

bare buttocks caned, tawsed and whipped before being “forced” to give oral sex to the women who had punished them; a Mistress tied me to a cross and whipped my penis before making me masturbate all over her shaven pussy and then lick it off; a Mistress sat on my face while she masturbated me, continuing vigorously — and painfully — beyond the point of my orgasm; a blond, slim girl with lovely long legs and a firm neat bum got a good flogging until her bottom was black, blue and welted, at which point her Master laid her on her back, opened her legs, and whipped her shaven fanny with a cat-o-nine-tails (that really had her crying out!).

Before proceeding, let me emphasise that the people at these parties are all consenting adults who enjoy the things that they do or that are done to them. It seems that you can never say this often enough, for no matter how many times you say it, there are always some stupid or dishonest people who will nevertheless wilfully misrepresent you as being in favour of rape, molestation or some other violation of people’s rights.

DOMINATION AND HUMILIATION

A lot of men enjoy watching their wife or girlfriend having sex with another man; especially if the other man has a bigger dick than they have. That *really* turns them on! I met a couple about two years ago. She was early twenties, beautiful, with a lovely figure (incredibly pert bum). He was early thirties. They loved to play a game in which she dominated and humiliated him, and they both wanted another man involved.

At their place, she and I began kissing and caressing each other, and taking each other’s clothes off, as the husband looked on. She then brought the husband into the action. She made him strip off and kneel on the floor. She tied him to a wooden frame. All the while she was reproving him. She then started caning and whipping him (nothing very severe) and humiliating him in various ways, e.g. making fun of the size of his dick. Then, while I was standing naked in front of him, she got on to her knees and started to suck me off — right in front of his face. I wasn’t facing him: he got to see the action side-on. Only a few inches in front of his face, there was his young and lovely wife on her knees making a meal of another man’s dick.

And she was really good! She was absolutely loving what she was doing, and it showed: the expression on her face was one of sheer bliss. She was enjoying sucking me off even more than I was enjoying it. In fact, what turned me on most about it was watching her (I do love to see women enjoying themselves!). I have never before seen anyone so intensely rapt up in what they are doing. After ten-or-so minutes of this, she asked me to turn to face him. Then she ordered him to suck me, which he did. My dick started to wilt slightly (not because of his technique, just because he was male), so she criticised him for the way he was doing it and told him to “be a good girl and do it properly”. From time to time she would take it back into her mouth, to show him how it should be done (she was, after all, an expert).

Later on, after we untied her husband, I started shagging her doggie-style while he watched. Once again she was completely carried away, thrusting herself back hard on to me, groaning and moaning and panting. Then he joined in, giving it to her in the mouth while I banged away. From time to time he and I changed ends. Unfortunately for me, she would not take it up her arse. Her husband wanted to take it up his arse; but, unfortunately for him, that is one thing at which I draw the line.

BISEXUALITY

There was an element of bisexuality in the experience I just described. In fact, I have had quite a number of man-to-man sexual experiences on the S/M scene. This is one of the ways in which my experiences on the scene have altered my sexual behaviour. For before getting into this scene, the thought of any kind of sex with another man completely turned me off. However, a good dom can take you further than you ever thought you could go.

For example, I had been invited to a party which ran from Friday evening to the following Monday morning; but, due to other commitments, I was able to attend only for a few hours on the Saturday evening. I arrived at about 6.30. They had had a good night on the Friday, and a number of people had stayed overnight so the action continued into the Saturday afternoon. However, most of those people had now left. More people were due to arrive late on the Saturday night to indulge their sado-masochistic fantasies into the

early hours of Sunday morning. However, when I arrived only four people were there: the host (an unattached man), another unattached man who left shortly after I arrived, and a mid-forties couple (dom female, sub male). Apparently, this couple (I had never met them before — or since, as it happens) have a stunning young female “slave” whom they both dominate on a regular basis (she, like the Mistress, is AC/DC). The slave was supposed to be there with them but, unfortunately for me, some family crisis meant that she was unable to attend.

After saying hello to everyone, the first thing I did was to take all my clothes off. That is normally the first thing I do at this kind of party. The host, the couple and I then went into the dungeon. I was the only one who was naked at that time: the other two men were wearing something (not much, but I cannot remember what); the Mistress was wearing a kind of corset with stockings, suspenders and high heels, with her lovely large, firm breasts fully exposed. I was then blindfolded. The next thing I knew, I was being tied up in some complex way. It turned out that I had a harness fitted to my body and padded straps fixed around my thighs, so that when ropes were attached and pulleys operated, I was raised off the floor in a sitting position. I was then slowly lowered on to a large dildo, which was fixed into something stationery. When I was fully impaled, people kept swinging me around, which caused me to experience a strange mixture of pleasure and pain.

Eventually, I was lifted off the dildo, stood upright and tied up with my arms outstretched toward the ceiling. The Mistress then caned and whipped my backside, hitting harder and harder. Her husband had been stripped and tied up too, facing me, and she would alternate whipping me with whipping him. When she tired of that she turned her attentions to my dick. She started whipping it with a riding crop, again building up the severity, and the harder she hit, the stiffer it got. Occasionally she would stop to offer her breasts to my mouth, then after a few minutes of that she would resume flogging my dick. Eventually the punishment stopped, and she stood between her husband and me and gently masturbated us, one in each hand. He didn’t come; but I did, all over him (she kept going on about what a lot of sperm there was).

Her husband was then moved to a different part of the dungeon and tied up again in a standing position. I could hear him being whipped (I still had the blindfold on). Then it was my turn again, across the backside. She then knelt in front of me and took my dripping detumescent dick into her mouth before applying another dose of the cane to my bottom. I was then untied and had the blindfold removed. I could not see at first: it took a few minutes to get used to the light. When I was able to open my eyes properly, she took me by the arm and moved me in front of her husband and told me to kneel. Then, as she resumed the caning of his backside, she ordered me to suck him, which I willingly did. In fact, I was so turned on that I would have done almost anything she said. It did not take him long to come, and of course I had to swallow it.

Afterwards, the husband said that it was his first sexual experience with another man and that he found it very erotic to have a “young boy” (his description) being “forced” to suck him off. I found the whole thing very erotic too (even though my dick was black and blue for three or four days afterwards). Since then, I have had to give oral sex to a number of men. On one occasion, a girl made me suck off her boyfriend while she buggered me with a strap-on dildo. I have also been buggered by a few men, sometimes while tied down.

However, I would be reluctant to describe myself as bisexual. For I do not fancy any men. I do not even know which men are attractive and which are not: they are all just blokes to me. The idea of me having a boyfriend strikes me as laughable. Even the idea of having straightforward sex with another man does nothing for me at all. But the idea of me being *forced* to have sex with another man — that is entirely different! For me, man-on-man sex is fun only if it is part of a sub/dom game.

There is quite a bit of same-sex action on the S/M scene; but probably no more than in the outside world. Certainly, most men, whether into S/M or not, seem to be quite averse to having sex with another man. Women seem to be far more liable to swing both ways.

ANAL SEX

I indicated a moment ago that I have been buggered a few times. Far more frequently, I have had dildos used on me. These may be hand-held or strap-on. A lot of women like using dildos on men. Some

especially like wearing a strap-on to do it because it lets them share something of the male experience. And a lot of men like being dildoad.

There is a straightforward physiological reason why men should enjoy receiving anal sex. The prostate gland is massaged by things moving in and out of the anus. Massaging the prostate causes a man to get erect and can cause him to ejaculate. It is also very pleasurable in itself. However, like all things in sex, there is a lot more to it than physiology. A lot of men like to be stretched: the size of the thing that is penetrating them can be very important. Anal sex can also be quite painful, and that mixture of pleasure and pain can be exquisite. And there is also the piquancy of experiencing the female role, especially if this is enforced.

However, from the fact that a man enjoys receiving anal sex, it would be wrong to infer that he therefore has bisexual tendencies. A purely heterosexual man can enjoy receiving anal sex for all the reasons I just gave (and perhaps others besides); but he would normally be quite turned off by having another man involved (either using a dildo or using his dick). One must distinguish activities from polarities: for a heterosexual man, receiving anal sex may be a fun activity; but it will be essential to him that it is a woman and not a man who wields the dildo. This is parallel to the case of lesbians: they may use dildos on each other in simulation of heterosexual intercourse, but it is vital to them that their sexual partner is another woman.

Women do not have a prostate. One may look for other physiological reasons to explain why so many of them love being screwed in the arse, e.g. the anus is close to the vagina and that whole area of a woman's body is very sensitive. My guess would be that the explanation is more psychological, to do with the desire to be penetrated and perhaps also with submissive desires to be misused. As for men, so for women, anal sex (if it is done properly) will involve a mixture of pleasure and pain.

Finally, unless you are into coprophilia, it is advisable that the recipient of anal sex should use an enema or an anal douche beforehand.

NO PAIN, NO GAIN

One can distinguish between sado-masochism and domination/submission. Some people like to play sub/dom games but without inflicting or experiencing any pain: they are not sadists or masochists. There are also gradations of sado-masochists. Some like to give or receive only mild punishment. Others are more extreme.

I met a couple a few years ago. They were both dom, and both sadists; and they were looking for subs (male or female) who could take a severe beating. They were very pleased with me. They would take it in turns to thrash my bottom, and they would each use a whole range of implements (straps, whips, canes, crops, etc.). I would often spend several hours at their place, and I would spend most of that time being tied up — or down — and being flogged. And they really did it hard, and for long periods without respite. I had a code-word which I came close to using several times. But I refrained from using it, partly because it would be an admission of defeat, and partly because it would be letting the doms down (withdrawing from the game). I then noticed the following phenomenon.

I would be experiencing severe pain, *fearing* each stroke and thinking that I would have to utter the code-word soon in order to call a halt; but I would resolve to suffer just a little bit more. And then suddenly the experience would transform. It still hurt like hell, but I could take it and I no longer feared the rod. In fact I accepted it — even *welcomed* it — and I just relaxed, let the cane descend, and enjoyed the rest of the punishment as the blood from my buttocks spattered the walls. This was another instance of doms taking me further than I previously thought I could go.

I said that for most of the time that I spent with this couple I was under the lash. But we did do a number of other things as well, e.g. the female would tie me down on my back and then sit on my face. She would also use a dildo on me, and she also masturbated me from time to time.

My capacity for punishment also endeared me to another dom couple who held spanking parties. The first time I met them, it was just the three of us. After they had beaten my backside black, blue and bloody they made me masturbate in front of them. At one of their parties, I was caned and whipped by a whole succession of people, including a lesbian couple one of whom held my face to her naked breasts while the other whipped my bum with a cat-o-nine-tails.

There was also a female sub at the party who got a good beating, and another sub male who took even more than I did. Once again, I had to masturbate in front of everybody.

Although a masochist is a person who derives sexual pleasure from pain, it is not *any* kind of pain that will do. I cannot imagine anyone getting off on a toothache or a headache! Similarly, getting beaten up in the street would not be a turn-on for anyone (it has happened to me a few times and I can honestly report that I obtained no sexual pleasure from the experience at all). Further, each masochist is pretty specific about the kind of pain he/she enjoys, e.g. some love having their backs whipped, while others detest that. Almost all like being beaten on the backside; lots of sub women like having their breasts — or, more especially, nipples — punished (and so do lots of sub men); and quite a few subs (of both sexes) like having their genitals punished (beaten, clamped, given electric shocks, etc.).

For example, I know one young woman who likes having her back whipped, her bum caned and clamps put on her nipples. She has also had a clamp put on her clitoris. She said it hurt like hell but it was great. On one night, someone had beaten her buttocks with a steel brush. As I caressed her bum I could feel all the little indents in her flesh! Other common methods of torture are dripping hot candle wax on to erogenous zones or rubbing stinging nettles over them; but there appear to be no limits to the imagination when it comes to ways of inflicting pleasurable pain on people. I have even had a small candle (the type one would put on a birthday cake) inserted into my urethra, held in place by having hot candle wax dripped over the “join”, and then lighted, with my penis held vertically, so that the hot wax from the candle runs down on to the glans. It gets hotter as the candle burns down.

POSITIVE FREEDOM

I have been interested in S/M since before puberty. However, I always tried to suppress it. I used to live with a girlfriend. On one occasion, she expressed a wish to engage in S/M sex, and in a way which really appealed to my suppressed fantasies; but I pretended that I was not interested. I could not admit even to myself — let alone to her — that I really had an interest in that kind of thing. Nowadays, I not only admit it to myself: I also tell everyone else, and I actively explore it in all its ramifications. There is a very real sense in which I am more free today than I used to be (“free to be me”, as Deep Purple put it).

The freedom on which libertarians usually insist is negative freedom or the absence of coercion or — what I take to be an explanation of this — not having one's property rights violated (and recognising that one's body is one's most important item of property). I had negative freedom with regard to sado-masochism even in my repressed past: I was free to engage in S/M sex with any willing partner(s); and I even appear to have had at least one opportunity. The trouble was, I had a psychological barrier to doing what I wanted to do. To overcome that barrier, I had to take the courage to make an honest assessment of myself and to accept and act on the results. That I have done; and I now have positive freedom with regard to sado-masochism (ironically, at a time when, thanks to the Spanner case, the negative freedom of sado-masochists is in jeopardy — which is why this article is pseudonymous).

Use of the term “positive freedom” can cause libertarians to shudder: the phrase has been used to justify authoritarian suppression of negative freedom. But every good term gets usurped by baddies as a cover for their nefarious deeds. The positive freedom of which I speak — adapting Kant's notion (see, e.g., *Critique of Practical Reason*, Chapter 1, Theorem IV) — is just a disposition to rationality, i.e. a willingness to question inherited or fashionable prejudices, to be honest about the facts and to consider available options objectively. Whilst we can and should help people to attain to this disposition, we have no right to do so by means which violate their negative freedom. (Incidentally, when I say that “we” should help, I mean *you* and *I* and other individuals, not the government or “society”.)

CORRUPTION VERSUS DEVELOPMENT

I spoke earlier of being led on, through my S/M experiences, and under the influence of other people (doms), to do things that previously I would not have considered doing and which originally I may even have found revolting. Have I been corrupted?

To say this would imply that my sexual behaviour has changed for the worse. However, I cannot accept that the things that I enjoy

doing now are *worse* than the things that I used to do, nor even that they are bad. Sure, my sexual behaviour now is *different* to what it used to be. But it has really only *expanded*: there are now more things from which I derive sexual enjoyment. This is surely better described as *development* than as *corruption*. Indeed, given that my capacity for sexual pleasure has been broadened, it would seem that only a puritan could say that my position had worsened and that I had therefore been corrupted.

EXPLANATIONS

Why do some people become sado-masochists? That question, it seems to me, is the best way to get otherwise reasonable people to talk a load of crap. Almost invariably, an explanation for someone being a sado-masochist will refer to something awful that happened in that person's childhood, e.g. he/she was caned by parents or teachers, or was *not* disciplined by parents or teachers, or was belittled by mother or father, or received little attention from one or other parent, or was sexually abused, and so on and so forth. Just think of some bad things that happened to you in your childhood (we all have them). I am sure that such types of thing will have been fastened on by someone in order to explain someone else's sado-masochism.

The point is that all of the popular-psychology explanations of why a person becomes a sado-masochist are *ad hoc*, i.e. they are pseudo-scientific with no explanatory power. For whatever bad thing in a person's upbringing is identified as being responsible for someone's S/M proclivities, the following will hold true of it:

- * there are other people who also suffered that bad thing, but they did not become sado-masochists;
- * there are other sado-masochists who did not suffer that bad thing.

The posited explanation is neither necessary nor sufficient for the thing to be explained; so it does not explain it at all.

Can we explain why people search for and accept such pseudo-explanations? That seems pretty easy, viz., there seems to be a prevailing assumption that sado-masochism is abnormal, some kind of aberration that needs to be accounted for.

In contradistinction to this assumption, I believe that sado-masochism is just part of the human condition: the capacity for enjoying S/M sex is just a human capacity. This is not to say that *everyone* must have that capacity, for we are all different yet still all human (the capacity for enjoying heavy metal is a human capacity, but not all humans possess it). Some people have the potentiality to develop into sado-masochists, others do not. No matter what happens to the latter, they will not become sado-masochists. As for the former, they may or may not become sado-masochists, depending upon their experience and their other personal characteristics (and the specific experiences that come their way may well influence the particular *form* that their sado-masochism takes). If someone has the potentiality to become a sado-masochist, any of a million and one things (e.g., a good caning in childhood) may bring it out. Alternatively, someone can have that potentiality without ever developing it (no-one can develop *all* his/her potentialities, because we have to make choices in life). I think sado-masochism is innate, in Leibniz's sense: "as the veins of the marble outline a shape which is in the marble before they are uncovered by the sculptor" (*New Essays on Human Understanding*, tr and ed. P Remnant and J Bennett, Cambridge University Press, 1982, p. 86).

ETHICS

Are there any ethical issues raised by sado-masochism? Yes there are.

Anyone who respects the dignity of human beings will respect people's right (their negative freedom) to engage in S/M sex with other consenting adults. It follows from this that anyone is committing a wrong who tries forcibly to prevent people from engaging in consensual S/M sex.

This does not by itself answer the question of whether S/M sex is wrong. For protection of our negative freedom is, amongst other things, protection of our right to be wrong, so long as we do not violate the rights of others. Let me illustrate this.

Suppose that I am walking down the concrete steps into my local underground station. Just in front of me an old fellow trips and falls down the steps. I have a choice. I can step over him and walk on, or I can stop and offer him assistance (see if he is all right, see whether he needs medical attention, help him to his feet, etc.). I have the

right to do either of these things; and if I decide to walk on, then no-one has the right to stop me and force me to help him. Nevertheless, I would say that I have a moral duty to stop and offer him assistance. Walking on would be perfectly within my rights, but it would still be morally wrong. And although no-one could rightly stop me from walking on, they would be perfectly entitled to think that I was a callous so-and-so and to deny me their friendship and favours (though they would *not* be entitled to violate my property rights).

So we can ask the question: while I am perfectly within my rights to engage in S/M sex, and while no-one has the moral right to stop me, am I nevertheless doing something morally wrong?

It seems as plain as anything to me that S/M sex is morally *irrelevant*. I cannot provide a positive argument for this here. But how could anyone argue that S/M sex is morally wrong? On what grounds? Contrast this with the example of me stepping over the old chap who fell down the steps. In that example, although it may be difficult to articulate the moral *principle* that my action contravened, it is easy enough to list the kinds of considerations that are relevant to the judgement that my action was wrong, viz.:

- * the old geezer had a fall;
- * so far as I knew, he had done nothing to deserve that;
- * I was the person who was best placed to offer him immediate assistance;
- * I could offer such assistance at little sacrifice to myself or anyone else.

But in the case of S/M sex between consenting adults, there are certainly no considerations of *that* type that could be brought to bear. What possible considerations *could* be invoked to justify a moral condemnation of S/M sex?

I can think of only three types that might be offered. The first would be an appeal to authority, e.g. some sacred text says that some sexual practices (such as buggery) are morally wrong. The second would be a protestation that such sexual practices are unnatural. The third would refer to the harm being suffered by the masochist. I think that all three types of consideration can be quickly dismissed.

An appeal to authority would miss the point. There is nothing wrong with appeals to authority in mundane decision-making. Indeed, we cannot do without them. But anything that, in our ordinary affairs, is taken on trust is, in principle, capable of being questioned. Of course, as a result of the questioning we may discover that what was taken on trust is very likely true. In that case, a belief held as a prejudice becomes a belief held rationally. On the other hand, questioning of an uncritically held belief can sometimes lead to its rejection as a *mere* prejudice. As I am raising the question of whether sado-masochism is morally wrong, an appeal to authority here would just be a refusal to take part in that debate.

I must make a twofold response to the claim that sado-masochism is wrong because unnatural. *First*, I have already opined that sado-masochism is perfectly natural for human beings (whether or not it is natural for other creatures). If you seek knowledge of what is natural to a species by empirical observation of the species, rather than by drawing conclusions from pre-conceived ideas, you will probably come to agree with me. *Second*, even if sado-masochism is unnatural, it would not follow that there is anything wrong with it. Heart transplants, pacemakers, prosthetic limbs, artificial respirators, false teeth, etc., are all unnatural but are life-enhancing and are not normally thought to be morally objectionable.

Finally, while it is true that the sadist causes the masochist harm, this is harm to which the masochist consents because he/she derives benefits from it (sexual pleasure, emotional release or whatever). Many activities from which we derive enjoyment, fulfilment, health or happiness involve some form of harm to our bodies, often inflicted by someone else; and such activities do not normally elicit moral disapprobation. Sport and surgery (including cosmetic surgery) are obvious examples. The reason we consent to participate in, or submit ourselves to, such activities is that we think the benefits are worth the harm. Sado-masochism does not seem to be any different.

Are there *any* kinds of consideration that could *reasonably* be urged against the moral propriety of S/M sex? Surely, S/M sex is not a moral issue at all. It's just another lifestyle choice.