

Sexual inhibition

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A **sexual inhibition** is a conscious or subconscious constraint or curtailment by a person of behavior relating to specific sexual matters or practices or of a discussion of sexual matters.

Though a person can be regarded as being sexually inhibited if he or she irrationally fears of or is excessively averse to any sexual practice or discourse, the term is normally not applied to a person who refrains from certain sexual activities on moral and rational grounds or due to a psychological disorder. On the other hand, a person can be regarded as having low sexual inhibitions when he or she welcomes a variety of non-conventional erotic practices. Hypersexuality is typically associated with lowered sexual inhibitions, and alcohol and some drugs can affect a person's social and sexual inhibitions. Hypersexuality is at times viewed in terms of sexual addiction.

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Examples

Some inhibitions are expressed in terms of preferences for specific sexual practices and may be based on cultural attitudes. For example, cultural attitudes toward oral sex range from aversion to high regard.^[1] It has been considered taboo, or at least discouraged, in many cultures and parts of the world,^[1] especially with regard to fellatio.^[2] People give various reasons for their dislike of oral sex.^[1] Some state that since it does not result in reproduction, it is therefore unnatural.^[3] Others find it less intimate because it is not a face-to-face practice,^[1] or believe that it is a humiliating or unclean practice;^{[1][4]} that it is humiliating or unclean are opinions that are, in some cases, connected with the symbolism attached to different parts of the body.^[4]

Sexual inhibitions among female same-sex sexual relationships have also been studied. The belief that all women who have sex with women engage in oral sex (i.e., cunnilingus) is a misconception; some lesbian or bisexual women dislike cunnilingus due to not liking the experience or due to psychological or social factors, such as finding it unclean.^{[5][6][7][8]} Other lesbian or bisexual women believe that it is a necessity or largely defines lesbian sexual activity.^{[7][8]} Lesbian couples are more likely to consider a woman's dislike of cunnilingus as a problem than heterosexual couples are, and it is common for them to seek therapy to overcome inhibitions regarding it.^[7]

A female who cannot conceive by normal means and requires assistance to conceive may be constrained by social and sexual inhibitions and taboos from accepting a sperm donor or a friend to perform an intravaginal insemination, and the friend may be similarly inhibited; the friend may opt instead for the more expensive and arduous artificial insemination.

A fear of being nude in front of others can be regarded as a sexual inhibition. Some people feel uncomfortable being nude in front of another person, even in private with their sex partner. For example, a person may feel comfortable being nude only during a sexual activity, and then only with subdued lighting, or covered by a sheet or blanket.^[9] Some people decline medical examinations that involve disrobing. In an interview in March 2007, Halle Berry said that her toplessness in *Swordfish* (2001) was "gratuitous" to the movie, but that she needed to do the scene to get over her fear of nudity, and that it was the best thing she did for her career. Having overcome her inhibitions, she went on to a role in *Monster's Ball*, which included a nude scene.^[10] In 2002, Eva Green in her first film role needed director Bernardo Bertolucci's guidance during the filming of the nude and sex scenes in *The Dreamers* (2003), but was embarrassed when her family saw the film.^[11] Some actresses prefer not to expose their bodies to others and use a body double even for exposure of breasts.^{[12][13]}

See also

- Asexuality
- Erotophobia
- Hypoactive sexual desire disorder or inhibited sexual desire
- Religion and sexuality
- Nature and nurture
- Social inhibition

Notes

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