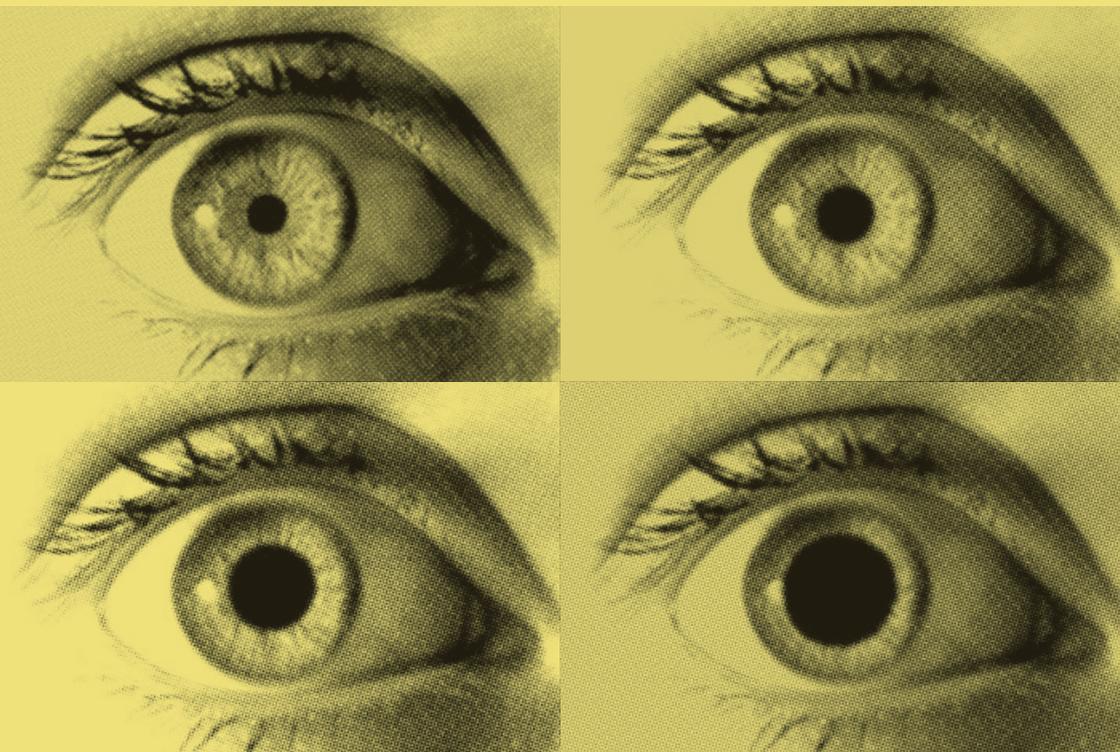


SPECIAL EVENT

wellcome
collection

Saturday
18 July
10.30–
17.00

SEXUAL DESIRE



PROGRAMME

From asexuality to sex addiction, there is huge variety in our experience of sexual desire. And as with many psychological concepts, it's also complex: biological and social influences interweave to determine our feelings.

Both the temptation and the conflict that attraction can create are enduring themes central to Western literature. It's omnipresent in the media yet often discussed in a way that highlights our discomforts.

Thank you for joining us at this special event to accompany *The Institute of Sexology* exhibition. This day-long symposium will delve into the complexity of sexual desire, tracing connections between history, sociology, psychology and neurophysiology, and, hopefully, we will leave the room with more questions than when we begin.

Discussions will take place in the Henry Wellcome Auditorium and refreshments will be served in the Williams Lounge, both on level -1.



Alfred Kinsey interviewing a woman. William Dellenback, Courtesy of The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction

SATURDAY 18 JULY, 10.30-17.00

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- 10.30** Opening remarks – Timandra Harkness (chair)
-
- 10.45** The Institute of Sexology – Kate Forde
-
- 11.00** What Do We Mean by Sexual Desire
and Why Does it Vary? – John Bancroft
-
- 11.40** Coffee break
-
- 12.00** To Utter Truths and Promise Bliss
– Katherine Angel
-
- 12.40** Undesirable Connections
– Susie Scott and Liz McDonnell
-
- 13.20** Lunch
-
- 14.30** What Makes the History of Sex Desirable?
– Kate Fisher
-
- 15.10** Sexual Addiction: Real or Myth?
– Frederick Toates
-
- 15.50** Coffee break
-
- 16.15** Roundtable discussion
-
- 16.50** Closing remarks
-
- 17.00** Drinks reception
-
- 18.00** Wellcome Collection closes

SATURDAY 18 JULY, 10.30-17.00

10.30 Opening remarks – Timandra Harkness (chair)

Timandra Harkness has written for newspapers and magazines including the *Daily Telegraph*, *Sunday Times*, *Wired*, and *BBC Focus*, and is now writing a book on Big Data for Bloomsbury Sigma. Her work on BBC Radio 4 includes social psychology series *The Human Zoo*, and a forthcoming documentary series, *FutureProofing*. Timandra writes and performs comedy on science and engineering themes: Her current solo show, *BrainSex*, is about brain science and gender.

10.45 The Institute of Sexology – Kate Forde

A brief illustrated introduction to *The Institute of Sexology* exhibition.

Kate Forde is the Senior Curator of Temporary Exhibitions at Wellcome Collection. She is the co-curator of *The Institute of Sexology* and has previously worked on exhibitions about the relationship between war and medicine, the history of anatomical waxworks, and dirt.

11.00 What Do We Mean by Sexual Desire and Why Does it Vary? – John Bancroft

The amount of sexual desire people experience varies. This in part reflects our propensity for sexual inhibition and also the sometimes paradoxical relationship between sexual desire and mood, depression and anxiety. In this presentation, John Bancroft will address some of the difficulties we have in understanding sexual desire and how it compares in women and men.

John Bancroft was born in 1936 and qualified in medicine in 1960. He trained as a psychiatrist and became interested in research on sexual behaviour and its problems. After working for the Medical Research Council's Reproductive Biology Unit in Edinburgh for 19 years, he spent the last nine years of his career as Director of the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction in the USA. Retired since 2004, John is now living back in the UK, writing books.

11.40 Coffee break, Williams Lounge, Level -1

12.00 To Utter Truths and Promise Bliss: How We Talk About Sexual Desire in Women – Katherine Angel

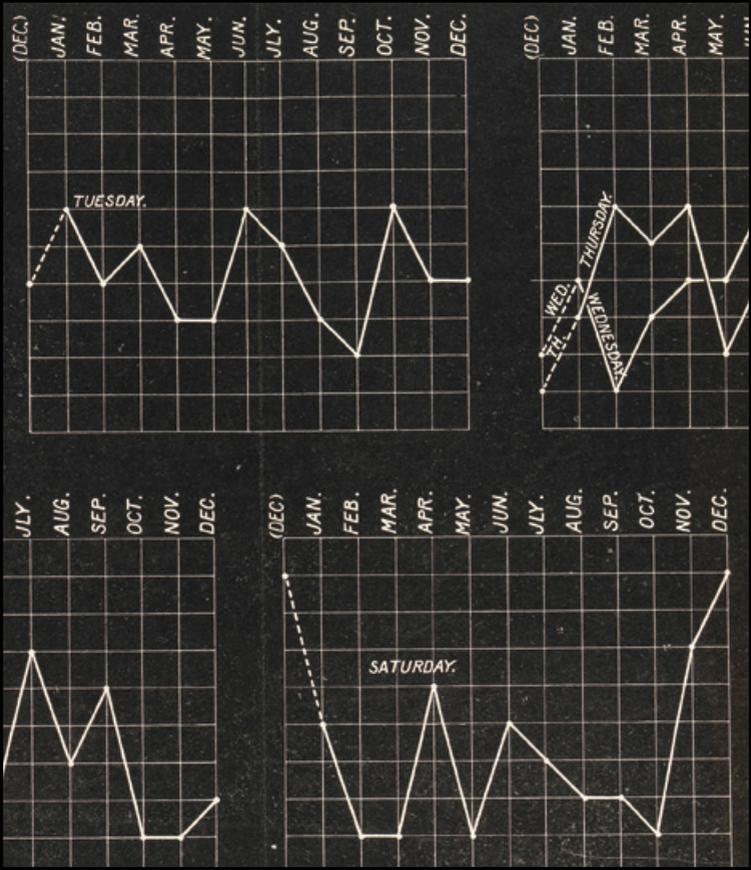
In this reading from her latest book, Katherine Angel will explore the language we use to talk about desire in women, looking at current debates within sex research about how women's sexuality differs from men's, and reflect on the cultural implications of this language.

Katherine Angel is a writer and academic, and author of *Unmastered: A Book On Desire, Most Difficult To Tell*. She holds a fellowship at the Centre for the History of Emotions at Queen Mary, University of London, and has a PhD from the History and Philosophy of Science Department at Cambridge University. Her research and writings are published in a range of journals and magazines. She is currently writing a book on subjecthood and post-feminism.





Picture from *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*, 1888.
Wellcome Library, London



Detail from chart of 'Joint Weekly Rhythm of Male Sexual Period' from *Studies in the Psychology of Sex, Vol. 1.* by Havelock Ellis 1910.

12.40 Undesirable Connections: Intimacy and Closeness in Asexual Lives – Susie Scott and Liz McDonnell

Cultural and social attitudes often associate intimate relationships with sex. Asexual people (who experience little or no sexual desire or attraction) are then stereotypically viewed as lonely and misanthropic, as if not wanting sex precludes any form of deep, close connection. Challenging this, we present interview and diary data from 50 asexual people, who explained how different forms of intimacy, specialness and closeness were expressed in all of their social relationships, from friendships to family and romantic partners.

Susie Scott is a Reader in Sociology at the University of Sussex, with research interests in Goffman and Symbolic Interactionist theory, shyness, self-identity, and everyday life. She is the author of *Shyness and Society*, *Making Sense of Everyday Life*, *Total Institutions and Reinvented Identities*, and, most recently, *Negotiating Identity*.

Liz McDonnell is a Research Associate and lecturer at Sussex University. She has worked as a qualitative researcher in areas including sexuality, family and parenting, and as a Research Fellow on the Asexual Lives: Everyday Experiences, Relationships and Stories of Becoming project. Her PhD explored fertility decision-making using narrative research methods. on Asexual Lives: Everyday Experiences, Relationships and Stories of Becoming. Her PhD explored fertility decision-making using narrative research methods.

13.20 Lunch, Williams Lounge, Level -1

Photograph of a heterosexual couple from a series entitled "Wedding Night". *Unknown photographer*

14.30 What Makes the History of Sex Desirable? – Kate Fisher

What can prehistoric societies tell us about our sexual nature? What does ancient Greece tell us about homosexuality? Are we more liberated than the Victorians? In asking important questions about sex we often turn to the past. This talk explores the history of our fascination with the variety of sexual cultures across the world in past times, and examines how this looking back has shaped and continues to shape our understanding of who we are and who we might be.

Kate Fisher is professor of social and cultural history at the University of Exeter. She is author of *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage* (2006), *Sex before the Sexual Revolution* (with Simon Szreter, 2010), and *Sex, Knowledge and Receptions of the Past* (with Rebecca Langlands, forthcoming, 2015). She holds a Wellcome Trust Award on the history of sexual science, and runs (with Rebecca Langlands) the Sex and History project which has been working since 2008 with the museum, education and health sectors to develop innovative resources for promoting healthy sexual development among young people in a variety of settings.



**15.10 Sexual Addiction: Real or Myth?
– Frederick Toates**

Controversy over the existence of sexual addiction rages, with opponents of the notion suggesting that the analogy with drugs is false. Rather, it is the product of religious condemnation, combined with the possibility of making large sums of money from spurious treatments. Defenders of the notion suggest that many of the symptoms are shared with those of addiction to hard drugs. This presentation will attempt to take a balanced view, while defending the usefulness of the notion of addiction.

Frederick Toates, Emeritus Professor of Biological Psychology, has been associated with the Open University for 37 years. He obtained a Doctor of Philosophy in Experimental Psychology from the University of Sussex and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Science from City University, London. His research concerns motivation and has the aim of establishing the biological roots of behaviour. Apart from the UK, he has taught undergraduate psychology in France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Romania, Moldova and the USA.

15.50 Coffee break, Williams Lounge, Level -1

16.15 Roundtable discussion

16.50 Closing remarks

17.00 Drinks reception

18.00 Wellcome Collection closes

THE INSTITUTE OF SEXOLOGY

A lavishly illustrated hardback book accompanying *The Institute of Sexology* exhibition is available, featuring more than 300 works of art, erotica, film and photography, and rare documents.



This book is a candid exploration of the most publicly discussed of private acts – sex – and those who have devoted their lives to studying it. It includes new texts by writers including Shereen El Feki, Alyce Mahon and Christopher Turner, as well as interviews with artists Carolee Schneemann and Neil Bartlett and scientist Anne Johnson.

Available from the Wellcome Collection shop for a special exhibition price of £19.99 (RRP £24.99)



**We're here,
visit us soon!**

By train

-  Euston, St Pancras, King's Cross
-  Euston, Euston Square, Warren Street, King's Cross

By bus

10, 18, 24, 27, 29, 30, 59, 68, 73,
88, 91, 134, 168, 205, 253, 390.

Galleries are open 10.00–18.00
Tuesday–Saturday (Thursdays until 22.00)
and 11.00–18.00 on Sunday. Galleries are
closed on Monday.

Stay later every Thursday and on the first
Friday of every month (except for August
and January). We're open until 22.00 so you
can enjoy the exhibitions, Reading Room,
restaurant and café out of hours.

See wellcomecollection.org/visitus
for full details, including Library
opening times and public holidays.

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