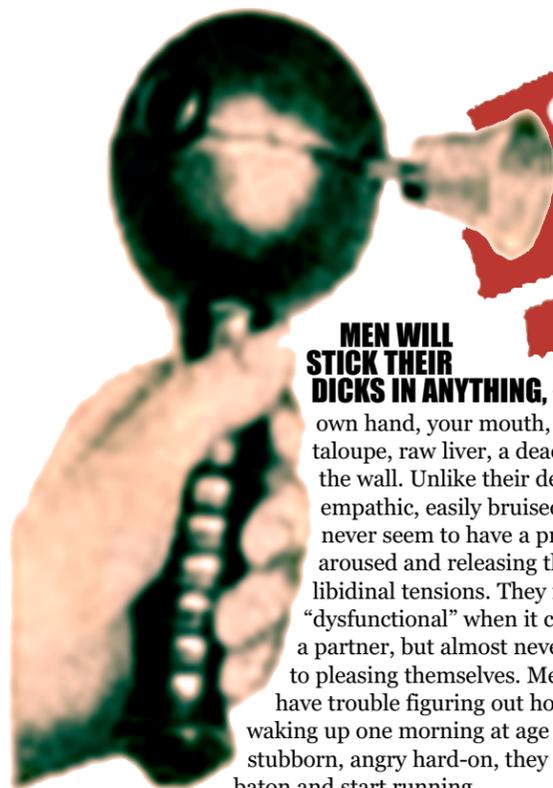


# SEX TOYS

## THAT TIME FORGOT

### VIBRATORS & DILDOS OF YORE



**MEN WILL STICK THEIR DICKS IN ANYTHING,**

whether it's their own hand, your mouth, an overripe cantaloupe, raw liver, a dead eel, or a hole in the wall. Unlike their delicate, intuitive, empathic, easily bruised sisters, men never seem to have a problem getting aroused and releasing their pent-up libidinal tensions. They may be laughably "dysfunctional" when it comes to pleasing a partner, but almost never when it comes to pleasing themselves. Men never seem to have trouble figuring out how to cum. After waking up one morning at age 13 with a stubborn, angry hard-on, they clutch the baton and start running.

Therefore, the sex-toy industry—with the stark exception of pocket pussies and their *reductio ad absurdum* sex zombie, the blow-up doll—caters almost exclusively to women and their ongoing quest to achieve the blissful muscular release of deep-tissue orgasm. Well, let's amend that—sex toys typically serve the needs of women and *gay men*, because with a little coaxing and some elbow grease, I suppose it's almost as easy to cram something that was intended for a vagina up some hairy jerkoff's pink starfish. Not that I'd know. I mean, I'm flattered that you'd find me attractive, but I just don't *swing* that way. And if you push the matter, I might have to bust out with some irrational, self-hating, homophobic violence.

Where was I? Oh—point being, nine times out of ten, a sex toy's gonna be modeled after a penis rather than a vagina. This occurs for no other reason than the fact that it's easier to design an item based on something rather than on nothing. You might be able to *dig* a hole, but it's hard to really *build* one. When all is said and done, when the chips have fallen and the dust has settled, a vagina is little more than a Waiting Room for a penis. And like I said, when you're hard-up, even a half-rotted cantaloupe will do.

These *faux* penises—which the sex-toy industry is so fond of foisting upon our nation's women with the intent of having them mockingly compare our organs unfavorably to these mammoth inanimate rubber obelisks—invariably fall into one of two categories: **dildos** and **vibrators**. A dildo is a fake penis. A vibrator is a fake penis that moves.

Well, let's clarify that. Vibrators are not *always* phallic. Many times their focus is the clitoris rather than the vagina—the Sweet Pea rather than the Sugar Walls, if you're more inclined to use "street talk." Therefore, unlike the dildo, the vibrator need not resemble any naturally occurring sex organ, because as we all know, Mother Nature purposely avoided designing anything on the male body that would naturally rub up against the clit. It takes you half a week just to *find* the fucking thing on some chicks.

Still, whether phallic or not, the fact remains that most sex toys are designed for women or anal-receptive men, and I'm not sure which is worse.

It may shock you—because, as always, you're pathetically easy to shock—but sex toys weren't invented by ham-fisted, no-neck, Frisco leather dykes sometime in the early 1980s. They are not the noble creation of a plucky cabal of overweight, flabby-titted, sex-positive erotic-fiction writers. They did not magically emerge to coincide with the coining of the term "modern primitives."

No, my chicken-chested, monkey-butt friend, we have always had sex toys. The dildo was invented long before the wheel.

**THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD "DILDO"** remains unclear. Most experts seem to think it's derived from the Italian *diletto*, which means "pleasure" or "delight." Others peg it on the Latin *dilatare*, which roughly translates to "dilate" or "open wide." There's also an old British folk song called "The Maid's Complaint for Want of a Dil Dou," and the words "dil dou" allegedly translate as "erect penis," but fuck if I could find out from what language. Regardless of its derivation, it remains a crass, ugly word—"dildo." It's

hard to sound classy and refined while saying it. Try it

if you don't believe me.

In Iceland, archeologists have recently unearthed an obviously phallic object which testing has revealed to be 106,000 years old and thus the undisputed title-holder to the much-coveted "World's Oldest Dildo" crown. Carved from whalebone, it is adorned with "goddess symbols" and an apparent menstrual calendar. German rockhounds have dug up an eight-inch "stone phallus" thought to have been used during Ice Age sex parties 28,000 years ago. And ancient Chinese suspected dildos, made of bronze, jade, wood, or ivory, have been found that date as far back as 10,000 B.C.

The problem with many of these Ancient Stone Cocks is determining whether they were indeed double-edged swords, i.e., used



both as "sculpture" and as marital aids. How can you tell whether they were only used in fertility parades or whether some troglodyte lass was shoving that stony slab up her prehistoric twat after the harvest festival was over? How the fuck do you tell? Huh? *How?*

Rumor has it that in the Africa of bygone days, dildos were sculpted from dried camel dung coated in layers of hardened resin. I think you'll agree with me that this is disgusting. But it wasn't until we encounter the ancient Greeks—those *freaks*—that we find the spectacle of dildos being crafted solely for penetration of human orifices.

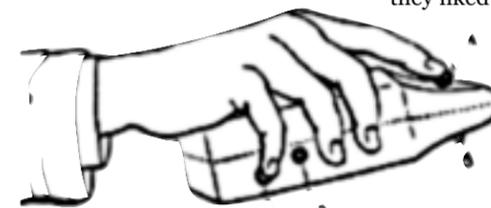
Starting somewhere around 500 B.C., artisans in the Mediterranean coastal city of Miletus began fashioning what they called the *olisbos*—a leather, stone, or wood surrogate schlong—specifically for women. Before going off to war, Greek men sometimes gave their wives an *olisbos* to stave off the pangs of penile deprivation. And fragments from a third-century B.C. Greek play tell of a young maiden who visits a friend to borrow her *olisbos* and becomes distraught when informed that her friend had already lent it to another lonely lady.

Renaissance Italians added some twists to the dildo template such as elaborate carvings and the occasional model cast entirely in gold. But as with prior incarnations, these dildos of antiquity were crude, hard, possibly injurious implements that required gobs of olive oil merely to get 'em in.

It was not until the mid-1800s and rubber's vulcanization that mankind entered The Era of the Modern Dildo.

**THE ANTIQUE DILDO'S DEATH** coincided with the antique vibrator's birth. As early as 1734, the French had invented *le tremousoir*—a hand-held wind-up toy that produced a vibrating motion on one end—for the purpose of curing a widespread medical condition they liked to call "female hysteria." But it wasn't until the late 1800s that a vibrator industry of absurd proportions emerged amid the clanging steel and smoking rubber of Gilded Age technology.

The idea of "female hysteria"—and I'm not here to argue whether it's just an idea or a LIVING THROB-BING THING—had



**"THE TREMOUSSOIR" (1734, France):** Widely considered the world's first vibrator, it depended on wind-up action from inserting a key in the hole marked "D." After revving up, you applied "B" to the area requiring "massage."



been around since ancient Greek philosophers spoke of a "wandering womb." According to hallowed Greek physician Galen, that wanderin' womb could be repatriated through a medically induced "hysterical paroxysm" evidenced by vaginal contractions and the release of excess, pent-up, stagnatin' pussy juice.

In other words, for a rock-solid 25 centuries—since a few hundred years before Christ up until 1952, when the American Psychiatric Association removed "hysteria" from their list of disorders—physicians took it upon themselves to jack off women to orgasm.

According to some estimates, anywhere from half to three-quarters of an average physician's business in the late 1800s consisted of these anti-hysteria handjobs. Nearly any female complaint would be neatly classified under the "hysteria" umbrella, and thus much jacking was done.

But as we all know, handjobs can be tiring. In 1869, George Taylor invented the "Manipulator," an unwieldy, steam-powered, hand-and-foot-cranked steel contraption that powered a vibrating ball against which a patient ground their pelvis. The Manipulator cut the average handjob time down from about an hour to ten minutes. Taylor cautioned physicians to protect women against "overindulgence."

By 1900, an estimated 100 different vibrators had appeared on the market, most of them confined to the physician's lair. They depended on anything from steam power to gas engines to air pressure to good ol' glowin' coal.

The turn of that century brought a new wave of "portable" models. Although the size of power drills, they were mere hand buzzers compared to the torture racks ensconced in doctors' offices. They boasted snappy names such as the "Gyro-Lator," "Vibra-King," "Vibro-Electra," and "Golden-Glo Vitalator." There were even hand-cranked models resembling pepper grinders.

When Hamilton Beach patented a take-home electrical massager in 1902, the vibrator became only the fifth home electrical appliance, following the tea kettle, sewing machine, fan, and toaster. But by 1917, there were more vibrators in American homes than toasters. Vibrator ads buzzed throughout respectable women's magazines of the WWI era. Marketed as "blood circulators" and devices "for anxiety and female tension," they teased female readers with the prospect of "30,000 thrilling, invigorating, penetrating, revitalizing penetrations per minute" and promised that "all the pleasures of youth will throb within you." The 1918 Sears, Roebuck catalogue peddled a vibrator "That Every Woman Appreciates... very useful and satisfactory for home service."

But when silent porno films of the 1920s began showing women using vibrators in a sexual context, advertisers could no longer hide the vibrator's true use behind medicinal mumbo-jumbo. The vibrator was shamed into obscurity until the 1960s and the Sexual Revolution's wackiness. No longer resembling a rusted steel printing press, the typical vibrator today is a slim pink plastic job the size of a baby carrot.

**"THE CHATTANOOGA" (1904, U.S.A.):** Steam-powered and nearly five feet tall, this vibrator required two men to shovel coal into a furnace while a physician manipulated a patient's genitals from the other side of a wall using a mechanical arm.



**"We have always had sex toys. The dildo was invented long before the wheel."**