WOMEN’S ANATOMY of AROUSAL
SECRET MAPS TO BURIED PLEASURE

SHERI WINSTON
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Maps, Models and Mistakes

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A Woman Waits for Me
(excerpt)

BY WALT WHITMAN

A woman waits for me,
she contains all, nothing is lacking,
Yet all were lacking if sex were lacking,
or if the moisture of the right man were lacking.

Sex contains all, bodies, souls,
meanings, proofs, purities,
delicacies, results, promulgations,
songs, commands, health, pride,
the maternal mystery, the seminal milk,
all hopes, benefactions, bestowals,
all the passions, loves, beauties, delights of the earth,
all the governments, judges, gods,
follow’d persons of the earth,

These are contain’d in sex as parts of itself
and justifications of itself.

Without shame the man I like knows and avows
the deliciousness of his sex,
Without shame the woman I like
knows and avows hers.
Section One
Maps, Models and Mistakes

“We don’t see things as they are, we see things as we are.”

ANAISS NIN, taken from the Talmud

Jehan Cousin—Livre de pourtraiture, 1608
Greetings!
MY NAME IS SHERI WINSTON, and I'll be taking you on an in-depth, illustrated tour of the land of female genitalia, feminine sexuality and the intimate erotic arts. Whether you're a man or a woman, the information in these pages can help you have great sex, so long as you have female parts or like to play with them.

I'll begin with a love story that may just be the grandest love story of all. It comes from the Hindu tradition.

The Love Song of Shakti and Shiva
In the beginning was the One. The One was all and everything, and for eons it reveled in being One for millennia of magnificent unitary bliss. Over the course of unimaginable time, however, the One grew bored. (Even the Divine gets bored with itself eventually.)

So the One split into two. One part was Shakti—she of energy, flow, and movement. The other was Shiva—he of consciousness, presence, and purpose.

As soon as the one became two, they gazed upon each other, fell madly in love, and wanted nothing more than to re-unite. They clasped each other passionately and explored all the ways two could merge into one. They entered each other and dissolved the boundaries between them. For millennia they made love, exquisite erotic love. At long last they again achieved oneness as they exploded in mutual simultaneous orgasm.
In that moment, the entire universe was born. All life sprang into being and is springing still. It was the original big bang!

The story of Shakti and Shiva is an origin story about the universe, and a story about each and every one of us. Like them, we long for connection, are magnetized by attraction, and drawn by the desire to merge into oneness. Like them, passion is what connects us to all life, and desire is our path to divine union.

**Sex—The Essential Life Force**

The saga of Shakti and Shiva reminds us that ecstasy is our birthright and the source of all existence. It also tells us that sex is more than our individual desires, erotic experiences, intimate connections and sexual behavior. It is the deepest expression of the power of creation. The mating drive is one of the most powerful forces in our world: it has to be or we wouldn’t be here, gloriously alive amid the wondrous diversity and complexity of existence. Asexual reproduction was a great starter plan for Earth, but it takes the desire to mate and mingle genes to birth the unimaginable and wondrous biodiversity of our world. Sex is the basic urge to merge.
Your individual sexuality is your small piece of that primal power—the vital, pulsing life force. Your sexuality connects to that cosmic energy: they are one and the same thing, only on the micro and macro levels.

How you relate to that immense power has a pervasive impact on your life. You can repress your sexuality. You can go “repression light” and downplay it. Or, you can take the other road and . . . celebrate it! Your sexuality can take you on a sacred ecstatic path that unites you profoundly to all life throughout time. At the end of the day, the choice is yours. You can learn to fully and consciously open the inner portal to your sexual life force, and in so doing gain access to divine bliss and link to your uninhibited wild power. That exquisite connection to the cosmos—the erotic cosmos—resides inside you, right there in your sexy center.

If sex were merely the natural mating behavior of putting Tab A into Slot B, everyone would be good at it. But sex isn’t just about who we do and how we do them, and it isn’t only about the ways we get aroused and orgasmic, either. Your sexuality goes to the heart of who you are. All of your relationships, not just your actively sexual ones, grow from this root.

“Sexual love is the most stupendous fact of the universe, and the most magical mystery our poor blind senses know.”

AMY LOWELL

SHERI WINSTON—Shakti and Shiva Making Love

SEX, SEX, SEX—IT’S ALL ABOUT SEX

7
When I say “all of your relationships,” I mean that literally … including your most significant connection of all, your relationship with yourself. If you want to have better sex and more satisfying intimate relationships, the place to begin is with yourself—and, more specifically, with your relationship to your own sexuality.

**The Learning Animal**
The more you understand who you are sexually and how you operate, the better you’ll do in all aspects of your life, sex included. There’s no question that sex is a natural behavior, which for most animals means an automatic “acting out” of their breeding blueprint. But we are humans—a very fancy sort of animal indeed—with special, big, malleable brains. We are *the learning animal*. As such, each of us is the result of a complex interplay between a long slow evolutionary process and our local and unique influences and environment. Not only are you the *result* of a dance between biology and culture, you *are* a dance between biology and culture! You entwine nature and nurture; you weave together what is inborn with what you’ve learned. All these forces and factors together create your own unique sexuality. Know thyself—learn about thyself!—and you’ll know how to access your ecstasy.

*François Boucher—Education of Cupid*
Hardware and Software

When I tell people I'm a sex teacher, I sometimes get this response: “Sex is natural! I don't need a teacher for that.” This is both true and not true.

In some ways, humans are like computers. We come equipped with hardware, the factory-installed equipment we were born with. The forces of nature shaped evolution and produced our unique DNA blueprint, giving us blue eyes or brown skin. It also hardwired us with certain types of sexual behavior. We all know about the basic mammalian humping motion, for instance. This isn't something we learned at school, and we didn't need Nike to inspire us, either. We just do it.

We're not just our hardwiring, though. We also come loaded with lots of software—our extensive programming, also known as culturally learned behavior. We probably do more learning than any other species. Much of our sexuality is learned, absorbed throughout our lifetime as we simmered in the soup of culture. We learn from our culture how to kiss and caress, what's acceptable and what's taboo, what's hot and what's not.

In other words, sex is natural and we learn sex. And you know what? If it’s learnable, then we can learn to get better at it. We can unlearn bad habits and acquire new skills, whether the activity in question is scuba diving, speaking a foreign language, or sex. While it's true that people bring varying levels of aptitude to what they do, we all have what it takes to get more skilled at the erotic arts. Our software is made for upgrading.

If you’re one of those people who thinks that sex is something you do, not something you learn, I invite you to reconsider that view. It's only partially correct and not especially useful. Why corral your potential unnecessarily? If you believe your sexual status quo is all that’s possible, then that’s all you’ll ever have. But if you believe that you can develop erotic mastery, then that’s what you’ll achieve, so long as your faith is accompanied by commitment and skilled guidance.

We’re all on a lifelong learning journey. By making sex a conscious part of it, you can make your whole life better—filled with more pleasure, power and connection.
The Planet of Missing Information
This book builds on a framework I’ve developed called Wholistic Sexuality, an empowering vision of healthy, loving, responsible, respectful and ecstatic sexuality. Wholistic Sexuality honors the wisdom of ancient sex-positive societies, incorporates modern scientific research and embraces the mind-body-spirit-heart connection. Anatomy matters—anatomy matters a lot!—but at the end of the day, great sex is about much more than physiology.

One of the foundational premises of Wholistic Sexuality is that, if we want to fulfill our erotic potential, we need accurate models to guide us. Unfortunately, in our culture, our sexual atlas has lots of missing pages, and a lot of the maps that do exist are just plain wrong. We’re especially challenged in our understanding of women, including both the specifics of female anatomy and more immaterial concepts such as feminine energy and power. Realistic, helpful models of female sexuality are not easy to come by (so to speak), hence the focus of this book.

“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the old model obsolete.”

BUCKMINSTER FULLER
It’s hard to believe that in this day and age, so much basic information about female genital anatomy is missing from our science, our media and our minds. Yes, we know there’s “stuff” down there, but the remarkable truth is that our contemporary models of female genitalia are incomplete and inaccurate. Many of the structures responsible for arousal and orgasm are absent from our models or woefully misunderstood, forcing women and their lovers to look for that legendary mega-orgasmic place without a good map to guide them. This book provides the model you’ve been missing. Here, you’ll find the map you need to fully realize female sexual potential, whether it’s yours, your partner’s or both.

The heart (or perhaps crotch) of the book focuses on women’s sexual anatomy, including all the parts women have (including the obscure ones) and how they work together as an integrated system. Women have an interconnected network of structures that act in concert to choreograph arousal and orgasm.

Sadly, though, many women don’t know about their whole set of equipment. And if that’s the case for women, who after all own the apparatus, it’s doubly so for men!

If this is your situation, don’t feel bad. Very few people know about these parts or understand how they enable both reproduction and erotic ecstasy. I’m not just referring to “lay” people here. Many professionals, including sex teachers and gynecologists, don’t have accurate or complete maps, either.

If you’re like most women, you’re using only part of your genital equipment to generate the music of stimulation, dance the path of arousal, and ride the waves of your orgasmic potential. Now, it’s true that you don’t need the entire system to have compelling erotic experiences. But when you work with and master the entire arousal system, you’ll experience every orgasmic cliché there is, and maybe discover some new ones, too. You, too, can be an erotic virtuoso!
What do I mean by this? I mean that you can learn to get turned on wonderfully quickly when you choose to, and easily achieve states of deep arousal. You can expand the kinds of stimulation that arouse you to the point that it doesn’t matter much if your partner is sucking on your pinkie or your clitoris—either way, it makes you wild. In addition, you can provide your partner with over-the-top pleasure, not only due to your technical skills but also because pleasuring him or her turns you on so much! (That’s right, you can get off and even come from getting your sweetie off!)

Last and definitely not least, you can achieve mastery in the wide, wild and wonderful world of orgasm. You can be multi-orgasmic, mega-orgasmic and much more-gasmic. All this awaits you through the information in this book.

The Luscious Land of Arousal and Orgasm
Expertise in arousal and orgasm is where erotic virtuosity begins. So let’s begin with a brief exploration of these realms.

Sexual arousal is an altered state of consciousness. An altered state is any mind-body mode that operates differently from our everyday awareness and transcends ordinary consciousness. Dreaming is one such state. Meditation and daydreaming are others. And, did you know that women actually need to enter an altered state to successfully labor and birth?

When we get turned on, we enter a state of non-ordinary reality. The arousal trance is characterized by deep awareness of bodily sensation, a decrease in pain perception and often a feeling of timelessness. Our heightened pleasure can produce euphoria and ecstasy. Our heart races, our breath quickens, and we become absorbed and entranced. Self-consciousness evaporates and a
feeling of relaxed concentration takes over. When you’re aroused, you
don’t need to plan or think. The arousal itself becomes your guide: you
simply go where it takes you.

Arousal also draws us into an intense focus on our immediate physical
and emotional experience. We become acutely aware of our senses; our
mindscape overflows with sensual sensation. Our mundane daily
existence can be left far behind as we soar into the realm of the ecstatic.

Arousal alters our perception of both pain and pleasure. During
arousal, we become increasingly and exquisitely sensitive to pleasure. At
the same time, our ability to perceive pain diminishes, causing varying
levels of analgesia. This accounts for the experience of a sensation that
only minutes ago was irritating, painful, or simply not arousing now
giving intense pleasure. In arousal, the fine line between pleasure and
pain is constantly shifting, yet another reason why partners need to be
in constant communication about what is and isn’t working.

Although the capacity for arousal is something we’re all born with, we
can learn to deepen our arousal trance while expanding the pathways
that lead us into this blissful altered state of consciousness. The
more we allow ourselves to surrender to the trance, and the more we
cultivate the practices that bring us there, the more we’ll find ourselves
having the transcendent sex we dream of.
start to get slightly turned on, we ascend to the first step, and as our arousal increases, up we go. We can only ascend one step at a time, though. We can’t soar from the ground floor to the top step in one giant leap. We require the stimulus of a physiological feedback loop to propel us to the next level of arousal, and so we need to proceed from step to step consecutively. We can learn how to climb the steps quickly, and, conversely, how to slow down and linger on a step, deepening each level of the journey.

This ten-step arousal process can most accurately be thought of as having three separate phases of three steps each, plus a very special tenth step. We can think of the first three steps as early arousal, the middle three as medium-level arousal, and the last three as high-level arousal. As for the tenth step, well, that one is a doozy. It’s the one we get to once lift-off is complete and we’ve settled into orgasmic orbit. It’s where we ride the wave of our orgasms.

To a significant degree, what happens while we’re in orbit remains within our control. We can shape our orgasmic experience with our intention, breath, sound and movement. In fact, we can use these sex skills to keep climbing!

I heartily recommend that you don’t make getting to the tenth step your priority, although it’s great to be able to get there quickly when you want. In fact, I suggest that you make a habit of playing around on the stairs for quite a while. Arousal trance states have depth—either more or less, depending on how much time you spend dallying at each phase. The deeper you get into your trance, the better. The more totally immersed you become in any one particular step of arousal, the easier it will be to
get to the next level, and it will also be less likely that you’ll get distracted or jarred back down the stairs. The longer you build arousal, the more energy you’ll have to ride and play with. The more rapt you are in your own rapture, the more spectacular your peak experience will be.

THE VARIETIES OF ORGASMIC EXPERIENCE
I used to believe that there was basically only one type of orgasmic experience. This was consistent with the usual formal definition of orgasm as a short-lived genital experience consisting of successive waves of pleasurable spasms. This characterization positions orgasm as a climactic event—in other words, a finale. And it’s true, that’s often what it is for people (almost always for guys, and frequently for women). But orgasm can be much more than that:

• It can be wave upon wave of ecstasy lasting many minutes. You can get to a place where you stay in a general state of orgasm, rising and falling, cresting into the pleasure over and over again.

• You can experience orgasm in any part of your body, or in any of your energy centers or chakras.*

• You can have orgasms that include only part of your genitals (your clitoris, for instance) or ones that include every yummy bit of your equipment.

• Your orgasm can transport you to an experience of yourself as divine.

• It can take the form of a shared love-gasm, centered in your heart and the heart of your Beloved. (In fact, any of these experiences can be experienced alone or with a partner.)

When you become an erotic virtuoso, you can learn to come easily and often. You can also become an adventurer, let’s call it an “orgasmonaut,” exploring the vast realms of orgasmic experiences.

* Chakras are energy centers or vortexes located in our energetic body. Although western medicine is skeptical of their existence, they are foundational to the eastern healing traditions.
Here’s a short list (okay, not so short a list!) of types of orgasm I’ve experienced:

- Little tickly genital-sneeze orgasms
- Big ones, bigger ones, and even bigger ones
- Megagasms (ridiculously huge ones that seem to go on forever)
- Multi-multi-multi-gasms
- Laugh-gasms
- Sob-gasms
- Love-gasms
- Chakra-gasms
- Releasing waves of flowing, “surrender” (or yin) orgasms
- Fierce clutching, driving (yang) orgasms
- Mini-orgasms and “aftershocks” (known as kriyas in the tantric tradition)
- Energy orgasms ranging from small shuddery ones to huge body-wracking ones
- Orgasms centered in different body parts and sex centers: mouth, throat, heart, breasts and nipples, clitoris, pussy, uterus, ass.
- Full-body orgasms
- Projectile, squirting, gushing orgasms (orgasms with female ejaculation)
- Surprise orgasms that sneak up on you
- Telepathic mutual mind-blowers when you feel you’re in perfect intuitive union with your partner.

If I’ve had these orgasms, you can have them, too!
Owning Your Sexual Potential

The information in this book is drawn from many wells: my personal life; decades of work as a midwife, women’s healthcare provider, holistic healer and sex teacher; obscure scientific knowledge; modern sexology research; and ancient sacred sexuality traditions. It was a very personal journey that got me where I am today.

This will also be a personal (albeit guided) journey for you. These pages have one purpose only: to facilitate your voyage. You have everything you need to connect to your own power, create relationships centered in love and integrity, and lead an erotically ecstatic life. You are your own gateway, and also your sole authority.

Anyone who’s spent much time with doctors knows that while they wear the expert’s white coat and sound authoritative, they don’t always have the right answers. As a general principle, it’s wise to maintain a healthy skepticism about official experts when they tell you about your body and how to do things differently or better.

I firmly believe that it’s our duty to question authority. Just because something is in a book or believed by most people doesn’t make it true. That goes for this book and this expert, too. I’m claiming that women’s genitals have parts that have gone missing in our culture. Here’s my expert advice: don’t believe me. Instead, check out my claims for yourself, using the laboratory of your own body.

What this means in practice is, don’t just read. Do! Become an intrepid explorer of your genitals and sexual potential. Be a junior scientist and gather your own data. Once you’ve done this, you’ll really know the truth, not because an authority or book told you, but because you experienced it directly.

More Than Sex

I applaud you for your courage in picking up this book. Good for you (and your partners, too!). I’m sure that, at a minimum, you did so because you want to give and get more sexual pleasure and enjoy more fulfilling erotic relationships. But this book isn’t only about how to have better sex. It’s also about deepening your connection to yourself, accessing

“Do not believe anything because it is said by an authority, or if it is said to come from angels, or from Gods, or from an inspired source. Believe it only if you have explored it in your own heart and mind and body and found it to be true.”

BUDDHA
more joy in all aspects of your life, having sustainable, authentic, and joyous intimate relationships, and feeling fabulous about yourself. This is about choosing happiness, reveling in your freedom, and experiencing your divinity—all through the gateway of your sexuality.

Imagine what it would be like if your sexuality were integrated with your whole being—your amazing mind, your wondrous body, your loving heart, and your sacred spirituality. Picture yourself able to honor your passions, revel in pleasure, and delight in your sexuality. Envision yourself as a truly free being able to choose healthy relationships that support your most empowered life. Imagine loving your body . . . totally. Take a moment to see yourself, alone or with a Beloved, in a beautiful temple where sex is a sacrament that celebrates your erotic desires as a divine connection to all. Can you see it? Do you want it? It’s yours for the claiming.

“Of the delights of this world, man cares most for sexual intercourse, yet he has left it out of his heaven.”

MARK TWAIN

ANTONIO CORREGGIO—Venus and Cupid with a Satyr
A Note About Language

As discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this book, our culture hasn’t given us a good vocabulary for talking about sex. We have scientific terms (“vagina,” “penis”), baby talk (“tushy” and “wee-wee”), euphemisms (“down there”), and super-charged so-called dirty words like (and, yes, I’m about to say them) “pussy” and “fuck.”

These last words and others of that ilk shock and offend so much they’re banned from radio and television. Yet they’re just words, just a collection of sounds and syllables that we collectively agree have a certain meaning. They only mean what we make them mean, and they’re only “dirty” when we make them so.

As a healer, teacher and writer, I constantly have to navigate the straits of the limitations of our language. It’s not easy to do: the choice is essentially between formal to the point of pomposity (scientific language), vague and silly (baby words and euphemisms), and provocative (the “dirty words”). I’ve dealt with this by being varied in my usage. Sometimes I’ve gone with the clinical term or my own personal variations on them. Occasionally I opt for terms from Sanskrit, the holy language of ancient India—using “yoni” for the female genitalia and “lingam” for the penis—which have the blessing of being sacred and the disadvantage of not being widely understood.

And I also use juicier language.

When I’ve taken the latter course, it hasn’t been to shock or offend. It has, though, been a conscious choice, and, in a sense, a political act. The simple truth is that we need a more straightforward, comfortable way to talk about sex than our current language provides. One way to do this is by taking the charge off words that currently titillate or offend. When I use “fuck” or “pussy,” I do so for two reasons. First, they’re straightforward and descriptive (and often sexy, fun and lighthearted). Second, by treating them as if they have no charge, it helps to normalize them.

Some years ago, Eve Ensler’s Vagina Monologues took the V-word out of the gutter and made vaginas respectable. At some point, hopefully in the not-too-distant future, “pussy” and other so-called dirty words will be equally legitimate and benign.
The Most Fun Homework, Ever
This book is divided into three sections and twelve chapters:

- The first section (Maps, Models and Mistakes) lays the foundation for the material that follows. Consisting of four chapters, it examines our confused cultural view of sexuality, lays out the transformative Wholistic Sexuality framework, and delves into ancient Taoist wisdom as a way of understanding our sexuality.

- The second section (Journey to the Origin of the World) is also made up of four chapters. It addresses everything you wanted to know (and probably didn’t know to ask) about female genitalia.

- The third and final section (Becoming an Erotic Virtuoso) guides you in taking what you’ve learned in the first two sections and using it to achieve your full sexual potential. It includes a chapter especially for men.

“I’m such a good lover because
I practice a lot on my own.”

WOODY ALLEN

Achille Deveria—Woman Self-Pleasuring, 1857
This book includes an array of suggestions of experiential things to do. Call the activities games, exercises, practices, rituals, or whatever works for you. Needless to say, you don't have to do anything I tell you. (I'm not your mother and you don't listen to her, anyway!). I invite you to check out each suggestion. If it sounds good, try it! Think of these ideas as a smorgasbord, a banquet of choices. Feel free to take what appeals to you and leave the rest. Try some new options that you haven’t tasted before, or check back later and see if your desires have changed. These are serving suggestions, not orders.

There is a great deal of visual material in this book. I encourage you to spend time with it. Doing so will deepen your understanding of female genitalia while also providing insight into how various cultures have distorted our understanding of the female body.

Just looking isn’t enough, though. If you don’t actually view, feel, touch, and play with the equipment, you’ll be less likely to discover your pathways and potential.

Yes, that’s right. Women, I just told you to go play with yourself and I meant it! Men, you’re welcome to help, if your goddess so desires. Be hands-on . . . literally!

In fact, if you really want to “get it,” you will need to both experience and witness the transformations of arousal. These changes will help you to fully understand what’s there, how it works, and how to make it really happy.

Specifically, here’s what I recommend. While you read the anatomy chapters, play along by checking out everything on your own (or a female friend’s) body . . . with her consent, of course! Almost all the structures I discuss can easily be felt, and most can be seen.

Start when you or your female partner are not aroused, and then feel and see the structures again at different levels of arousal. It will soon be eminently clear to you that this book’s description of female genitalia is accurate. Plus, it makes doing your homework a whole lot of fun. In fact, we should probably call it homeplay, because it’s definitely not work!

Women, I suggest that you take the tour alone the first time. If you are partnered, make a second trip to introduce your lover to the wonders of your body.

To make your learning experience fun and easy, we’ve made liberal use of sidebars, some of which run throughout the book. There are five running sidebars in all:
**GUIDED TOUR**

Step-by-step instructions for the female genital tour. Follow them to get the most out of your homeplay sexploration.

**Owner’s Manual**

Greater detail about gynecological health issues that women will find especially useful.

**GODDESS GUIDE**

Ways women can honor and connect to the spiritual power of their bodies and sexuality.

**Play and Practice**

Activities, exercises, games and suggestions to help develop your erotic skills and have more fun playing with yourself.

**HOT TIPS FOR GUYS**

These sidebars are designed to help men understand how to honor, humor, handle and please the wondrous pussy and the women who own them. Men, if you just want the essentials, check out these sidebars and the short concluding chapter.

Whether you're a man or a woman, I encourage you to enter this book in a spirit of adventure, with optimism and an open mind. Why accept cultural canards about sex when you can experience the amazing reality? Why wait any longer to expand your repertoire of what's possible? Thank you for embarking on this journey toward your very own authentic, sexiest self.
About The Center for the Intimate Arts

Sheri Winston’s Center for the Intimate Arts is dedicated to providing empowering, enriching and entertaining erotic education.

We envision a world where sex is understood, honored and free from shame, where our bodies’ ecstatic potential is explored and celebrated, and relationships are based on integrity, compassion and love.

The Center offers a curriculum of over 45 intimate arts classes, all of which are available as in-person classes and workshops, offered throughout the United States and beyond. Online classes will be available starting in 2010.

We offer additional sexual education products, including e-books, online classes, sexual health products and more.

Services include speeches and presentations, and consultations and counseling for individuals and couples (both phone-based and in person).

A weekly Internet radio show, “Juicy Pleasures with Sheri Winston,” can be heard at VoiceAmerica.com. A companion DVD to this book will soon be available.

To sign up for our newsletter, purchase other products, get more information about sponsoring or booking Sheri Winston, or to learn more, please visit us at our website: INTIMATEARTSCENTER.COM.