

THE HISTORY
OF
SEX



IN A FEW SHORT MINUTES

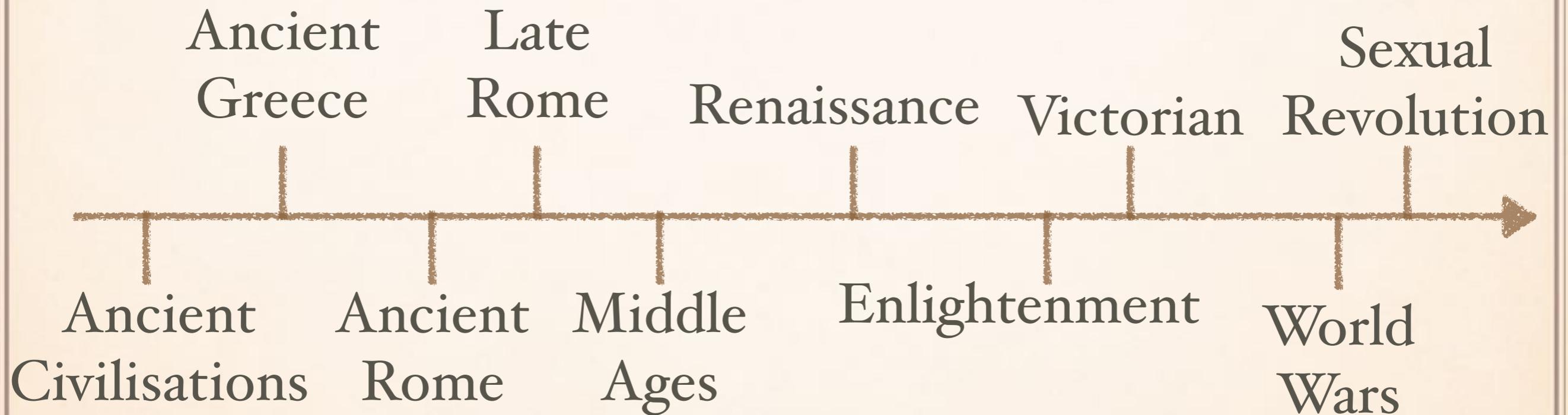
THE FIRST
AWARENESS
OF SEXUAL
MALAISE



THIS IS WHY A MAN LEAVES HIS
FATHER AND MOTHER AND BONDS
WITH HIS WIFE, AND THEY BECOME
ONE FLESH. BOTH THE MAN AND
HIS WIFE WERE NAKED, YET FELT
NO SHAME. GEN 2.24-25

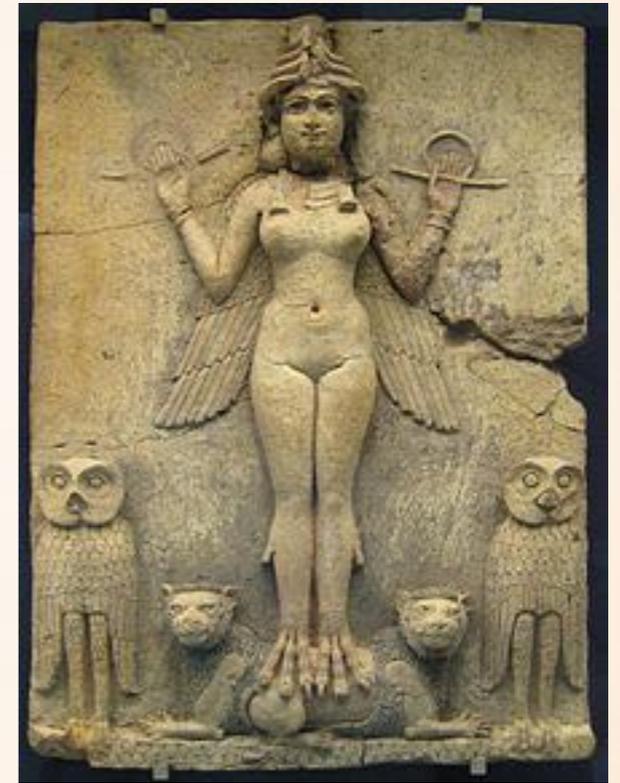


A TIME LINE



ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS

- ❖ Assyria – Ritual of Ishtar
- ❖ Homosexuality
- ❖ Reputation of decadence



HEBREW NATION

- ❖ Homosexuality, Bestiality, Prostitution known but condemned
- ❖ Adultery unlawful, but concubines were common
- ❖ Strictures of uncleanness associated with emissions

ANCIENT GREECE

- ❖ Zeus and other gods were promiscuous
- ❖ “Orgy” greek origin
- ❖ Prostitution was normal
- ❖ Pederasty – commonplace



ANCIENT ROME

- ❖ Very similar to Greek culture – social status plays an important role
- ❖ Prostitution - highly developed
- ❖ Male domination / virginity and education desired in women
- ❖ Pederasty – common male/female young slaves

LATE ROME

- ❖ Decline of privileged classes and slavery
- ❖ Rise of Christianity as state religion
- ❖ rise of Manichaeism – Augustine ~ stoic views :
desire is, at best, dangerous
- ❖ Indian Kama Sutra dated roughly to this period

MIDDLE AGES

- ❖ Strong influence of Catholic church, Thomas Aquinas: “Natural law”
- ❖ Decline of Rome’s homosexuality
- ❖ Sexuality was not a taboo topic and prostitution was common
- ❖ Sexual “Economy” : legitimate children fare better

RENAISSANCE



- ❖ Decline of asceticism, rise of art and sensuality
- ❖ Modest improvement in women's role
- ❖ Protestantism – breaks with celibacy and purely procreation tradition

ENLIGHTENMENT

- ❖ Limited literature
- ❖ Authors preoccupied with philosophical topics and accepted status quo
- ❖ Rise of humanism, weakening of divine authority replaced by rationality as a moral compass

VICTORIAN

- ❖ Period with a reputation of having a strong moral compass
- ❖ Greater prosperity and leisure
- ❖ Scientific and sociological interest in sexuality, Freud among others

WORLD WARS

- ❖ Early 20th century, woman's liberation, women's suffrage 1917-1971
- ❖ Perceived as a period of great transition, fashion, culture, shedding of religious and cultural conventions
- ❖ Wartime excesses break down additional boundaries

THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

- ❖ Effective Contraception
- ❖ Treatment for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)
- ❖ Political upheaval, rebellion against institutions
- ❖ Feminism and Identity Debates

“Sexual intercourse began

In nineteen sixty-three

(which was rather late for me) -

Between the end of the Chatterley ban

And the Beatles' first LP.”

-Philip Larkin

INVARIANTS

- ❖ Sexual Desire and Fascination
- ❖ “Deviant” behaviours
- ❖ Hypocrisy and Infidelity
- ❖ Pornography and Prostitution

THINGS THAT HAVE CHANGED

- ❖ Specific laws regarding sexual behaviours
- ❖ Understanding of biology, arousal and the chemistry of attraction
- ❖ Rollercoaster of public or private sexuality

SEXUAL IDENTITY WARS

- ❖ 18th century – clear physiological distinctions are noted, woman ≠ under-developed man.
- ❖ 1960s - questions of sexual identity arise : fraught topic => “gender” identity, freed from physical specifics. 21st century “free” to chose gender
- ❖ Notion that our gender identity is largely cultural
- ❖ Is homosexuality a trait or a behaviour?

SEXUAL ETHICS



WHY DO WE BELIEVE AND ACT THE WAY WE DO?

SEXUAL ETHICAL MODELS

- ❖ Procreative model – Sex is acceptable and desirable for procreation
- ❖ Natural model – Anything “natural” is acceptable
- ❖ Romantic model – If we are in love it’s all good
- ❖ Realist model - Sex is. No moral position required
- ❖ Pleasure paradigm – If it procures pleasure it’s ok

SEXUAL SUB-MODELS

- ❖ *Metaphysical paradigm – Sex is something more profound than procreation or physical action, it is human bonding “two becoming one flesh”*
- ❖ *Communications model – Sex is component of intimate communication, a language of touch and tenderness, sorrow and deep unspoken emotions*

INFORMED BY THE STATE

- ❖ Why does the state dictate our morality? In practice: “If it’s legal its ok”
- ❖ Historical laws about sexuality
- ❖ Issues of public health: STDs, pregnancy
- ❖ Same sex marriage, legal agreements without marriage

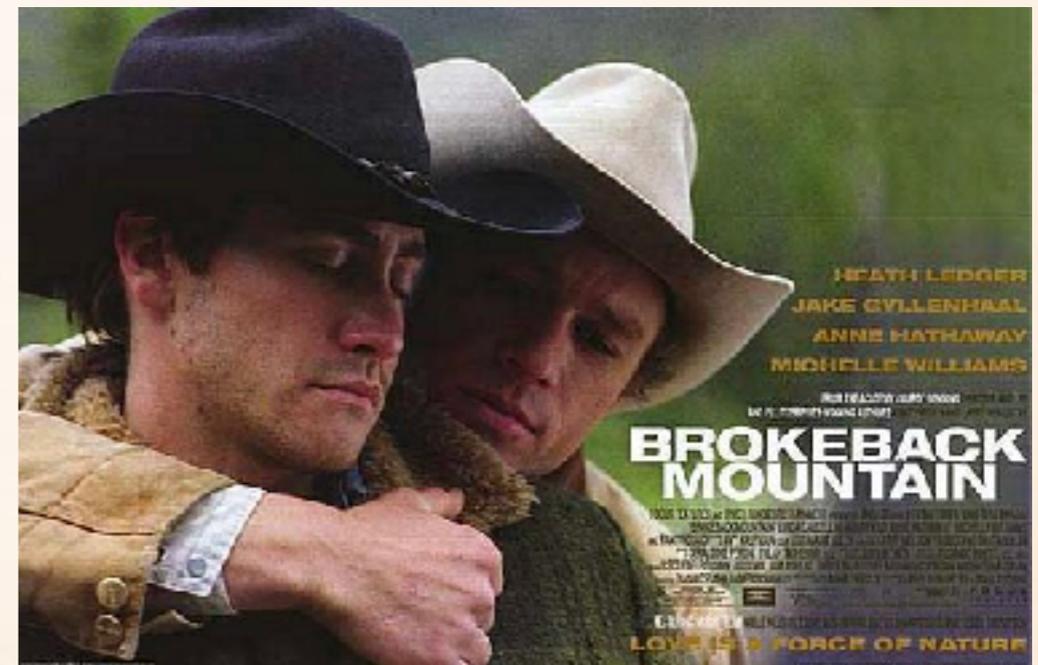
INFORMED BY SOCIETY

- ❖ We learn from interactions with our peers what is normative, what is taboo
- ❖ We behave in certain ways to belong
- ❖ Fashion dictates what is meant by “modesty”

INFORMED BY POP-CULTURE



The Romantic Model



The Pleasure Paradigm

MISINFORMED

"The adults," she says, "have allowed all the protective barriers to go down. We have done away with chaperons, supervision, rules, close family relations, and privacy from the intrusion of the communications media. We have left our children totally vulnerable to the onslaughts of the commercial exploitation of sex, tabloid reporting of sordid sexual occurrences, wholly unsupervised after-school occupations. To fill the void left by the old safeguards, youngsters must be given a bulwark of factual knowledge and orientation."

Dr Mary Calderon, 1967

INFORMED BY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

- ❖ Counter cultural community of shared beliefs and practices
- ❖ Not necessarily rational or comprehensible from the world's viewpoint
- ❖ Must be proven in the community's lifestyle to be credible