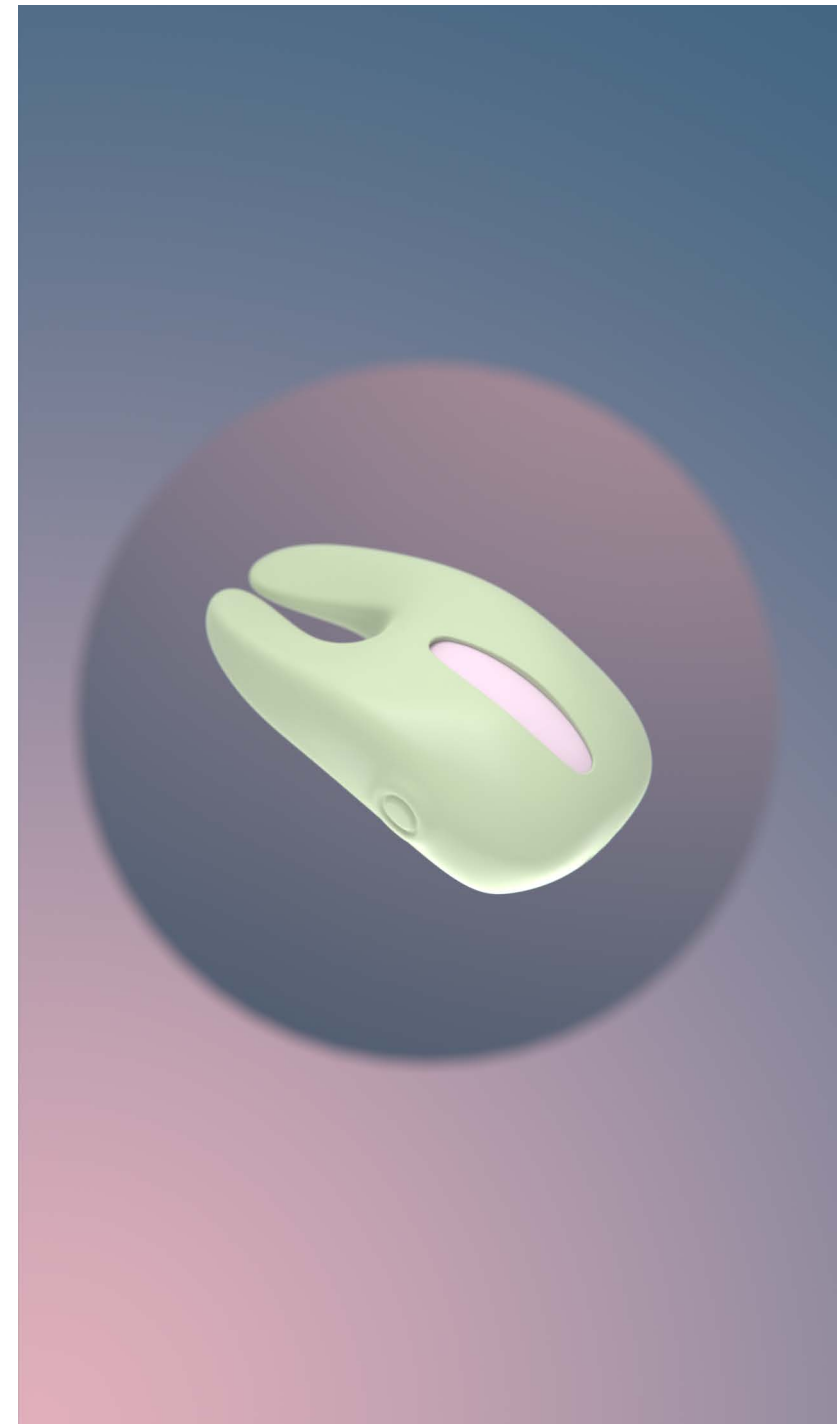


Fig. 151 Green version, render, personal image.



Fig. 152 Light grey version, render, personal image.

13.5 Magnetic pins and LED light

Magnetic pins allow charging of the internal battery. The pins are always in sight, so the toy can be loaded with both the silicone part present and without it.

Most of the girls interviewed in the survey in Annex 1, complained about the lack of communication from the toy of the level of the charge. I decided to add a small LED that flashed when the charge is about to run out. When the sextoy, once attached to the magnetic cables, is 100% charged, the LED light turns green to indicate the charging completed. When I disconnect the cable the light goes back to turn off so as not to annoy the user during use.



Fig. 146 Flashing LED indicating low battery, personal image.



Fig. 147 Green LED indicating complete charge, personal image.

14

Conclusions

Summarizing the project it can be listed the various benefits that the product provides, in respect to other models of sextoys:

Demountability and dismissability

The case can be opened to allow the maintenance of the product, while maintaining the characteristics of water resistance and easy usability of the product. The bodysafe materials to produce these items in large batch sizes to date are still limited, but the disassembly facilitates the recycling and division of the various components.

Interaction with the product

The interaction with the product wants to induce the user to position his hand so as to cover the entire surface of the product and then completely lie on the area of the vulva. Unlike other sextoys that need to be held differently, This product allows the user to approach a more personal interaction with his body and to approach it in a different way without

being forced to come into direct contact with the skin.

At the same time, like other products, this toy can be used by leaning on it, without having to hold it with your hands.

Variability

The shape of this toy allows the user to move the extremities in the way she prefer. Being a not-entirely rigid toy, the user may decide to use the flexible ends directly or you'll insert your fingers inside the vagina during masturbation. In addition, the flexibility allows you to use the product on multiple areas of the body with different curves and shapes, allowing the soft ends to stimulate even the smallest and unreachable areas.

Non-explicit shape and colours

The non-explicit form of the product, and not attributable to a phallic form by penetration, cancels the feeling of discomfort that can give that kind of form to a person more sensitive and less inclined to purchase such objects. The less pop, but softer colors facilitate the user to have a less aggressive perception of the sextoy.

15

Future Developments

As it has been noted during the development of the thesis, to date the materials compatible with the human body, safe for people, are very few, in the medical sector is in fact always used silicone to produce many devices, even disposable.

There are companies that are trying to develop new materials for their products, such as Iroha, but they are still very few and still at an immature stage to say that the use of recyclable materials is a common practice. It is not, and probably seen the type of object you will not be for long, but for sure the possibilities are many and worth exploring.

As for the type of product, the sextoys, to date there is no such ad hoc maintenance, most are products not disassemblable therefore a source of a huge pollution and no possibility of being adjusted if they get damaged. There are products like the Magic Wand that are removable and modular, but the modularity in this type of vibrating products can result in a shortening of the product life for possible premature damage of the contacts. It also entails a higher cost, which not all people can afford, especially when there is no possibility to adjust the sextoys if damaged. Ideally, there should exist a maintenance system like all electronic products, but this will only be possible when most products can be opened without problems and closed for safe use.

Ringraziamenti

È la fine di un percorso lungo e difficoltoso ma pieno di soddisfazioni, non sarei qua se non fosse grazie ad alcune persone che ci tengo a ringraziare. Ringrazio la mia relatrice Lucia Rampino, che ha saputo supportarmi ma soprattutto capirmi durante tutto il lavoro svolto, anche quando per me diventava troppo difficile.

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Attachment 1: Taboo of pleasure

The survey was completed by to 269 young women

Hello! I'm a student of Politecnico di Milano, enrolled in the master's degree in Industrial Product Design and Engineering.

Female sexual pleasure is still a taboo, rooted above all in the most backward countries on this topic such as Italy.

My degree thesis wants to contribute to overcoming this stigma: the aim is to design an object for women pleasure that encourages them to explore their body and to get to know it better, without fear or conditioning, to have greater self-awareness. The goal is to move ever closer to the acceptance of female masturbation and pleasure by promoting a sex-positive point of view.

The survey is aimed at girls up to about 30 years old, possibly Italian or resident in Italy. It will help me understand your perception of the world of sex toys and how you live your sexuality, living immersed in a macho culture. The questionnaire is anonymous and you can choose not to answer questions that may not put you at ease (except for some that send you to the right section).

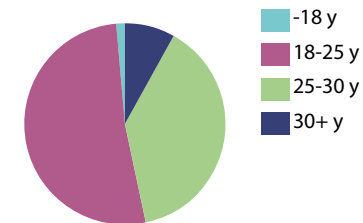
I hope the survey, as it will give useful information to me, will leave some interesting reflections for you too.

Thank you!

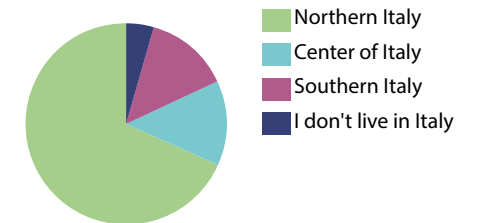
I will leave a box at the end in which you can enter your email, in case you want to be available for any further information.

1. Tell me about yourself

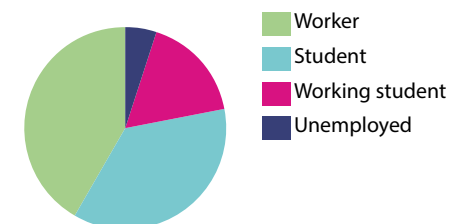
a) How old are you?



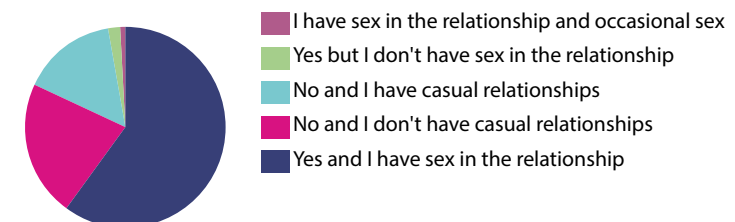
b) Where do you live?



c) What's your current occupation?



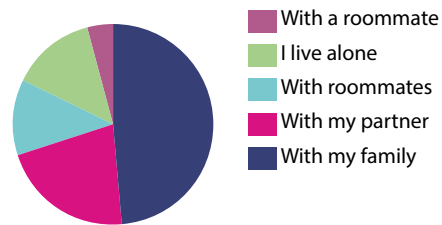
d) Are you in a romantic relationship?



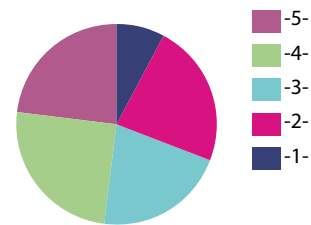
2. Body and sexuality

In this section I will ask you some questions about your relationship with your body and how you experience your sexuality

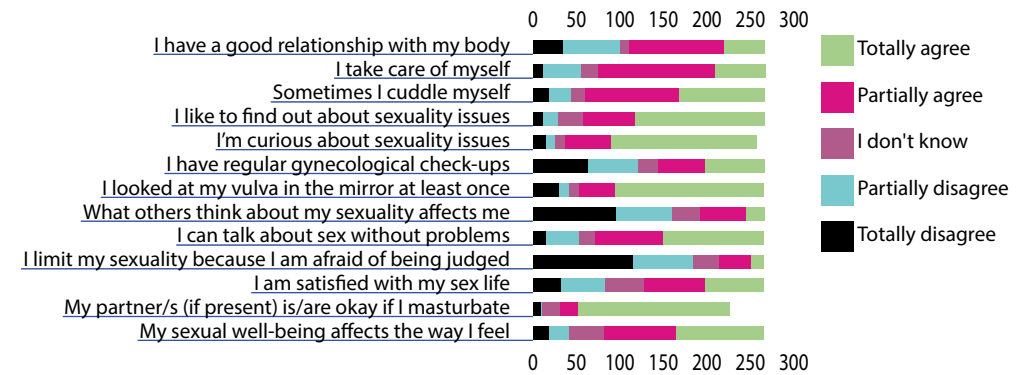
e) Who do you live with?



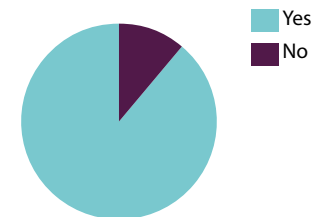
f) How much privacy do you feel you have in your home?



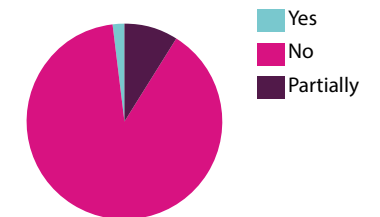
a) Do you agree or disagree?



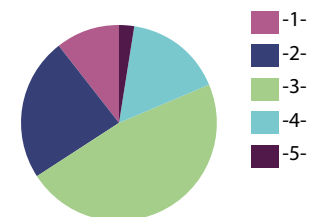
b) Do you watch or have you ever watched porn videos?



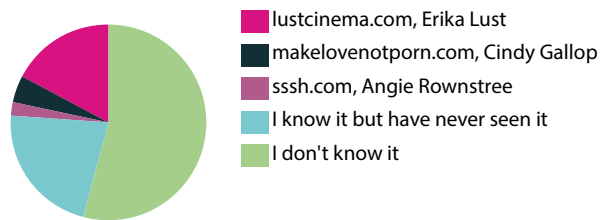
c) Do you think they represent reality?



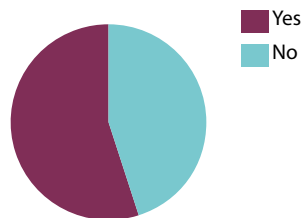
d) What perception do you have of porn videos? (1=negative, 5=positive)



e) Do you know ethical porn? For example you know:



f) Have you ever been in a sex shop?



g) Would you describe your experience? What is your idea of the place?

- interessante conoscere cose nuove
- divertente
- /
- Sorpresa dalla quantità di oggetti di cui non immaginavo nemmeno l'esistenza
- Divertente
- Stravagante
- Ci sono andata con un'amica per curiosità ma non abbiamo mai comprato nulla
- Un po' triste e un po' troppo targettizzato; a volte gestito da personaggi viscidati.

- Sono stata in due diversi tipi di sexy shop, il primo era un negozio di periferia, cupo e poco invitante, classico per come ce lo si potrebbe immaginare se presupponessimo che ci va solo gente squallida e losca, infatti era deserto e con la maggior parte della merce di dubbia qualità. Considerandolo una prima necessità che dovrebbe essere una cosa comune a portata di tutti senza taboo, l'ultimo sexy shop in cui sono stata, Wovo, ha una visione più aperta e improntata sulla qualità, serietà e importanza dei prodotti, con assistenza pre durante e post vendita, senza vergogna in base alle necessità e piaceri del compratore.
- Mi spaventano ma vorrei poter essere tanto libera nel provarli
- We dont have sex clubs where I live
- Molto interessante e ispirante
- Ho avuto ottime esperienze, ho sempre trovato persone che hanno saputo indirizzarmi verso ciò che volevo e consigliarmi, senza alcun tipo di disagio.
- Ero ad Amsterdam con il mio partner dell'epoca, ero interessata ma non ho comprato per imbarazzo / non sapevo dove nascondere a casa
- I have been in a couple, and they have always been a little like this kind of "secret place" (tinted windows, kind of dark atmosphere). But I would love for them to be just a little bit more playfull. Maybe to have different types of porn displayed, or if they would organize more "get togethers" or situations to make more normal the fact that we all could talk about having sex more freely.
- L'ambiente era amichevole, il personale specializzato e cordiale.
- Danno la sensazione di essere in posti "a luci rosse", e rimandano una sensazione di proibito quasi, mantenendo in auge il concetto di taboo per quanto riguarda la sessualità
- È stato interessante e stimolante
- il primo sexy shop che ho visitato: caotico e da donna mi sono sentita un po' in soggezione a causa degli sguardi degli uomini, ero un po' in difficoltà a chiedere informazioni
- il secondo sexy shop: bellissimo, organizzato e gestito da madre e figlia, super disponibili e informate sui prodotti
- Alcune cose interessanti, altre un po' troppo legate al porno e quindi non alla vera sessualità (inteso tra persone normali che hanno rapporti)
- Piacevole
- Tutto molto colorato e con oggetti che stimolano la propria fantasia sessuale
- Positiva, era una boutique in centro a Firenze piuttosto che un posto gigante, la responsabile mi ha seguita quando le ho chiesto una mano e mi sono sentita a mio agio
- molto datati e poco informati su dinamiche kinky, soprattutto molto eteronormativi, a parte quel paio di boutique famose nelle grandi città

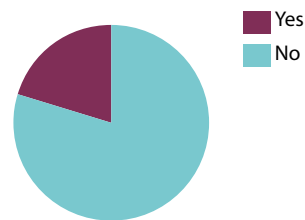
- quelli che ci sono nelle mie zone vengono frequentati principalmente per comprare regali stupidi per i diciottesimi o per le lauree.. sembra più un posto da vivere di nascosto come un taboo
- Positiva ed accogliente
- Un negozio come un altro, in cui comprare oggetti/vestiti/articoli di proprio gusto, per un mero piacere personale
- Mi piace!
- Ero molto incuriosita, c'erano un sacco di prodotti che non avevo mai visto
- Era come stare in un negozio come un altro, il commesso non ha fatto una piega e il mio ragazzo dell'epoca eravamo molto tranquilli, tutto si è svolto nella normalità.
- Mi sentivo osservata, ho acquistato sex toys da un sito perché lì non riuscivo a sentirmi a mio agio
- L'ho fatto per curiosità e divertimento, alcune cose non le userei mai altre si
- Sinceramente non vergognandomi della sessualità in generale, ho notato che era come entrare in un normale negozio dove acquistare ciò che più mi serviva in quel momento per raggiungere il piacere (sia nella masturbazione che nella coppia), o appunto per risanare un rapporto di coppia che sotto le lenzuola iniziava a risentire della routine;ed ho trovato sempre del personale estremamente educato che non è mai sceso a battute scontate o banali ridicolizzando magari l'acquisto.
- Anzi ho notato invece di come fossero gli uomini (anche ragazzi) ad essere i più impacciati nel fare gli acquisti,a tratti quasi vergognandosi.
- Anni fa a cyberdog londra, quindi ho una prospettiva troppo parziale. Solitamente mi appaiono come luoghi squallidi, ma conosco solo quelli "vecchio stile"
- Preferisco i sexy shop online, i negozi fisici hanno ancora un'aria troppo "sporca"
- Neutrale, come andare in un qualsiasi altro negozio
- Divertente
- Sento come se ci fossero dei taboo anche in un posto dove i taboo sono esposti, forse perché i sexy shop sembrano ricalcare l'immagine della sessualità che ci viene imposta dai porno. Non mi sento molto a mio agio ad andare lì.
- sembrava troppo losco e mi sentivo a disagio
- Sono prevalentemente negozi trash senza informazione seria sulla sessualità (a parte wovo!!)
- Buona
- Non mi è piaciuto affatto perché ogni cosa mi è sembrata di qualità veramente bassa, poco affidabile.

- Esperienza normalissima di chi entra in un negozio e acquista articoli correlati al ad esso.
- La mia esperienza la definirei tranquilla, ho contattato il gestore inizialmente sul sito per sapere se avessero ciò di cui necessitavo e quando sono andata lì sono stata trattata in maniera rispettosa
- A volte sono un po' squallidi
- Viene vissuto con troppo imbarazzo dai clienti, spesso più come uno scherzo che qualcosa di serio
- Negozio inclusivo e preparato, mi sono trovata benissimo. Complice il fatto che fosse una vetrina luminosa, con negozio a vista e non dietro le tende
- PS (Ho descritto wovo senza leggere la domanda successiva)
- Positiva
- Sono stata in un sexy shop a Firenze ed era molto elegante e non mi ha dato alcuna sensazione di imbarazzo o di disagio. Il fatto che fosse luminoso e non ricordasse nulla di viscido/squallido mi ha fatta stare tranquilla. Inoltre c'era una commessa quindi forse anche per quello'
- Ero più piccola per fare un regalo divertente a un'amica e poi non ci sono più tornata.
- Più discreto di quanto mi aspettassi
- È stata molto piacevole perché ho sempre trovato persone che mi sapessero consigliare in maniera professionale capendo prima quali fossero nello specifico le mie esigenze e quelle della mia partner
- No idea
- Il posto era molto accogliente e confidenziale,mi ha fatto una buona impressione
- positiva, il personale è sempre stato disponibile e pronto ad aiutarti a capire cosa poteva fare al caso mio
- È stato divertente
- Un'ambiente tutt'altro che rassicurante, in una strada secondaria a Bergamo (new temptation) , con i vetri oscurati e l'obbligo di suonare il campanello per poter entrare. Il proprietario era diffidente e scontroso perchè eravamo due ragazze giovani e siamo state praticamente cacciate dopo due minuti solo perchè gli sembravamo indecise e non rispecchiavamo il suo target. L'ambiente trasmetteva molto il messaggio che ciò che avveniva lì dentro era sbagliato e andava tenuto lontano dagli occhi di tutti.
- è stato curioso e divertente, a tratti istruttivo
- Sembrano posti interessanti, vorrei tornarci
- Inizialmente in imbarazzo, dopo qualche minuto, anche osservando le altre persone, mi sono sentita a mio agio

- è stato divertente, ci sono entrata per curiosità ma non ho acquistato nulla
- Nonostante il titolare fosse molto professionale il mondo del porno e dei sexyshop non mi sembra a misura di donna
- All'estero c'è una concezione migliore del sexy shop, ci sono piccoli stand dedicati all'informazione e al benessere sessuale. Qui in Italia spesso, sono posti bui e grigi, mezzi ritrovi per maniaci..
- Ero in Australia quindi sicuramente è stata un'esperienza diversa rispetto ai tristissimi sex toys che si vedono nella periferia di Milano dove solo a entrare temi che ti violentino! Lì è stato molto rilassato e divertente.
- Non piacevolissima, il gestore ci ha provato in modo abbastanza viscido
- Molto buio, sembrava qualcosa di "illegale"
- Divertente e istruttivo
- Intrigante
- Un comune negozio
- Un posto demonizzato dalla nostra società ma che una volta dentro non ti fa sentire giudicata, anzi ti permette di esplorare la tua sessualità.
- Molto simpatico!
- Cool, interesting
- In Italia sono un po' trash e disordinati, all'estero invece sono eleganti e curati
- Ho visto solo tanti dildi e lingerie spinta, niente di più interessante, mi sono annoiata subito
- Era un posto piccolo, pulito. Il negoziante è stato molto professionale.
- Esperienza breve, positiva, mi sono sentita a mio agio.
- Era tipo vending machines, quindi non so se conta lol ma è stato interessante, anche se andavo di fretta!
- Molto a disagio. Niente giocattoli per lesbiche. Il tipo alla cassa molto molto inquietante. Negozio con cassiera donna era molto meglio.
- Sono sicuramente fatti soprattutto per una clientela prevalentemente maschile, ma ultimamente il mercato dei sex toys si sta espandendo molto per essere inclusivo anche verso le donne. Sono stata in sex shop in Italia (squallidissimi, con le cabine monoposto per i film e l'unico toy in vista erano cazzi di gomma bruttissimi) e in Giappone (dove spesso sono a più piani divisi per tema e oggetti venduti, dove ho trovato una grandissima varietà di toys per tutti/e).
- Ci andai un paio di volte quando ero adolescente e mi sorpresi della quantità e varietà di gadget e sex toys. Alcuni film porno in vetrina mi sembrarono ridicoli. In generale mi feci l'idea che esiste tanto materiale che piace ad altri ma che a me non interessa.
- in vacanza con gli amici in una città estera, siamo entrati per curiosità in un sexy shop enorme e abbiamo curiosato

- Esperienza ilare.
- Le prime volte ero in imbarazzo, poi mi sono abituata e ora sono molto a mio agio. Preferisco quelli luminosi e "puliti" a quelli con le cose tutte ammassate e la luce soffusa che mi danno un'idea di cosa losca
- O un po' trash (che mi repelle) o un po' magazzino. Non sono posti che ho piacere frequentare, ma ci vado se voglio comprare qualcosa in particolare.
- Sono stata in diversi sexyshop per motivi differenti (acquisti personali o gadget divertenti da regalare). In alcuni ho trovato poca scelta che rispondesse alle mie esigenze, perciò preferisco gli shop online
- Ero un po' in imbarazzo
- È semplicemente un negozio, non ha senso dover ricorrere per forza ad internet e al completo anonimato per acquistare dei prodotti legati alla sessualità
- Commerciale
- Sono stata in diversi sexyshop, le prime volte più che altro per curiosità, poi anche per acquistare sex toys
- I vibratorini costano troppo
- Trovato cose che non sapevo esistessero. Un buon modo per vedere dal vivo le cose prima di comprarle
- Ci sono entrata per caso perché avevo bisogno di indicazioni, ero di fretta, quindi sommariamente mi ricordo giusto che fosse arredato per attirare l'attenzione, nella disposizione degli oggetti in vendita, nelle luci soffuse, nell'arredamento. Peccato la posizione sfigata in cui era stato relegato (centro commerciale)
- Interessante
- Non tutte le donne si troverebbero a proprio agio, anzi.
- Un luogo che ha le potenzialità per garantire scoperta di oggetti nuovi, ma che solitamente finisce per avere personale inadatto e prodotti costosi e banali.
- Figata
- Sono stata da wovo e è stato tutto normale, come entrare in un negozio di vestiti
- La prima volta sono stata da wovo perché ho trovato su internet un video in cui ci andava chadia e durante l'acquisto riceveva una semiconsulenza sull'acquisto del toy. Questo mi ha spinto ad andare da wovo, nonostante al tempo avessi meno consapevolezza sessuale rispetto ad ora. Poi mi sono fatta regalare dalle mie amiche un toy che volevo provare. In seguito ho acquistato su internet su un sito a caso perché c'erano tantissime cose che costavano poco. In ogni caso ho pochi toy preferiti, vorrei provare ad esplorare di più ma per "comodità" vado sul sicuro.

h) Do you know and/or have you ever been to WOVO?



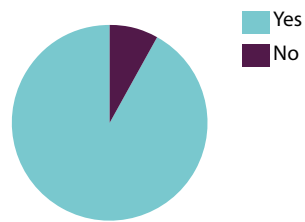
i) Have you been to "modern" sex shops? Would you write me the name of the shop and where it is?

- No
- paderno dugnano
- Non sono mai stata
- /
- Mai stata
- Non ricordo
- Purtroppo non ancora.
- Come sopra, Wovo
- No i have not
- Milano Buonarroti
- Wovo
- Ni
- "perché l'amore è un'arte" a Firenze
- Perché l'amore è un arte, Borgo Albizi, Firenze
- Non ricordo il nome ma si trova a Firenze
- Mai
- Si a Parigi ma non ricordo il nome
- Era un piccolo sexy shop nelle Marche, non ricordo altro
- Non ricordo

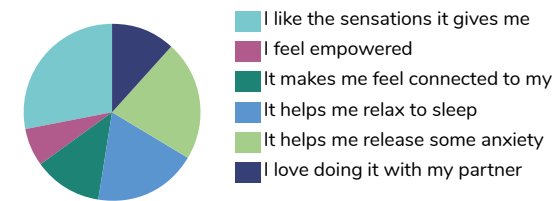
- A Milano ma non ricordo il nome
- no
- Wovo!!
- Ci sono stata l'ultima volta ad Amsterdam un paio di anni fa ma, non ricordo proprio il nome
- Non ci sono mai stata
- No sono stata in un sexyshop normale
- Sexsade milano
- Il sexy shop della mia città consiste in un 24h con delle macchinette
- Erotika, Milano
- Non so se fosse moderno, si trova a milano zona porta venezia
- Non so cosa si intende per "moderni", ma non credo comunque di esserci stata
- La conchiglia sexy shop - Bologna
- Si sono stata in un sexy shop a Barcellona, non ricordo il nome, fa parte di una catena spagnola
- Online, Amazon
- wovo
- sì, a Barcellona (non ricordo il nome)
- Sex Sade, Porta Venezia, Milano
- Loverver a Torino
- Non capisco cosa si intende per "moderni"
- Fetishop, Colonia
- Purtroppo ancora no
- Non so cosa siano
- In Giappone a Tokyo, ma non mi ricordo l'indirizzo.
- Mi pare di non esserci mai stata.
- penso che il sexy shop che ho descritto sopra fosse uno di questi, non ricordo il nome ma era in centro a barcellona
- Magiclove Sexy Shop Milano 02 3653 4009 <https://maps.app.goo.gl/xK32riNfaRuSpSpr8>
- A Berlino. Uno molto pretenzioso, vendono solo vibratori con dei prezzi assurdi.
- Non saprei come incasellare un sexy shop "moderno", in ogni caso ne frequento uno di fiducia, Magic America
- Mai stata, quello era di fine anni '90 inizio 2000 probabilmente!
- Wovo milano
- Sono stata da Erotika in via Melzo ma non ero interessata a comprare toy in quel momento quindi non mi sono lasciata in esplorazione

3. Masturbation? Tell me more!

j) Do you masturbate?



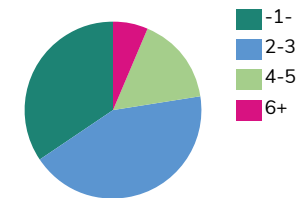
a.1) I masturbate cause..



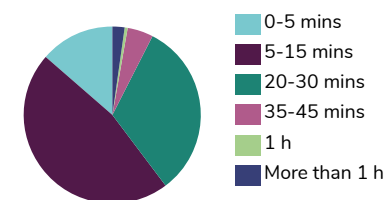
a.2) Someone added:

- I feel the physical need
- I don't particularly like doing it
- I try to masturbate regularly but it's really difficult for me to feel pleasure, even as a couple
- I started doing it thanks to a psychological path and I still can't see it as pleasure, but as something that helps me to experience sex better

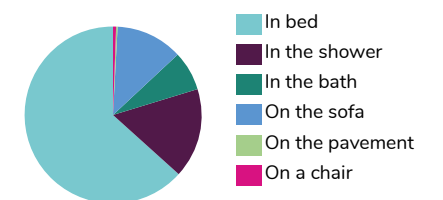
c) How many times do you masturbate in a week usually?



d) How long?

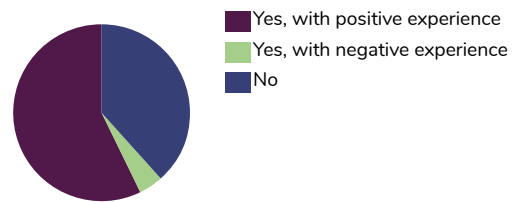


e) Where do you usually masturbate?

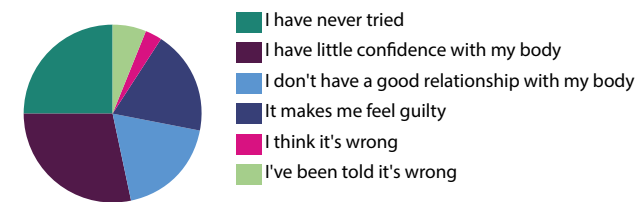


4. Masturbation? No thanks

f) Have you ever used sextoys?



a.3) I don't masturbate because ...



Someone added:
 I don't feel the need to do it as I am satisfied with sexual intercourse with my partner
 I have never felt the need
 I prefer two
 I find myself uncomfortable because with my hands it is like doing it with myself, which does not lead me to be as relaxed as in a relationship.
 I feel pain
 I'm not interested and it

a.2) Someone added:

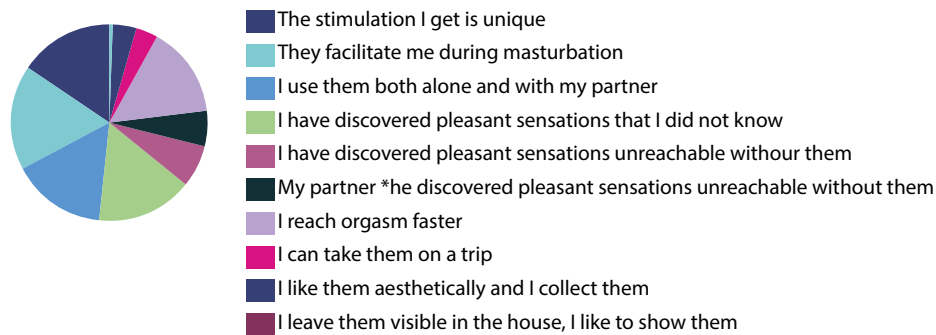
- I don't feel the need to do it as I am satisfied with sexual intercourse with my partner
- I have never felt the need
- I prefer two
- I find myself uncomfortable because with my hands it is like doing it with myself, which does not lead me to be as relaxed as in a relationship.
- I feel pain
- I'm not interested and it doesn't satisfy me

b) Of the people who masturbate I think:

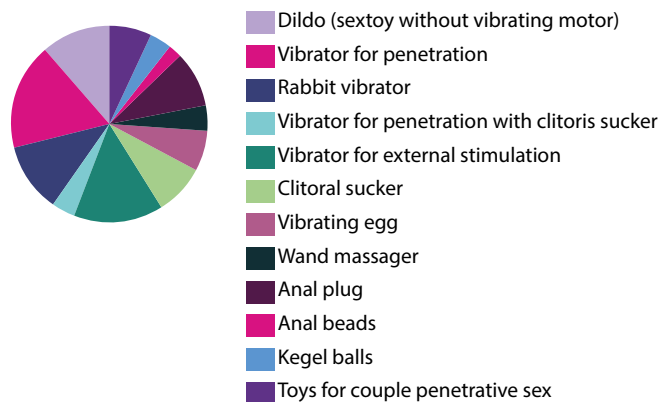


5. Sextoys: tell me more!

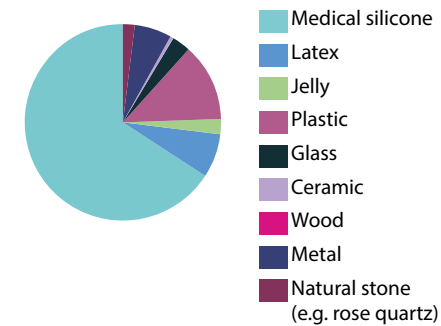
a) I use sextoys because...



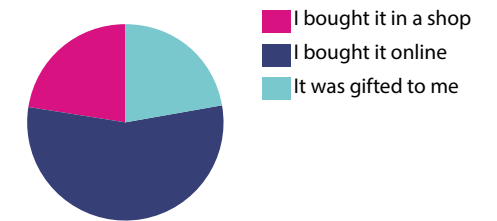
b) What types of toys do you own, or have you tried, among these?



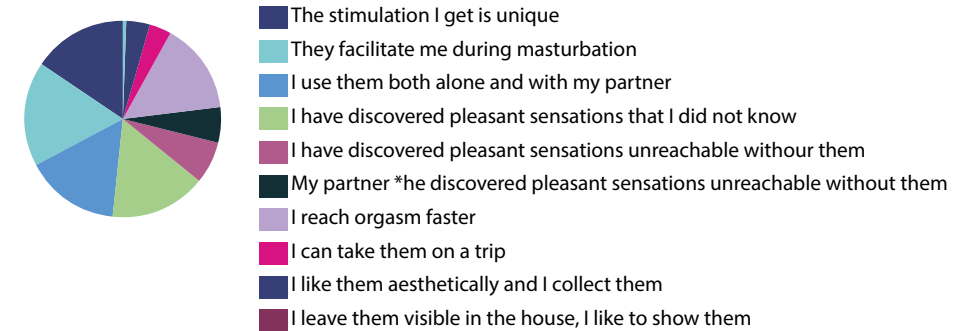
c) What materials are the sex toys you use?



d) How did you get the sex toy?



e) Do you agree or disagree with these statements? Answer based on the type of toy you have



f) Is there anything you would change about your toy?

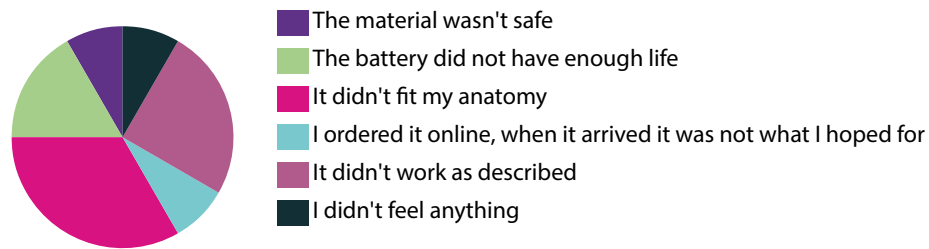
- No
- livello di batteria
- Sì, per l'uso che ne faccio io spesso vibrano in modo troppo intenso. E sicuramente a livello estetico non sono il massimo.
- Non è totalmente impermeabile il che è un problema per la pulizia
- Il materiale di merda
- Not really
- No, credo di essere soddisfatta.

- the shape could be more playful and stimulating
- Il materiale, per esempio vorrei comprarne uno in quarzo rosa ma ho paura che non esca
- più toys intelligenti con app che oltre alle varie modalità dicono la percentuale di batteria, tipo i satisfyer, più toys multiuso
- Sarebbe utile un indicatore della carica e vorrei che fosse più silenzioso. Anche una bella custodia sarebbe comoda.
- Alcuni tipi di vibrazione (troppo forti o troppo deboli)
- Preferirei riuscire a capire quando sta per scaricarsi e ne preferirei uno sia per stimolazione esterna che interna (ma sono povera)
- no
- Materiale e funzioni
- Nel succhia clitoride aggiungerei più vibrazioni
- Vorrei avere più modalità di vibrazioni e che si sentisse di meno il rumore magari. Ma ne ho solo uno quindi vorrei provarne di altri tipi
- Durata batteria
- La punta per la stimolazione clitoridea
- l'interfaccia utente
- Materiale
- Inserire delle indicazioni sulla batteria (il mio è con le batterie a litio)
- Lo vorrei in un materiale che lo renda più flessibile e adattabile alla posizione del corpo
- lavorerei sulla maneggevolezza
- No ma ne comprerei altri per provare cose nuove e diverse
- Indicare quando le batterie stanno per finire, così non ho brutte sorprese in momenti clou
- Il mio rabbit non è anatomicamente "giusto" per me, qualche volta fatico ad utilizzarlo, inoltre il materiale non è così morbido
- capire quando si scarica, più facile da tenere in mano
- Sarebbe utile un indicatore di carica
- No eheh
- La dimensione
- Nel dildo cambierei la durezza, lo vorrei leggermente più morbido. In più sarebbe perfetto se si scaldasse (nei limiti della sicurezza)
- Aumenterei la durata della batteria e aggiungerei sempre un sacchettino (tipo velluto) per conservarlo una volta pulito.
- Che funzioni se attaccato alla batteria portatile
- Del mio rabbit vorrei capire meglio quando sta per scaricarsi, poi la parte per la penetrazione ha una specie di bump che lo rende fastidioso, infatti lo uso

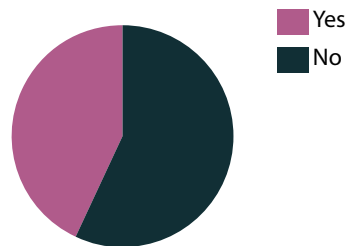
- solo esternamente. Il mio bullet è solo piccolo, non è il tipo di toy che fa per me
- Sarebbe utile avere una funzione che avvisasse quando il vibratore stia per scaricarsi, anziché che si scarichi sul più bello :) In più sarebbe carino se si potesse usare anche quando è in carica e non solo da scollegato. Per quanto riguarda quelli a batteria, se i formati delle batterie fossero più reperibili e standard.
- In fase di acquisto non era chiarissimo fossero presenti dei LED RGB, sarebbe utile poterli spegnere anziché solo cambiare colore. Preferirei anche facesse meno rumore e che le vibrazioni fossero più "soft"
- La dimensione della "punta" rispetto al resto del corpo del vibratore non mi permette di usarlo facilmente anche internamente perché è troppo grande. Preferirei che fosse più ridotta in modo da poterlo usare anche così. La forma curva è molto più comoda dei soliti vibratori dritti, non stressa il polso.
- Mettere in una posizione più comoda il tasto per cambiare la modalità di vibrazione
- il colore, sono tutti viola, rosa o neri, faccio fatica a trovarne di colori interessanti
- Alcuni sono stati abbandonati perché non sono piacevoli come pubblicizzati
- La modalità di ricarica via cavo. Un avviso per quando si sta per scaricare.
- La durata della batteria
- Niente scritte "ad incisione" (su silicone nel mio caso) in parti che penetrano/ su cui si applica del lubrificante, scomodi da pulire e nel caso di plug anali assolutamente antigienico
- Mi sono stati regalati da un "maschio bianco etero basic": riproducono fedelmente dei peni, ma è una caratteristica inquietante. Se avessi potuto scegliere io sarebbero stati diversi. Ora non ho le disponibilità economiche per comprarne altri e spiace buttare via qualcosa che tutto sommato fa il suo dovere.
- È una c vibrante. Non c'erano più misure e non arriva nei punti giusti perché per me è grandino, per cui lo utilizzo diversamente da come è stato pensato.
- La possibilità di adattarsi, di essere pieghevole, meno rigido soprattutto se si hanno problemi di contrattura pelvica/ vaginismo/ vulvodinia
- Più grosso
- Durata della batteria da aumentare

6. Negative experience with sextoys

a) What went wrong using the sex toy?



b.1) Did the negative experience put you off about using sextoys in general?



b.2) Someone added:

- Mi ha fatta sentire più insicura sul mio corpo
- Non abbastanza interessata
- Vorrei provarne di diversi

7. Sextoys? No thanks

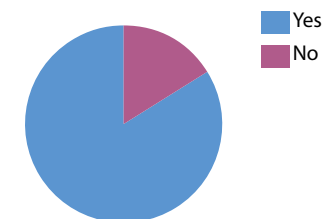
a.1) I don't use sextoys because



a.2) Someone added

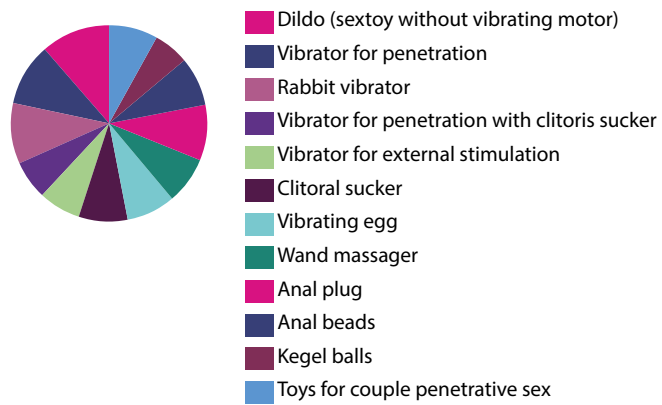
- They seem noisy
- I would feel weird about using them for no particular reason
- I would like to be sure that what I buy is useful and I am ashamed to go to the store (I don't like to shop online)
- I would be ashamed to own one
- I am lazy, and I seem to satisfy myself enough by myself
- They intrigue me but I've never had that little bit extra to try them
- I had never taken them into consideration
- I am allergic to many and have to use a condom
- I look forward to buying them
- Never had or bought one
- I do not know

b) Are you curious and / or would you like to buy them?

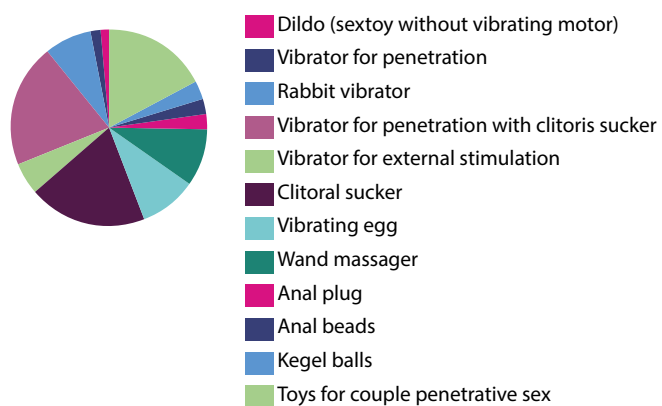


8. How much do you know?

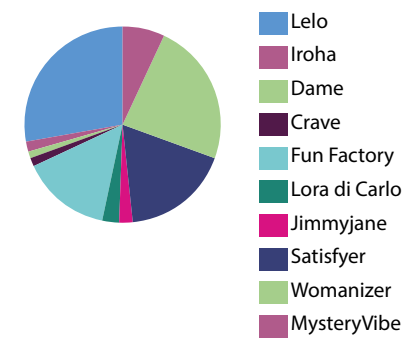
a) What types of toys do you know among them?



b) Which one you are more curious about?



c.1) Which sextoys brands do you know?



c.2) Someone added

- Adrien Lastic
- Magic Motion
- Realove
- Bestvibe
- I don't know what brand mine is
- Amorelie
- Durex
- I don't know any
- Smile maker
- Louviva
- Mantric
- Lovehoney
- Monster Pub
- Tenga
- Biird
- WeVibe
- Y Spot

9. Which one do you prefer?

Indicate which sextoy you prefer among those proposed

1. I prefer...



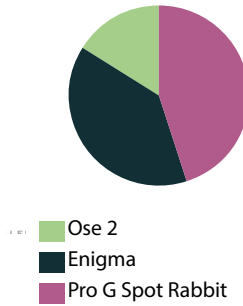
Pro G Spot Rabbit by Satisfyer



Ose 2 by Lora DiCarlo



Enigma by Lelo



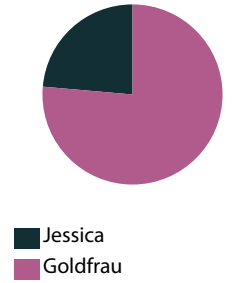
4. I prefer...



Jessica by Silvia Picari



Goldfrau by Judith Glover



2. I prefer...



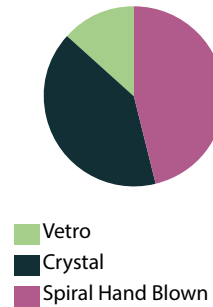
Vetro by Jimmyjane



Crystal by Y Spot



Spiral Hand Blown Glass Massager Clear by Icicles



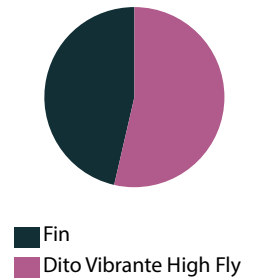
5. I prefer...



Fin by Dame



Dito Vibrante High Fly by Satisfyer



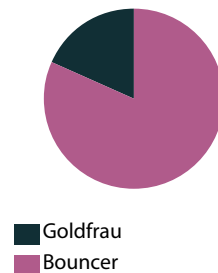
3. I prefer...



Goldfrau by Judith Glover



Bouncer by Fun Factory



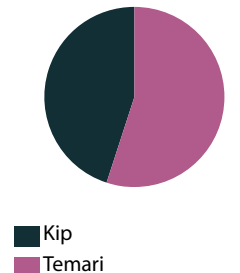
6. I prefer...



Kip by Dame



Temari by Iroha



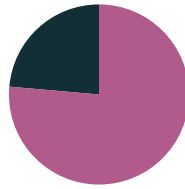
4. I prefer...



Jessica by Silvia Picari



Goldfrau by Judith Glover



Jessica
Goldfrau

10. I prefer...



Kushi by Iroha



Duet Lux by Crave



Yumi by Yspot



Kushi
Duet Lux
Yumi

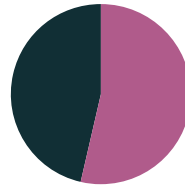
5. I prefer...



Fin by Dame



Dito Vibrante High Fly by Satisfyer



Fin
Dito Vibrante High Fly

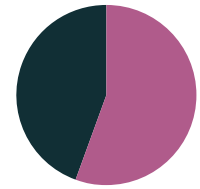
11. I prefer...



Soraya 2 by Lelo



Yulia by Yspot



Soraya 2
Yulia

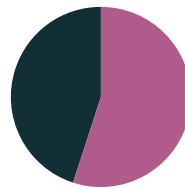
6. I prefer...



Kip by Dame



Temari by Iroha



Kip
Temari

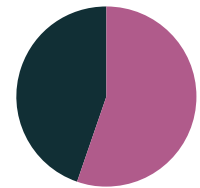
12. I prefer...



Carezza by Lora DiCarlo

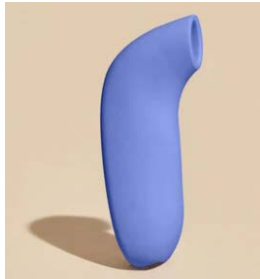


Ora 3 by Lelo



Carezza
Ora 3

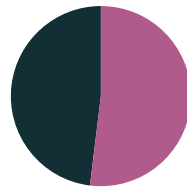
13. I prefer...



Aer by Dame



Pro 2 by Satisfyer



■ Aer
■ Pro 2

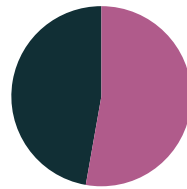
16. I prefer...



Sila by Lelo



Ynes by Yspot



■ Sila
■ Ynes

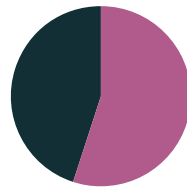
14. I prefer...



Baci by Lora DiCarlo



Pro Traveler by Satisfyer



■ Baci
■ Pro Traveler

17. I prefer...

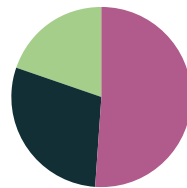


Patchy Paul G5 by Fun Factory



Yasmin by Yspot

Arc by Dame



■ Patchy Paul G5
■ Yasmin
■ Arc

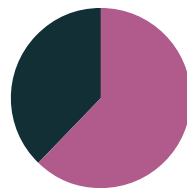
15. I prefer...



Pro Penguin by Satisfyer



Sona 2 by Lelo



■ Pro Penguin
■ Sona 2

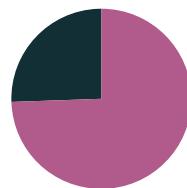
18. I prefer...



Amorino by Fun Factory



Yulia by Yspot



■ Amorino
■ Yulia

19. I prefer...



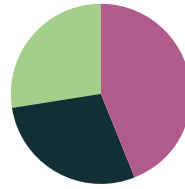
Exona by Jimmyjane



Aria Vibra Wand



Smart Wand by Lelo



■ Exona
■ Aria Vibra Wand
■ Smart Wand

10. Which one do you prefer?

This question is not linked to sextoys or masturbation: I ask you to indicate which chair you prefer among those proposed, depending on their style.

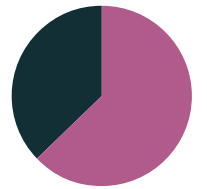
1. I prefer...



Al Bombo, by Stefano Giovannoni for Magis



Armillaria, by Odo Fioravanti for Plust



■ Armillaria
■ Al Bombo

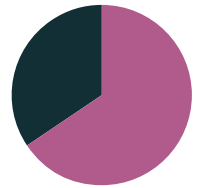
2. I prefer...



Bench One & a Half, by Antonio Aricò



Rodeo stool 06, by Chiara Moreschi and Matteo Ragni



■ Rodeo stool 06
■ Bench One & a Half

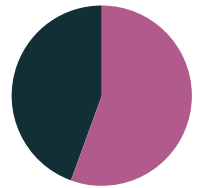
3. I prefer...



Galactica, by Antonio Aricò for Fontana Group



Plia, by Giancarlo Piretti for Castelli



■ Plia
■ Galactica

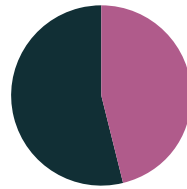
4. I prefer...



Toast, by Odo Fioravanti for Casamania



Anish, by Emanuele Magini for Campeggi



■ Toast
■ Anish

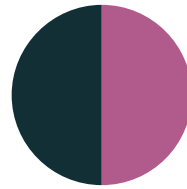
7. I prefer...



Vanity by Stefano Giovannoni for Magis



Intro by Odo Fioravanti for Pianca



■ Vanity
■ Intro

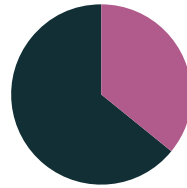
5. I prefer...



Frida, by Odo Fioravanti for Pedrali



A Signurina by Antonio Ricò for MYOP



■ Frida
■ A Signurina

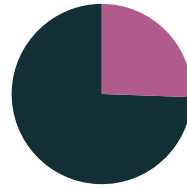
8. I prefer...



Virgola, by Giulio Manzoni for Campeggi



Raviolo, by Ron Arad for Magis



■ Virgola
■ Raviolo

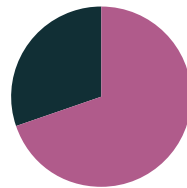
6. I prefer...



Husk, by Patricia Urquiola for B&B Italia



Sacco, by Piero Gatti, Cesare Paolini and Franco Teodoro for Zanotta



■ Husk
■ Sacco

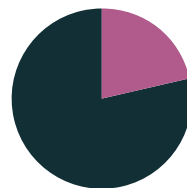
9. I prefer...



Tuttomio, by Emanuele Magini for Campeggi



Proust, by Alessandro Mendini for MAGIS



■ Tuttomio
■ Proust

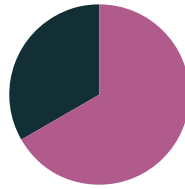
10. I prefer...



Lazy Basketball, by Emanuele Magini for Campeggi



Bertoia Side Chair, by Harry Bertoia for Knoll



■ Lazy Basketball

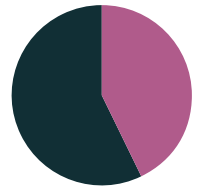
13. I prefer...



Yoda, di Campeggi Magini



Calla, by Stefano Giovannoni for Domodinamica

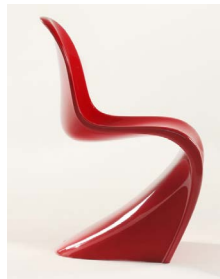


■ Yoda

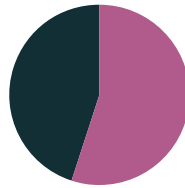
11. I prefer...



Snow Junior, by Odo Fioravanti for Pedrali



Panton Chair, by Verner Panton for Vitra



■ Snow Junior
■ Panton Chair

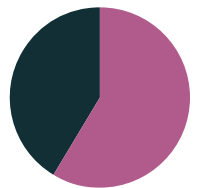
14. I prefer...



Livia, di Gio Ponti



Wishbone Chair, by Hans J. Wegner for Carl Hansen & Søn



■ Livia
■ Wishbone Chair

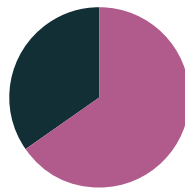
12. I prefer...



Rabbit Chair, by Stefano Giovannoni for Qeeboo



Gilbert & George, by Denis Santachiara for Campeggi



■ Rabbit Chair
■ Gilbert & George

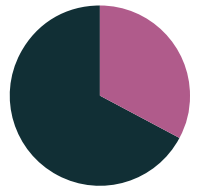
15. I prefer...



Eames Plastic Side Chair by Charles and Ray Eames for Vitra



Cavatina, by Odo Fioravanti for Steelcase



■ Eames Plastic Chair
■ Cavatina Steelcase

11. Thanks for helping me!

Thank you for reaching the end of the survey, your contribution is precious!
Remember that the questionnaire is anonymous so I cannot trace your contacts, but if you want to make yourself available for any further information you can leave me your email.

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Attachment 2: Motor Details



Double Counterweights 3V DC Brushed Micro Electric Motor for Toys IND-YZN20D-5848

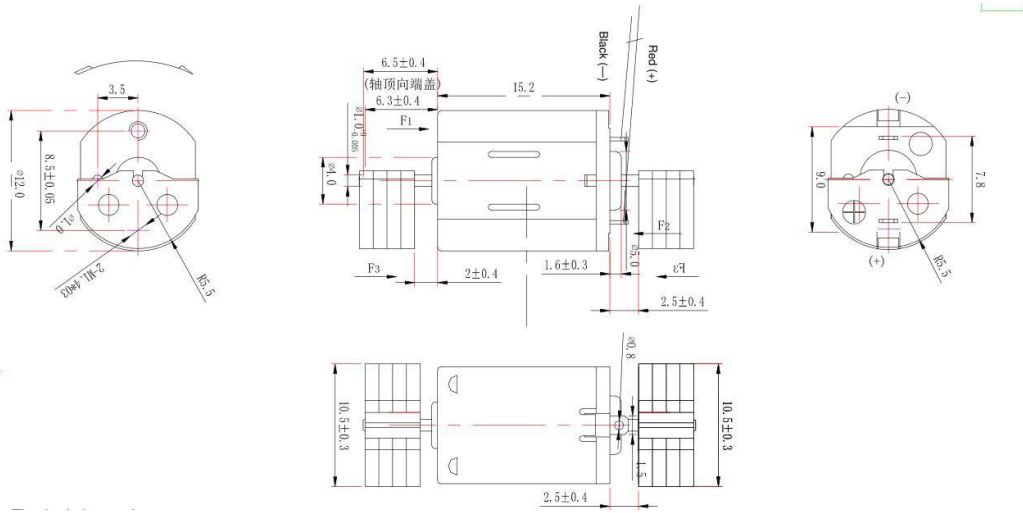
Model No.: IND-YZN20D-5848
 Brand: INEED
 Application: medical device ,toy,
 electronic locks, fans
 Capacity: 200,000 pcs monthly
 Certification:
 ISO9001,ISO14001,ISO45001
 Green product: ROHS/REACH
 compliant
 Motor Diameter: 10 mm
 Motor Body: 15 mm
 Rated voltage 5.0V

Product Details of Double Counterweights 3V DC Brushed Micro Electric Motor for Toys IND-YZN20D-5848

Our products are widely used in on board Wireless charging Mobile phone Wireless charging bracket, electric home appliances, medical devices, office devices, toys, car accessories, optical lens, electric locks, digital cameras, electric instruments and meters, beauty bars, smoke detectors, automatic curtains, attendance machines, vending machines, cash counters, etc.

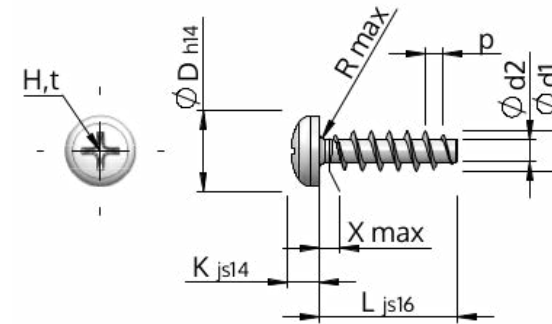
Technical data:

| Motor model | motor size (mm) | | | Rated voltage | No-load speed | No-load current | Load-current | Load-speed | Operating voltage |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| | Diameter | Length of motor body | Overall length | VDC | rpm | mA | mA Max | rpm | VDC |
| IND-YZN20D-5848 | 12.0 | 15.2 | 30 | 5.0 | 14,500±15% | 75 | 110 | 8300±12% | 1.8-6.0 |

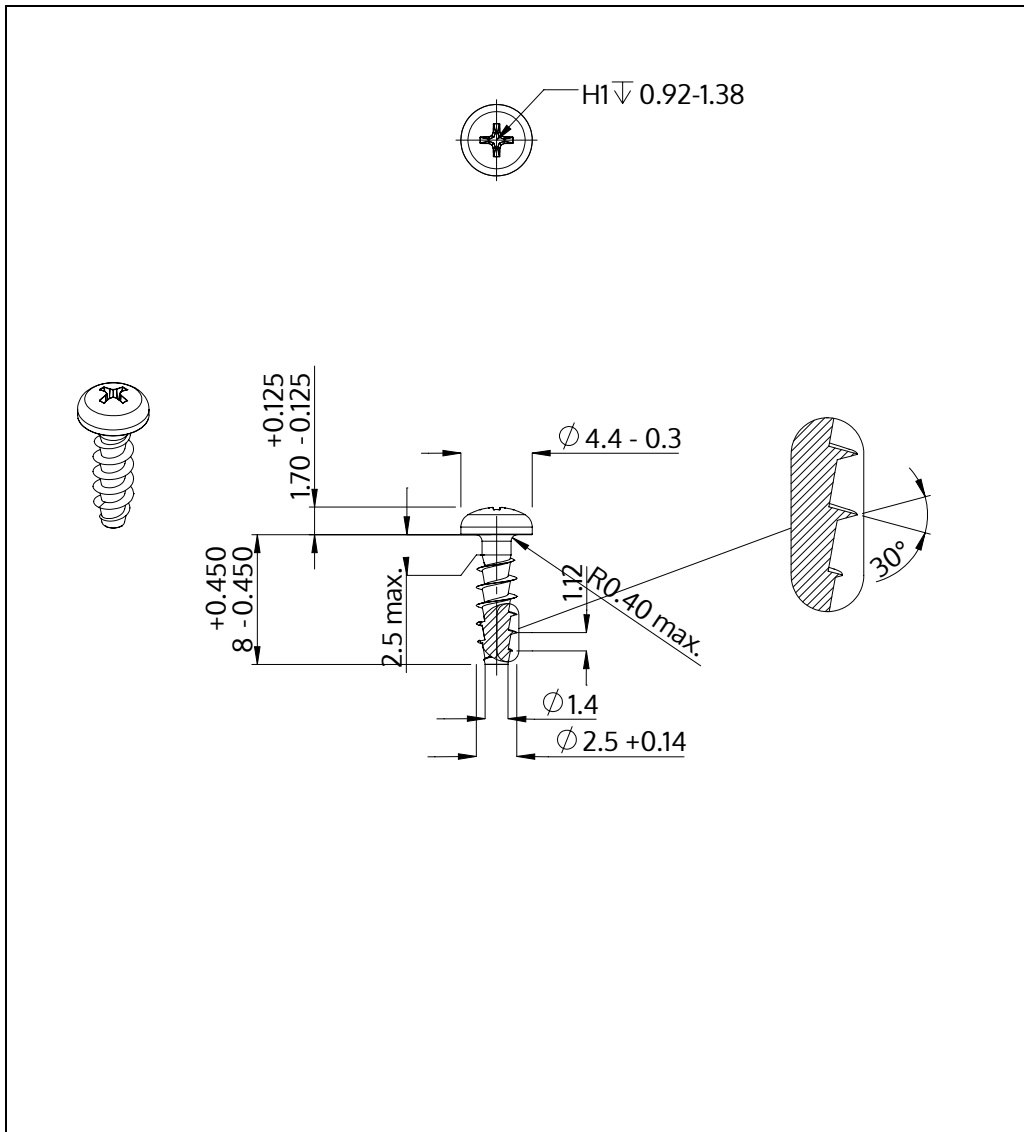



Attachment 3: Fasteners

Specifiche per STP32A0250080E

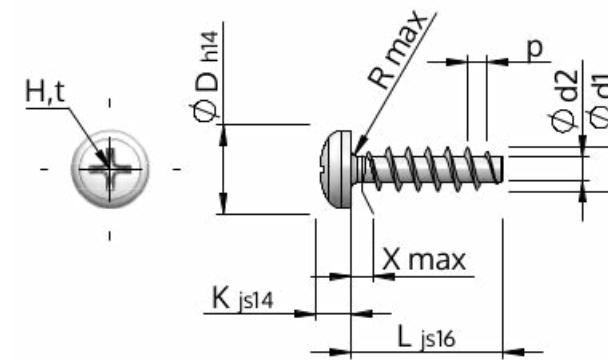


| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Prodotto Numero | | STP32A0250080E |
| Testa | | KN1032-Neu |
| Materiale | | acciaio inox, A2 - 1,4567 |
| Superficie | | bianco-decapato e passivato |
| Filettatura esterna-Ø | d1 | 2,50 ^{+0,14} mm |
| Filettatura interna-Ø | d2 | 1,40 mm |
| Passo della Filettatura | p | 1,12 mm |
| Lunghezza | L | 8,00 mm |
| Testa-Ø | D | 4,40 _{-0,30} mm |
| Altezza Testa | K | 1,700 ±0,125 mm |
| Uscita del Filetto | X max. | 1,30 mm |
| Raggio | R max. | 0,30 mm |
| H-intaglio a croce | | H1 |
| Penetrazione Profondità | t min. | 0,92 mm |
| Penetrazione Profondità | t max. | 1,38 mm |
| Filo | | STS |
| Peso | | 0,328 kg/1000 pz. |
| Tariffa Doganale num. | | 73 181 410 |

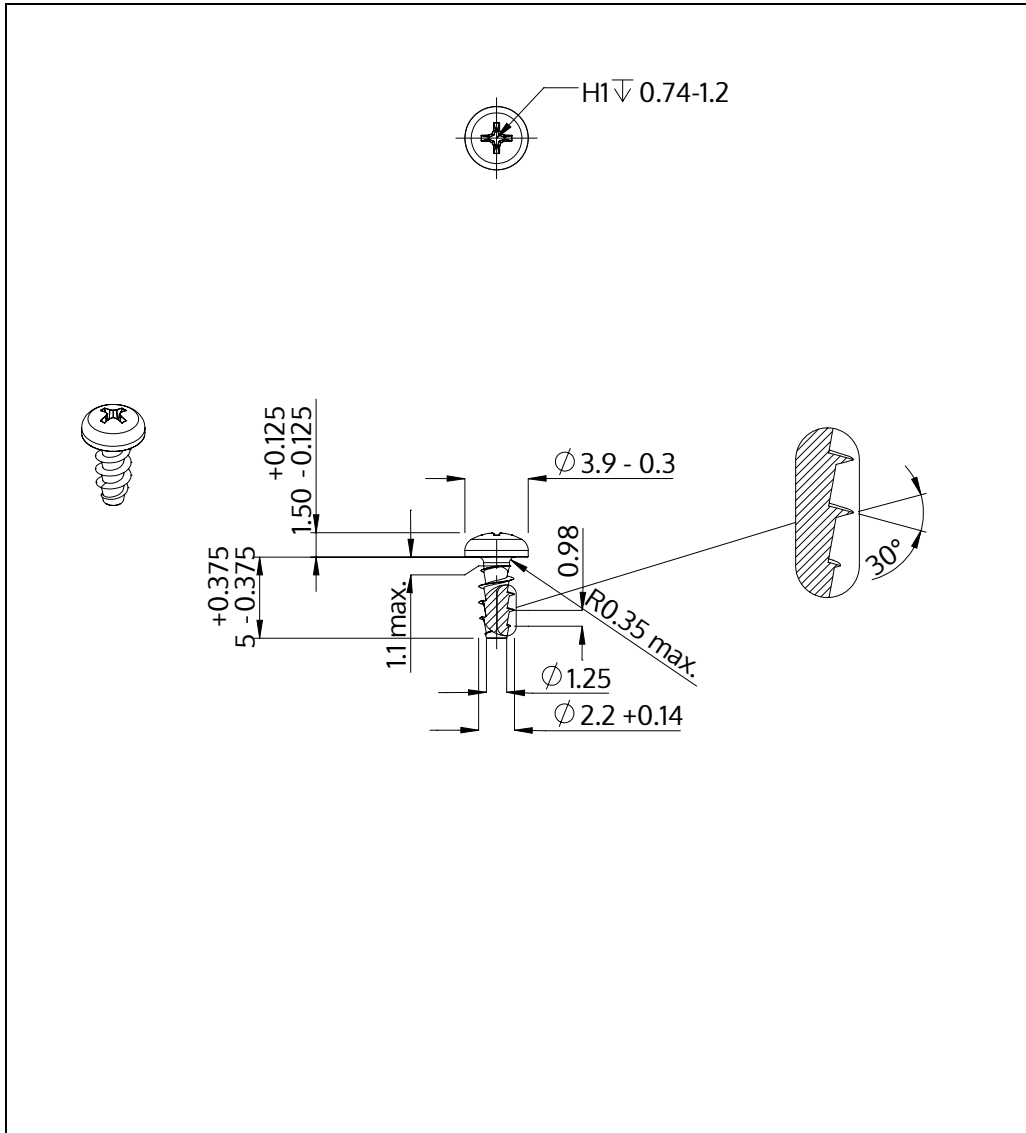



| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------|
| Descrizione | Vite STS KN1032-Neu 2.5x8 - H1 | |
| Materiale | acciaio inox, A2 - 1,4567 | |
| Superficie | bianco-decapato e passivato | |
| Peso | 0,33 kg/1000 pezzi | |
|  SCREWWERK | | |
| STP32A0250080E | | |
| Disegno metrico A4 | Scala 3:1 | 03.2018 |

Specifiche per STP32A0220050E



| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Prodotto Numero | | STP32A0220050E |
| Testa | | KN1032-Neu |
| Materiale | | acciaio inox, A2 - 1,4567 |
| Superficie | | bianco-decapato e passivato |
| Filettatura esterna-Ø | d1 | 2,20 ^{+0,14} mm |
| Filettatura interna-Ø | d2 | 1,25 mm |
| Passo della Filettatura | p | 0,98 mm |
| Lunghezza | L | 5,00 mm |
| Testa-Ø | D | 3,90 _{-0,30} mm |
| Altezza Testa | K | 1,500 ±0,125 mm |
| Uscita del Filetto | X max. | 1,10 mm |
| Raggio | R max. | 0,25 mm |
| H-intaglio a croce | | H1 |
| Penetrazione Profondità | t min. | 0,74 mm |
| Penetrazione Profondità | t max. | 1,20 mm |
| Filo | | STS |
| Peso | | 0,166 kg/1000 pz. |
| Tariffa Doganale num. | | 73 181 410 |



| | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---------|
| Descrizione | Vite STS KN1032-Neu 2.2x5 - H1 | |
| Materiale | acciaio inox, A2 - 1,4567 | |
| Superficie | bianco-decapato e passivato | |
| Peso | 0,17 kg/1000 pezzi | |
|  SCREWERK | STP32A0220050E | |
| Disegno metrico A4 | Scala 3:1 | 04.2021 |

Politecnico di Milano
School of Design
Master of Science in Design & Engineering
Academic year 2021/2022

