

Let me introduce myself my name is Jane and I am Sky Gilbert's alter ego. I don't want you to have any worries about my little talk Let me just say -- right off the bat, I didn't come here to confront you or to take you to task. That is not Jane's way. That is sometimes Sky Gilbert's way, but since he had been invited to a Unitarian Church -- and by the way Sky and I graciously thank you for your invitation to this lovely place (a place dedicated to celebrating the spiritual side of things, a place which is open to many many different ways and modes of worship of whatever Gods or Goddess people believe in) when Sky Gilbert thought carefully about where he had been asked to give a sermon -- .I'd rather say little talk, I really don't like that word sermon -- well Sky decided to send Jane. Why? Jane is not a confrontive person. She is, in a word, feminine, and loves all things gentle and delicate and graceful and sexy and flirtatious and fun. She doesn't lecture (or tries not to) she plies, she pleases, she pleasures. In fact Jane is, in all ways devoted to pleasure. How do we feel about that word-- pleasure? I want you to keep the word pleasure at the back of your mind, because it is an important one, and one which I will be referring to, again and again...with....pleasure.

I thought I might mention that I have lots of connections with the Unitarian Church, and most of those connections are related to pleasure. My parents were married in a Unitarian Universalist church in the states -- as my father reminded me when I told him that I would be delivering this....talk. In fact my father was very proud of me being invited to speak at a church -- because I come from a long line of ministers. At least, my great grandfather was a minister, and so was one of my great uncles, neither of whom I ever met. But my grandmother very much wanted me to be a minister, like her father and her brother, and when I was thirteen and took my catechism in the Anglican church, a job in the priesthood was something that I was...well tentatively offered -- as much as a priest can offer a thirteen year old a priesthood. Anyway, this is the story: we had to learn our catechism, and in that catechism were all sorts of statements which I found bizarre and which I challenged. One of the oddest statements for me to get my head around was the virgin birth. So when I had my little meeting with the priest I looked him in the eye and asked him some serious questions. I told him that since I was going for my catechism, it was important for me to understand the concepts involved and one thing I really didn't understand was the virgin birth. Well he tried to answer my question, but he didn't answer very well, at least in my opinion. However, at the end of the session, he asked me if I had ever considered becoming a priest. I asked him why? And he said because he had never, in all his years of advising young people on their catechism, ever had any young person sit him down and ask him detailed questions about any of the concepts involved. I was flattered and told my father who was flattered and told my grandmother who was pleased. But the matter ended there. As you can see, I didn't end up becoming a priest.

On the other hand you might say that I did end up becoming a sort of high priestesses of something else -- a high priestesse of pleasure. The whole idea of pleasure, again, something I want you to think about., because we will be talking about pleasure, later.

I have another connection to the Unitarian church. When my mother first brought us to Toronto back in 1965, after my parents' divorce, she immediately became a member of the Don Heights Unitarian Church in Scarborough Ontario. Now the reasons for her becoming a member were twofold. After all, my mother disliked organized religion, especially catholicism. Anyway, back to the topic -- the two reasons my mother had for joining the Unitarian Church were twofold

a) she liked political discussion and ideas, she was a big fan of Gordon Sinclair's on CFRB - one of the reasons we moved here was because she liked the open-ness of Canadian radio talk shows, and what she called their controversiality -- my mother always loved to talk politics, and actually ran for political office in Buffalo New York where I spent my childhood
b) also she was looking for a social life. At any rate I associate Don Heights Unitarian Church with the gossip my mother shared with me about being a single divorced woman at Unitarian Church gatherings, but also because I had one of my first theatrical experiences

there, acting in a play that I got involved with through a youth group at the church.

But I must say that although most of my first experiences with the Unitarian faith were chock filled with pleasure (there's that word again, that luscious word pleasure...it's one of those words that just fills up your mouth, doesn't it?) my experiences with organized religion in general were not pleasurable. I can't, of course relate to you any direct encounters I had with organized religion, it was more through my parents and through the ethical climate that I grew up in. Even though my mother detested organized religion my father came from a family of ministers, and as I mentioned, my mother insisted that we do the catechism (she said it was a practical concern to be registered Anglicans, for when we were married we would need to belong to an official religion). But I know that the anti-sexual precepts of conventional Christianity had a deep and somewhat traumatic effect on me. After all, I didn't come out of the closet until I was 29 years old. Understand what that means! It's 29 years of having sex with women -- when deep down that was the last thing I wanted to do -- so it was bad sex, unpleasant sex, in relationships that were extremely unpleasant for me, and somewhat unpleasant for the women I was trying to satisfy sexually and emotionally. Of course it was POSSIBLE for me to have sex with women -- in fact I think...deep down in their Private Lives...to quote Noel Coward, it is quite possible for anybody to have sex with anyone. But though I think we are all capable of bi or ambisexuality or whatever you wish to call it, most of us, I think have certain preferences -- types or genders etc of people that we would prefer to have sex with. So I did what I was told until I was nearly thirty and tried not to disappoint my parents by dating women, and along the way I tried desperately to give women orgasms. But it was a lost cause -- because one of the first things I learned about sex, when I first started having sex with men, who I VERY much enjoy having sex with by the way, is that the pleasure that your partner has during the act of sex can actually be a major part of the fun -- so if you're not having any fun, your partner may be missing out on something! Anyway.... I blame the anti-sexual aspects of western culture period in my life. I don't mean you -- I don't mean anyone here. But, our culture and organized religion in the west, ie, Christianity, Protestantism and Judaism, is in my view, anti-sexual.

Now you may or may not agree with me on this. I would say that I agree with most of that Da Vinci's code stuff -- because from my limited reading on the topic, it makes a lot of sense. There probably was a real Jesus, but that the real Jesus was not necessarily the way he has been portrayed in the gospels. Basically, the authors of the gospel and other post roman empire medievalists, were in my view, a lot more anti-sexual than I expect the real Christ was. It's all connected with misogyny. I believe that there may very well have been a Jesus Christ who was a prophet and started a new religion, but THAT religion was, originally, most likely more sexual, more matriarchal, and just generally more human, and by that I mean more accepting of humanity (and sexuality) than what it became through the gospel of Saint Paul and later promoters of organized Christianity. Bertrand Russell mentions, in his essay "Why I Am Not A Christian" that there were early directions given to medieval priests not to fondle the nipples of the nuns. I find that fascinating --because well - we wouldn't expect young priests to be taught that nowadays. Why? Because there is a different attitude to sex and to religion in general -- today people don't expect religious people to be having sex willy nilly, and to be fondling each other promiscuously, for fun. (Of course maybe that's part of the problem, why there are all these priest scandals, because organized religion imagines that it's anti-sex policies will and have worked, when in fact they haven't changed anything, people are still sexual and when they are repressed, become inappropriately sexual.) You see, the pagan, pre Christian religions in Europe were more matriarchal and more open about sex -- and when Christianity appeared -- St. Paul's version and the Biblical version anyway -- the new promoters of the new religion had to work hard to wipe out an ancient, sexual, pagan culture, a culture that was matriarchal, not patriarchal. I was once in a play about Joan of Arc in which I played the original Gils de Rais -- in fact the original Bluebeard -- long story --but from the playwright Sally Clark I learned a lot about matriarchal religions. It was Sally's theory that Joan of Arc's voices were pagan voices, womens' voices, from the voices of female gods that she and her female friends

worshipped when they danced around the women's tree at night. According to Sally, Joan of Arc's experience was censored and her experience of voices was made into a Christian experience -- one which was not sexual, not matriarchal and not pagan. That's the only way the Christian Church was able to appropriate Joan of Arc as a saint. But Joan of Arc is perhaps a link to those sexy pagan times, before modern Christianity gave sex a bad name. So yes, Christ might have been married or have had enjoyed sex with a prostitute or even have been a woman! But the people who created the New Testament didn't want us to know that.

I don't mean to bash religion along with Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins -- I just mean to suggest that it might become more happily sexual.. By the way I've been recently reading a book by Terry Eagleton called Reason, Faith and REvolution, which presents (among other ideas) the case that Christianity is not fundamentally anti-sexual, because Jesus was nice to that prostitute -- for instance -- remember that? So maybe instead of being so negative, let's be positive. What would a sex positive religion be? I suggest that it is a religion in which sex becomes AN IMPORTANT PART of worship. In which sex is an ordinary aspect part love, in fact in which sex was recognized as LOVE. What would it be like if our worship wasn't in a Church on a Sunday during the day, but instead involved going out to the Women's Tree, taking off our clothes, and loving each other a little, sexually? I want you to think about that, and again, about the word, pleasure. Perhaps it might be better if I were to try and define what I consider a pro sexual stance to be. Here are some of the things that I believe, as a pro sex person:

a) the body is not a bad thing, and it is not separate from the soul or at war with the soul, or the opposite of the soul, the body is just , what it is -- it pees, it eats, it defecates, it gets sick, it has sex, it dies and somehow the BRAIN is lodged in the body, which houses our thinking, so our body and souls are TOGETHER in our BRAINS . But the body is not something that has ethical or philosophical properties; it is not a good or a bad thing, though it sometimes causes us pain. If you have feelings or attitudes to the body or fantasies about the body, or you hate it or you see it as the enemy of the soul -- well that (I think) is a destructive fantasy with no relation to reality. The body, in all its contradictions, just IS. Best to accept it!

b) your genital organs have three functions

-- you can pee

-- you can make children

-- you can have sexual pleasure

None of these functions of the genitals is more important than the other. If people don't use their genitals to create children, if they only use them to pee and have sexual pleasure, then they are not bad people. One of the most important functions of the genitals is to give us pleasure and pleasure is a good thing

c) in fact the concept of PLEASURE is so important I'm going to give it special attention to it -- physical pleasure is IS, generally speaking, good for you (except of course, when the thing you are doing to give yourself pleasure is bad. If cutting off your limbs, for some reason, gives you pleasure, although the feeling may be good, it might be best not to do it.)

d) sex does not have anything to do with romantic love, and it is not 'better' inside a marriage or with someone whom you know, or someone you have a personal commitment to

-- sex is in itself healthy and positive and good and good for you. It does not need to be attached to anything else to make it good

e) masturbation is good, and so are same sex practices, bisexuality and all kinks and/ or fetishes -- the only time a fetish or sexual activity is wrong is if it involves hurting another person against their wishes, ie not consensually

(What is consensual sex? It simply means that both or ALL partners have given their permission -- therefore an adult person cannot have consensual sex with a child or an animal, because neither a child or animal is capable of giving their informed, adult, human

consent)

f) you can't change a person's sexuality or sexual inclinations by talking to them or putting them in therapy

g) each and every act of consensual sex is an act of love

this means that any sexual act you engage in with any adult person involves some sort of love or affection, even if you do not know the person and may never see them ever again -
- when you suck someone's cock or play with their clitoris it is an act of love, if that is something that they wish to you to do, or wish to have done to them

h) Sex is not just the missionary position done by a married heterosexual couple in bed

Sex is defined as any situation in which you experience sexual arousal in a consensual situation with another person (or by yourself!)

There is no such thing as good sex and bad sex -- of course some sex is more pleasurable than other sex -- but one cannot moralize about sex. In other words mutual masturbation, penetrative sex with man on top, non penetrative sex, penetrative sex in which the woman penetrates a man with a dildo up the ass, sex with two people in leather who whip each other for fun -- all of these are activities are good and good for you, if again, done consensually by adults . And conversely the Bill Clinton obfuscatory is simply that, a lie -- ie. the idea that oral sex is NOT SEX

Sex, according to my sex positive definition, is not for the propagation of the species, although it can and may lead to that -- so putting a penis in a vagina is only one small aspect of the huge world of sex

sex is important to us because it brings us PLEASURE so...

having sex with your clothes on is still SEX

having sex WITH an article of clothing , i,e, hot leather boots -- is still SEX

kissing someone and getting sexually aroused is SEX

touching someone's body parts for the purposes of sexual arousal is SEX

All these things are sex and they are ALL GOOD if the partners involved have given their consent

SEX IS GOOD SO GO OUT AND DO IT-- WITH AS MANY DIFFERENT PARTNERS AS YOU LIKE! ENJOY IT WHENEVER YOU CAN! YOU WILL BE A MUCH HAPPIER PERSON! WE ALL (OR AT LEAST MOST OF US) NEED SEX AND OUR BODIES WERE MADE TO ENJOY SEX!

SO GO AHEAD AND EXPERIENCE PLEASURE!

START NOW!

AFTER THIS LITTLE TALK PERHAPS!!!!

I hope this little talk gives us all the opportunity for us to put the sex back in religion.

Because I am utterly convinced that sex was once WAS very much a part of worship, and I can't think of a good reason why it should NOT be today.

But before I finish, just want to talk a little about the little voice in your head. Do you have a little voice in your head? I have lots of them. No, I'm not bipolar-- or at least I haven't been diagnosed as such. But I do have voices inside my head telling me what is good and what is bad, and making me feel guilty. So as you've been listening to my sex positive creed, you may have some little voices in your head arguing against these ideas. I'm going to try and address these voices now.

1. There may be a voice in your head that says "Jane, what you seem to be recommending is promiscuity. Doesn't promiscuity lead to unwanted pregnancies and venereal disease and AIDS? Aren't those good reasons not to be promiscuous?"

Well I, Jane, would say one word back to answer this little voice: CONDOMS.

Condoms are 99 percent effective against venereal disease and unwanted pregnancies and AIDS. Anyone who tells you that condoms are not effective is an anti-sexual, liar who is trying to make you paranoid and stop you from having pleasure. There are, of course, other methods of birth control besides condoms -- ones which women can initiate -- but I say, it's always good to make the guys take a little responsibility for a change. At any rate, the dangers of pregnancy AIDS and VD are NOT related to promiscuity, NOT if you take

the proper precautions. Remember --

HAVING SEX WITH YOUR CLOTHES ON IS VERY SAFE!

HAVING AN ORGASM WHILE SOMEONE SPANKS YOU OVER THERE KNEE IS VERY SAFE!

HAVING SEX WITH AN OLD BOOT IS VERY SAFE!

MASTURBATING WITH SOMEONE OR HAVING ORAL SEX WITH THEM IS VERY SAFE!

I know there has always been some dispute about whether or not oral sex is safe, but let me tell you as a gay man who is 57 years old and has survived nearly thirty years of the Aids epidemic, if AIDS could be transmitted through oral sex then I wouldn't be alive right now!

Anyway, the point is that people who use fear of venereal disease, AIDS and pregnancy to stop you from having sex are fear mongers-- they think that fear will stop you from seeking pleasure. Don't let them try that on you. They have some other agenda that has nothing to do with all things healthy and human. It is possible to be promiscuous and still be quite safe from unwanted pregnancy and venereal disease and AIDS

2. There may be another little voice in your head that says: "Jane -- isn't promiscuous sex hurtful? When people cheat on their partners isn't that evil? Aren't we sexually faithful to people for good reason --because we love them? And what about jealousy?"

Well just as my answer to the first question was one word: CONDOMS, my answer to the second question is also one word: HONESTY

All you really need is honesty. As long as you are honest with everyone that you have sex with, and don't create false expectations, or obscure the truth of your romantic relationships, everything will be fine. I don't think that most people were MADE to be monogamous.

And I don't think that it's right to suggest that men are less monogamous than women. Most people in the world are heterosexual, right? So if straight men are more promiscuous than women, who are they having all this promiscuous sex with? It must be with women. Well some people would answer-- promiscuous men don't have sex with women, they have sex with whores. But hey -- news flash -- whores are women! Some of them are very nice women -- some of them are friends of mine -- so you'd better be plenty nice to them!

There are, in my opinion, a small percentage of people in the world who were made to be monogamous (ie to have sex with one person for their WHOLE life) but I certainly don't believe the majority of people are made that way. So what would be the best way to deal with this situation where most people AREN'T made to be monogamous? Well there are three different types of loving relationships you can have with someone -- you can have:

a) romance

b) sex

c) friendship

All three of these things involve love and they are all good types of relationships. BUT IT HARDLY EVER HAPPENS THAT ALL THREE HAPPEN TOGETHER FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME.

This is a very important thing to remember, if you don't then you may spend your life expecting things from relationships that you CAN NEVER get.

So it's best to be honest with the people about what you want with them, whether it's friendship, sex or romantic love. Of course you may start out thinking you want all three things, or two of them with one person -- but those feelings may change. You have to tell the person when your feelings change. That's called honesty.

If we set young people out in the world with two things:

condoms

and

honesty

They would be much better prepared to find love and keep it in in their lives.

So -- if what I'm saying is true -- if people can have 'free love' and pleasure themselves with as many people as they want to -- as long as they are armed with condoms and

honesty -- then why haven't people tried this before?

They have. For instance, many of the ideas I've presented here were suggested over 100 years ago by Emma Goldman, an anarchist, political activist and a firm believer in free love. She opposed marriage, describing it as a hypocritical sexist institution. And she also recognized what gave marriage -- and the hypocrisies that accompany it, its staying power; after all marriage is not only an economic arrangement between two people, but an important building block of our capitalist economy because the nuclear family is a solid base for creating new workers and sending them out into the capitalist system. But Emma Goldman recognized how limiting it was for the human spirit -- for all that love and yearning - - to be tethered to an economic imperative. Among other things, she said:

"If love does not know how to give and take without restrictions, it is not love, but a transaction that never fails to lay stress on a plus and a minus."

Love is everywhere. So why is it so hard to find? Because sometimes we don't recognize that it is being offered to us through sex, and sometimes we forget that every act of consensual sex is an act of love. In Tennessee Williams 1961 play *The Night of the Iguana*, Hannah Jelkes recounts the story of her encounter with an underwear salesman in a boat near Hong Kong; she gives him an article of her clothing and he 'satisfies' himself with it. Hannah Jelkes teaches the defrocked priest Shannon a lot about love. She tries to make him understand that what might be considered by many to be a tawdry or disgusting sexual experience, is actually an act of love. Here is their exchange:

Rev. Shannon: "And that experience, you call it a..."

Hannah: "Love experience. Yes I do Mr. Shannon."

Rev. Shannon: "That sad little dirty little episode, you call a ..."

Hannah: "Sad, it certainly was for the poor little man but why you call it dirty?"

Rev. Shannon: "You mean you weren't disgusted by it?"

Hannah: "Nothing human disgusts me Mr. Shannon unless it is unkind or violent. And I told you how gentle he was. Apologetic. Shy. Really, very, well... delicate about it."

Later in the play when Hannah Jelkes talks about what she learned from the incident, she says a very important thing:

"Acceptance of life is surely the first requisite of living it." I would suggest that it is in our very human nature to be sexual beings. But that doesn't mean that sex is only good when it is sanctioned by marriage or romantic love. Sex is a good on its own. And each and every act of consensual sex is an act of love.

Thankyou.