

A woman with curly red hair is the central figure. She wears a headband made of several large, vibrant red roses. Her makeup is dramatic, with dark eyeshadow and red lipstick. She is positioned in a lush, green field of tall grass and clover. Her right hand rests against her chin, and her left arm is bent with the hand near her head. The lighting is soft, creating a romantic and ethereal atmosphere.

Seunye

ISSUE V

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The most beautiful servant and our most dangerous master - the mind is everything, what you think you become. Issue V of Semple Magazine delves into the inner most workings of our being. Delight the senses and evoke your imagination in our pictorial fantasy world unearthed, 'The Hollow', and open your imagination and mind to subjects that will get you thinking.

Horace once said "rule your mind or it will rule you"

So rule.

Sophie

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YOGA'TTA HAVE FAITH

GET YOUR ASS-ANA ON THE MAT AND CHILL OUT

SOPHIE MAGUIRE

I t has been said by some (on more than one occasion) that I am not exactly the most laid back of people. And I would wholeheartedly agree with them. In fact I'm the very opposite.

I am an overthinker, someone who is easily irritated and has terrible trouble relieving my stress in a positive way. I'm prone to road rage, impromptu outbursts of anger over trivial circumstances (if it asks me to 'place the item in the bagging area' one more time I swear to God...), and I'm known to bite your head off if, heaven forbid, you should rub me up the wrong way when I'm in one of my moods. It's a running joke in my family, who have lived with my episodes for 25 years now, that I'm going to give myself a heart attack. Except that isn't really that funny at all considering that according to research at Monash University Au, ongoing stress could be as potent a risk factor for heart attacks as high blood pressure or high cholesterol. News of which I must say is doing nothing to alleviate my ever-rising stress levels.

So in a bid to live a little longer I have tried everything to calm myself down. I've tried talking about it, not talking about it, I've written it down and I've tried the time old favourite of removing yourself from the



Laura Ashman

situation and breathing deep, simple! But I'm sad to say all have been to no avail.

So it was when I was at my most frantic that I decided I would try my hand at something completely out of my comfort zone, in the hope that finally I could find some peace within myself. And for me that something was yoga. So I took a leap of faith - knowing nothing of the practice other than that I would be expected to contort my ridged body into poses I never even knew humanly possible - and I booked into a class.

I arrived a complete novice, to a dusty community centre that had carpet uglier than my grandmothers, pewter coloured wallpaper that curled up at the corners and an aroma that I can only liken to someone having left their gym bag in there for all eternity. It wasn't quite how I had envisioned my first yoga experience, but pushing myself to find the positive in the situation I resisted my urge to leg it.

And then out she came - our teacher. A women the wrong side of 40, wearing threadbare leggings that displayed a serious case of camel toe and who, dare I say it, looked more like she enjoyed take-out and nights in front of the TV over any form of



laura Ashman

physical activity. Needless to say I left after the first 'down dog' slightly lightheaded and with the stench of that place still lingering in my nostrils. I felt duped that I had paid £12 for the privilege. It was all I could do not to key her car on the way out.

A few DIY DVD's later, I was ready to

get back out there. So undeterred and determined to find a place to be at ease, I came across Yogarise Peckham. Run by locals Emma and Sean (and Misty the dog) this place is exactly what I had been looking for. Bright, airy and fun. No stuffy yoga experts peering down their noses at you. No charlatans wearing cheap lycra. Just

a community of people coming together over a common thought – that yoga makes you happy! A thought I now share after my class at Yogarise taught by Lolo.

During my class not only did I learn a lot and push myself harder than I knew I could (they know their stuff here) I laughed a lot too. But the most positive outcome of all was that I managed to do exactly what I was asked, to leave my troubles at the door and to my surprise I didn't pick them up on my way out. With each changing pose I could feel the tension melt away and roll off my shoulders, my breathing became steady and I felt energised. I was lighter - it was the release I had been so longing for. So if you, like me, need a little coaxing to become a nicer version of yourself then head down to Yogarise and prepare to get happy and consequently avoid any unnecessary run-ins with the law. It will be the best thing you ever do. I promise.



Laura Ashman

[Read interview with Emma of Yogarise](#)

FRANCK SORBIER

A CREATIVE MIND

SOPHIE MAGUIRE

Parisian designer Franck Sorbier reached Haute Couture status in 2005. His luxe prints, embroideries, deconstructed laces and hand printed fabrics blend surrealism and fantasy with refined, exciting craftsmanship. Semple sat down to interview the creative mind behind one of Paris' most exquisite fashion houses.

Would you agree that some of the most beautiful works of art, in fashion and even literature come from some of the most troubled minds?

Yes, definitely. The creation is directly linked to sensibility. Then if the sensibility is lively even in sadness or in joy, the creation is often stronger. For me, I have always tried to transform deep feelings into positivity even in difficult moments. But sometimes, when clothes 'leak out' too much, it is impossible to hide moods and feelings. A real creator is like a sponge; he feeds from what is happening around him.

Do you draw on your own experiences for inspiration when it comes to your collections?

Indeed, I need for all my collections to have a deep meaning rooted from my experiences. Collections are like a search, a quest. Life, in general, is a succession of choices which

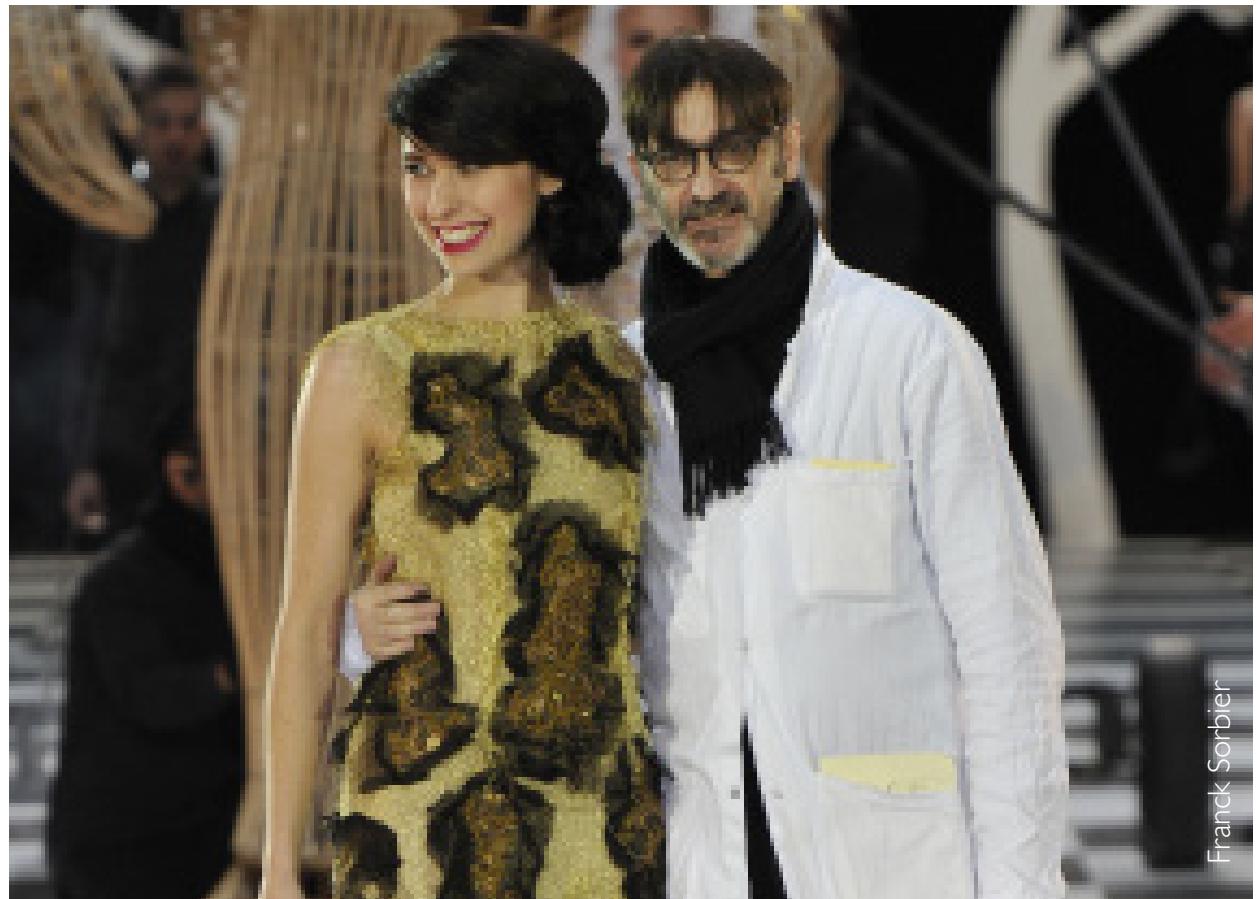
we make. A collection is a choice but some options are essential because they represent better than just imagining a wardrobe of clothes.

What is the thought process you go through with each collection, from the first idea to the final show?

As I am hyperactive, I always have collection themes in advance. Most of the time a story comes to me without me asking - even if it is not the right moment. It is a kind of impetus which boggles my mind. It has to be visceral. I need it. I love the period I call, 'la gamberge' ('dreaming up'). This is the fantasised period. But I am a fundamentalist so I materialise with pictures, photography, and techniques. I make boards, which help me to concentrate my attention and eliminate that which has no place to be. From the first thought to the last one; the runway, the emotion is still intact and pure; it is how we can hold on.

What was the wicker man symbolic of in this collection? The models all behaved very differently towards this figure throughout the show. Some seem bound to him with a great sense of admiration while others appeared ambivalent.

The main theme of the collection was the



journey, but I wanted a more special hook especially as the destinations were fanciful, at least their names. The vocabulary is important for me; words are the key to everything. Words enable us to unlock the part of our unconsciousness, which sometimes goes away. I chose Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, as a common

thread, hence the presence of the wicker giant. In the olden times, the mannequins of the dressmaker were made of wicker. There is a bit of fashion history in this. The symbol is for sure the relativity of everything. The models often idolised in the fashion world had, in the runway, a more realistic dimension even more, human. Above all it





Franck Sorbier

is important to stay humble, and happy to be at the disposal of beauty.

Is it important for you to take the audience on a journey through your clothes and get them to think about your meaning a little more?

I hope the audience appreciate the creations, the know-how, the techniques and also the defended idea and sometimes that we have to read between the lines.

How different is the process of designing and realising a ready to wear collection compared to Haute Couture?

There is an extraordinary freedom in Haute Couture, because the clothes shown are just propositions. Everything is possible, everything has to be re-invented with the client, and otherwise marketing rules govern ready-to-wear. But the fundamental difference is that a couturier creates for a woman he knows, the designer creates clothes for the image of a woman, this is completely different.

What effect does music coupled with design have? We noticed a strong soundtrack at your show.

When I imagine a collection, the music is one of my first and principal preoccupations because music brings a message in more universal manner than the clothes do. It is an emotion, a pure sensation. I have the chance to work with a sound designer (Enafaa for MoreSalt) who sticks to stories. I trust him more and more, day after day, collection after collection. Music is essential, it brings to one of your first questions, music does simply make you live.

How much do you value your mind? How precious is it to you?

I am not sure I am at my maximal. I accept, with happiness, what nature gave me, I thank the angels and I command myself to God to evolve.

Tell us something we wouldn't know about you?

I love dancing!



Franck Sorbier

THE POWER OF COLOUR

SOPHIE SEYMOUR



Step on any commuter train during rush hour and you're guaranteed to be surrounded by hoards of workers dressed almost entirely in an uninspiring colour scheme revolving around black, navy, grey and white. Typically, we associate these muted colours with business, professionalism and formality, but where do these unwritten rules come from? The notion of colour association is long standing, being evidently ingrained within the minds of the world's population - the associations are fairly well known, but the causes of this phenomenon less so. The fashion industry habitually produces repeat colour trends based upon seasonal changes, such as the reliable immersion of pastel hues for springtime and darker tones come autumn, with little change or even explanation. It's hard to ascertain whether the rules and expectations regarding certain colours serve any specific purpose or if these well established parameters are influential simply because we are merely creatures of habit who are resistant to change.

Colour associations undeniably begin at a young age. With baby girls commonly surrounded by light pinks, and boys with soft blues, it would be hard for an individual to grow up without relating certain hues to each gender. Infants are consistently provided with light, cheerful colours for their bedrooms,



Raspberry Rouge

playrooms, toys and clothes so it is no wonder that pale yellows, light greens and similar shades are often found to be soothing and linked to happiness. Growing up, we continue to develop more associations. These anchors can instantly trigger memories of certain people, places, tastes, smells, feelings and events, thus any one pigment can evoke

a broad range of emotional responses. The colour red, for example, is often tied to anger and danger, yet is also synonymous with love and passion. Similarly, black can be viewed as a hue of luxury and elegance, just as it can be linked with fear and secrecy. Interestingly, the connections with certain tones differ depending on geographic locations, cultures,

and religions due to varying upbringings and differences in social norms and expectations that come from certain heritages.

“The fashion industry habitually produces repeat colour trends based upon seasonal changes, such as the reliable immersion of pastel hues for springtime and darker tones come autumn, with little change or even explanation.”

Some of the most valuable brands in the world, such as Apple, Microsoft, Coca-Cola, IBM, Google and McDonald's, focus a great deal of their energy on ensuring that certain colours, images and products are instantly recognisable as their own. Several brand images are so powerfully reinforced that they no longer require wording; a key example being the inimitable Nike 'swoosh'. Research at the University of Amsterdam revealed how children begin to recognise that a logo stands for a particular set of products between the ages of three and five. By seven to eight years of age, children consistently recall logos



accurately – the company identity is deeply embedded within the child's memory, proving the success of their branding.

Alongside repetition, colour plays a significant part in encouraging consumers to buy into a brand. Purple is frequently associated with luxury and royalty, so is a popular choice for many companies, just as green is selected for its links to wealth and success. Despite the resources available to dominant brands, errors are still sometimes made. Apple were recently shocked by the statistics for the release of the iPhone 5C, their first model available in a variety of colours. Whilst the pink and blue phones sold quickly, the yellow option has remained surprisingly unpopular, with experts suggesting negative associations to the colour were to blame. Yellow can be linked to undesirable traits such as cowardice and weakness, particularly for those who remember the timid lion in the classic childhood tale 'The Wizard of Oz'.

From a scientific perspective, colours are simply different waves of light reflecting off any given object and are converted into electrical impulses within the retina of the eye. These impulses then travel to the hypothalamus section of the brain and our reactions are processed. Various colour wavelengths reach the eye differently, with shorter wavelengths

being found to have a stronger physical affect on the person seeing them.

"By seven to eight years of age, children consistently recall logos accurately – the company identity is deeply embedded within the child's memory, proving the success of their branding."

Similarly, colours have been proven to have different energies, with even the blind being able to sense the differences in shades despite their lack of sight. Interestingly, our responses to looking at any one colour vary depending on other shades surrounding it – we don't simply respond to one colour at a time, but any number of combinations visible to us. For example, a grey sky in summertime against soft pastel colours is most likely to be far more appealing than grey seen against harsh dark clouds that threaten bad weather. Perhaps this explains the return of soft, light shades such as powder blue and baby pink year after year for the Spring/Summer fashion cycle. If our surroundings are to play a large part in our perceptions of colour then perhaps wearing mint green and lilac does make more sense





Raspberry Rouge



Raspberry Rouge



Raspberry Rouge

in springtime when our environment is more at harmony with these delicate sorbet shades, however it is interesting to see what happens when our colour norms are discarded.

"Post-recession consumers are more aware of their spending, and the notion of purchasing investment pieces has not faded as the financial climate has improved. By repeating trends through several seasons, brands can offer items that remain fashionable over a longer length of time."

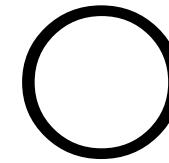
The Autumn/Winter 2014-2015 catwalks featured typical trends for the season, such as the use of velvet at Vivienne Westwood and Nina Ricci, or the inclusion of essential weatherproof garments at Miu Miu and Balenciaga. What really stood out was the continuation of the sugar sweet pastel trend from the Spring/Summer shows. There were powder blues at Moschino, pistachio greens at Gucci, and candy pinks at Chanel. The designers at Mulberry, PPQ, Phillip Lim, Betsey

Johnson, Mary Katrantzou and Meadham Kirchoff also used confectionary colours to invigorate their collections. Post-recession consumers are more aware of their spending, and the notion of purchasing investment pieces has not faded as the financial climate has improved. By repeating trends through several seasons, brands can offer items that remain fashionable over a longer length of time than the retail industry has grown used to. Equally, those with an interest in style can break away from the monotonous expectations with regards to colour in relation to the season and can use this as a way to both stand out and be more creative with their wardrobe. In turn this change could also begin to affect other restrictive dress norms; though it seems unlikely that you will ever spot many professionals en route to the office in jewel shaded suits or brides straying far from white gowns on their big day. Perhaps if the concept of being more experimental with colour trickles down from high fashion luxury brands then we might be so lucky as to see some eye-catching flashes of colour break through to our local high streets.

A UNIVERSE OF CREATIVITY

HOW HEALING IS THE HAMSA?

MARNI BANKS



One of Semple's most loved symbols is the palm-shaped amulet known as the hamsa hand. Popular throughout the Middle

East and North Africa, the hamsa hand has become a global symbol of protection, blessings, power, and strength. The open palm is used by many for a range of different reasons, but for Tom Hardless, it is a sign of conscious creativity, unity and life, giving birth to his own incredible fashion line, iamVibes. For this issue of Semple Magazine, there was a very definite reason as to why we approached Mr Hardless again, and I can assure you, if you don't finish this feature feeling inspired to change, then that's because his words probably captured your imagination from the get go and you're already busy making it happen.

Tom is very grounded by his passion and connection with the mind, he is a knower and a doer of all things creative, inspirational and holistic and has a very firm understanding of what the mind means to him and the mental and physical powers of this entity. "The mind is the metaphysical and the body is the physical manifestation of the mind. How you feel within your mind is being played out in how you physically appear and act."

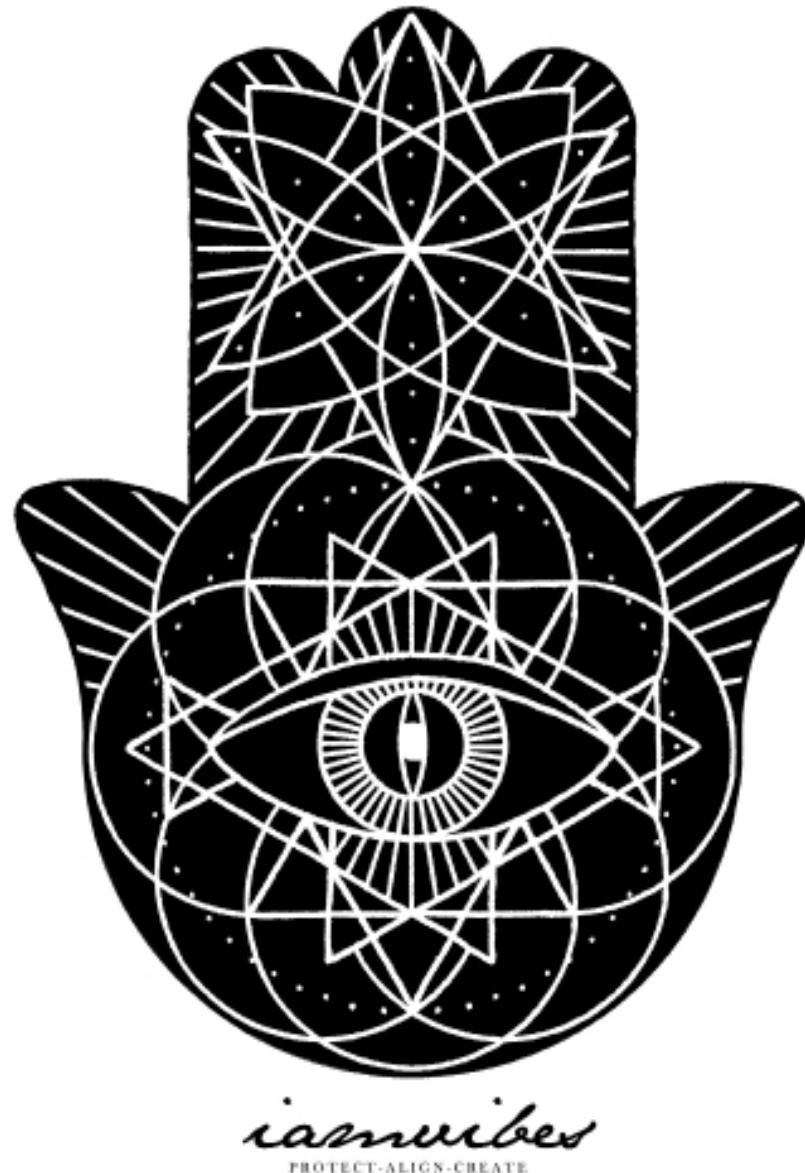
Our state of mind can often be threatened by our day to day endurance, causing stress,

anxiety and fear which taints a calm and healthy outlook; a problem effecting people of all ages and genders in today's world. We asked Tom how he seeks to restore a neutral balance.

“The open palm is used by many for a range of different reasons, but for Tom Hardless, it is a sign of conscious creativity, unity and life, giving birth to his own incredible fashion line, iamVibes.”

“The trick is to be conscious of the stress you are creating and allowing into your life in the first place. Peace of mind should not be one part of the day it should be the whole day. You have to find what serves you best as a peaceful human and take action, be brave and make those changes and become the peaceful mind you want to be. ‘Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass, it is about learning to dance in the rain.’”

When interviewing Tom, I wanted to unearth the meaning behind a brand that has become a global medium by bringing together thousands of people by the means of an iconic symbol. And in all honesty, I didn't anticipate



Tom's answer to be so poignant, but I think this only emphasises the importance of the brands mission and efforts.

"Some of the beautiful souls I have friendships with have previously been abused as young women and (through them) I have learnt of the power of evil but also the power and healing potential I have as a human to help these traumas be at ease. My friends, courage and determination to find inner peace really inspired me to believe that anything is possible and there is a light worth sharing with the world."

"The mind is the gateway to true self and a universe of creativity. When mind and heart are aligned we can find a inner peace which can resonate and manifest out into our own personal physical paradigm and 'reality'".

– Tom Hardless

Throughout history the power of healing and protection manifests itself best in the form of the Hamsa Hand and through the use of this

symbol on clothing iamVibes has been able to create a unity with others on a level in which we are understanding and honouring our differences as well as similarities as a global community.

"After donating some iamVibes t-shirts to an event my soon-to-be business partner was producing, he went on to become my consultant for 6 months. During this time I learnt that he too had similar experiences, as well as the same mission to spread a powerful light and represent the new global conscious generation. He became the catalyst that enabled me to be proud of what iamVibes really stood for."

Tom's motive to help and heal the traumatised and troubled not only translated into the iamVibes clothing brand, but into workshops which sought to help people find "a place of peace within the self where all is calm and you can tune into the purest of positive energies or thoughts." Leading a number of these projects in LA, Tom's transformational retreats help increase the consciousness and bring peace to those in need. Tom sites the workshops as "a physical experience to represent the brands purpose." The classes cover everything from Sound Healing Therapy, Reiki and Seichem Healing, to Meditation, Yoga and Tai Chi classes.

Relaxed, rational, patient, calm, and peaceful - it is Tom's practises of well being that allow him to be content, connected and aligned with the universe. "My independence and disciplined practises give me the strength to control my ego and balance my desires. My infinite courage and internal self confidence propel me forth through the mystery of life with an unfaltering trust in the universe. I acknowledge every moment as holy, and celebrate my ability to create my own beliefs."

"Through the use of this symbol on clothing iamVibes has been able to create a unity with others on a level in which we are understanding and honouring our differences as well as similarities as a global community."

It is this affirmation that has allowed iamVibes to become the powerful protector it is and Tom the centred being he continues to strive to become.

STUPID AND CONTAGIOUS THE DESTRUCTIVE CELEBRITY MIND

SOPHIE SEYMOUR

In 1987, frontman Kurt Cobain formed Nirvana with bassist Krist Novoselic. Drummer Dave Grohl joined three years later, by which time the band had been transformed into a household name. On April 5th 1994, after seven years of Nirvana and three successful albums, Kurt Cobain's life ended tragically. Despite murder conspiracies, the death was ruled as a suicide. Aged only 27, Cobain joined the infamous '27 Club' – a group of famous musicians whose lives ended prematurely at the same age, including Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and Jim Morrison. Cobain's death instantly solidified his status as one of music's most iconic stars, representing the desire for eternal youth: living fast, dying young, and forever being remembered as a beautiful talent. What remains perplexing is why so many talented stars have met such untimely ends. Was it simply impossible for Cobain to live a stable life in the spotlight, or is it reasonable to suspect foul play?

Nirvana appealed to outsiders not only in the Nineties, but in every decade since. Despite being released in 1991, bestselling album 'Nevermind' is still current today and over 30 million copies have been bought. However, it is hard to determine if future records would have proved so popular had Kurt Cobain lived. The grunge era was undeniably coming to an end and as Cobain famously wrote

in his suicide note, "It's better to burn out, than to fade away." Though the death of the Nirvana singer was undoubtedly a waste of a gifted young life, his tragic demise forever made Cobain, and equally his music, iconic. Some hold the opinion that Nirvana had no option left but to 'sell out' and become more commercial, which went entirely against their ethos. By inadvertently becoming music's James Dean figure, Cobain ensured that everything he created held so much more meaning. Consequently, Nirvana will now be discovered and rediscovered by fans time and time again.

"Nirvana fans walk up to me every day and say thank you for the music. When I hear that, I think of Kurt Cobain."

– Krist Novoselic.

On April 4th of this year, just before the 20th anniversary of Cobain's death, the Seattle Police Department released 35 previously undeveloped photographs from the crime scene. The images reveal that Cobain was found wearing a medical wristband from a rehabilitation facility that he had just left – a glaring indicator that the musician was highly



likely to have been in a poor psychological state. Equally, images of drug paraphernalia reinforce police reports that Cobain was found with a lethal dose of heroin in his system. A chilling snap of a recently purchased box of shotgun shells, of which only the used bullet was missing, makes the notion of murder difficult to believe. Why would a killer have used two methods to end Cobain's life?

“Had the police initially revealed the deadly dose of heroin involved, it seems probably that conspiracy theories would have been less likely to emerge.”

Police officials repeatedly insist that there is no reason to doubt the suicide, partly because Cobain left a heartbreak note and had previously made attempts on his own life. The cause of death was ruled as a self inflicted shotgun wound to the head following the discovery of Cobain's body in a small cottage at the rear of his home by an electrician, three days after the incident. Had the police initially revealed the deadly dose of heroin involved, it seems probably that conspiracy theories would have been less likely to emerge. “Sometimes people believe what they read ...

Some of the disinformation from some of the books, that his death was a conspiracy. That's completely inaccurate. It's a suicide. This is a closed case," stated Detective Mike Ciesynski. The release of the photographs have resulted in a court case being opened against Seattle Police Department by investigate journalist Richard Lee, who hosted the television show 'Kurt Cobain Was Murdered.' The actions of such a key murder conspirator make suicide seem an even more rational ruling.

"Had Kurt Cobain lived he would now be 47, facing a drastically changed music industry and the further pressures of fame later in his career."

The 14th annual Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction took place on April 10th 2014. It was the first time that Nirvana had been eligible and they dominated the votes. Undoubtedly one of the most influential bands in American history, the remaining members of Nirvana performed with Lorde, St Vincent, Joan Jett and Kim Gordon in Cobain's place. Cobain left behind not only a legacy, but also his family, including wife Courtney Love and

their daughter, Frances Bean. His mother Wendy said: "I'm already crying because he'd be so proud. I miss him so much, he was such an angel." Had Kurt Cobain lived he would now be 47, facing a drastically changed music industry and the further pressures of fame later in his career. Regrettably it seems plausible that to a troubled mind, suicide was a viable and practical option.

Despite his well-deserved fame, Cobain found it hard to cope living in the public eye. His life had been something of a rags to riches story after his parents separated when he was nine, and a dysfunctional upbringing saw him shuffled between homes. Even when 'Nevermind' reached number one in the US charts, Cobain was living out of his car. In contrast, when he died two years later, he left behind a multimillion estate. In an interview in 1991, Cobain claimed that his ambition was "to at least sell enough records to be able to eat macaroni and cheese, so [he] didn't have to get a job." Krist Novoselic later confirmed that the unexpected success of Nirvana impacted negatively on Cobain, explaining: "We weren't the same old band. Kurt, he just kind of withdrew". Already suffering from an undiagnosed stomach condition and depression, Cobain's newly found wealth allowed his heroin addiction to grow, causing further damage to his physical and mental

health. The unlikely icon inevitably found it all too much to bare.

Though Seattle Police Department receive weekly requests to reopen the Cobain case, and a new conspiracy documentary 'Soaked in Bleach' is soon to be released, it seems unlikely that fans will ever know exactly what happened to one of music's best-loved stars. Though most evidence points towards suicide, it is perhaps most important to rule Cobain's death as a tragedy. But regardless of the cause, Kurt Cobain will forever be cemented within the history of music. Though the continued appreciation of Nirvana can partly be attributed to the unfortunate end of their frontman, his death has also raised awareness regarding the implications of fame. Kurt Cobain leaves behind an inimitable legacy, but sadly his tragic demise is still far too relevant today.

DON'T JUST DREAM IT

WHAT IF YOU COULD MAKE YOUR
DREAMS A REALITY?

JENNA JONES

How often have you said: 'follow your dreams' or 'all my dreams have come true' without really thinking about the literal meaning of the word and the complex process of actually 'dreaming'. In today's Western society the word dream is often used in a very flippant manner, and quite possibly never fully understood or taken seriously. Dreams have become fantastical, more often linked to fairytales and unreachable goals than as a genuine scientific process that can have an incredible affect on your waking life and mind.

"But what if it was possible for us to have more control over this seemingly insensible state of mind; to intentionally engage with our inner most thoughts and feelings on a whole new realistic level?"

According to Dream Expert and Author, Lauri Quinn Loewenberg, we dream because we think, and when we're dreaming we are thinking on a much deeper level. The process of dreaming starts when we enter the REM or Rapid Eye Movement sleep phase and the brain begins to work in an unassociated



Madeline Masarik

manner to when we are awake. Loewenberg explains: "Different parts of the brain become dormant while other parts become highly active. Because of this difference in brain function, our literal thoughts, our stream of words turn into images, symbols, emotions and metaphors ... our dreaming mind puts a microscope on our life and figures out what is wrong and what we can do to make it right. Essentially, our mind is trying to tell us how to improve upon our life."

But what if it was possible for us to have more control over this seemingly insensible state of mind; to intentionally engage with our inner most thoughts and feelings on a whole new realistic level? And amazingly enough dipping your toe into dream limbo actually exists. Step forth Charley Morley and the intriguing process of lucid dreaming - the art of becoming conscious within your own dreams, as part of your brain reactivates allowing you to experience the dream like state with self-reflective awareness. "Once you know that you are dreaming you gain access to the most powerful virtual reality generator in existence: your mind ... [allowing] you conscious access to [it's] deepest depths," says Morley.

Through this awareness we are opening our minds up to the prospect of incredible things.



Once understood, lucid dreaming has been known to aid problems including nightmares, insomnia and even significant physical illnesses, and according to Morley we are barely scratching the surface. "I believe that within a few years time we may be able to apply the healing potential of lucid dreaming to a much wider range of ailments and perhaps

help with the treatment of some of the most serious conditions."

This practice of controlled awareness is very different to the traditional dream like state, explains Morley because due to the activation of the prefrontal brain areas that accompany full lucidity we can begin to engage the

"wonderful potential of neuroplasticity", in which the human brain rewires itself in favour of a newly learnt or repeated action. "In our lucid dreams neural pathways can be strengthened and created in just the same way as they can while we are awake. So, lucid dreamers who consciously engage in certain activities within their dreams are creating and strengthening the neural pathways associated with those activities, which may then become habitually engaged in the waking state."

Like any ambiguous concept there is always an array of theories, and analysing the dream state is no exception. Loewenberg believes that we can programme ourselves to dream about what and whom we want, through the process of Dream Incubation. Used by many people as a method to solve current issues, or inspire creative ideas for a project, the process of dream incubation is actually quite a simple concept. The key, according to Loewenberg, "is to obsess about it all day long - [as] we tend to dream about what is on our mind the most - and then at [night] write down your request in a journal ... Then turn out the lights and as you drift off, think about your issue or fantasy and odds are your dream will address it!".

Living in Western society processes such as lucid dreaming and dream incubation are

rather alien concepts that we more often than not tend to associate with Eastern culture. But perhaps it's about time we started to open our minds to what else is out there and embrace these perhaps less traditional thought processes. Morley explains that the Western tradition of lucid dreaming is still in its infancy compared with the 1000 year plus head start that the lineage of Tibetan Dream Yoga has had. But far from questioning our potential to compete, he feels that "the combination of Western pragmatism and scientific scrutiny has allowed the Western dream researchers to create a series of techniques, some of which are just as effective as the Tibetan ones for inducing lucid dreams."

Of course I am aware that the word dream has a plethora of separate connotations, each as acceptable as the other but I can't help but wonder if a better understanding of the process in its original state, could in fact encourage us to bridge that gap and really acknowledge our dreams. To stop fearing the unknown and start controlling these thoughts and musings because who knows, perhaps one day we'll be able to turn those 'dreams' into reality.

Charlie Morley's new book *Dreams of Awakening* is out now, check his website www.charliemorley.com for more details.

Lauri Quinn Loewenberg is the founder of www.whatyourdreammeans.com and author of *Dream On It, Unlock Your Dreams Change Your Life.*

We thought we'd put expert and author Lauri Quinn Loewenberg to the test by analysing some of our very own dream experiences.

"I have a recurring night terror of being suffocated with a pillow in bed by a strange male figure. I am usually found walking around my bedroom or running out of my room during the night terror" - Sophie

I can't help but wonder if you have a sleep disorder, perhaps REM Behaviour Disorder. I would normally chalk this up to plain old sleep walking but since the accompanying 'dream' is frightening and somewhat violent it makes me think it could be REM Behaviour Disorder or something akin to it. In the dream state we are supposed to be paralysed in order to keep us from acting out our dreams. Once we enter

REM a chemical is released through the brain stem to our skeletal muscles that paralyses them. It is a built in safety mechanism. I would go to a sleep lab and have them check you. Once you are diagnosed, they are likely to prescribe a muscle relaxer to help keep you in bed.

“I have had a recurring dream since childhood of being trapped in a house. The house and rooms keep shifting so I can never find my way out. The house always looks different and sometimes I get chased. Once I escaped only to find that it was a trick and the outside shifted to become the house again.” - Samantha

Wow! Interesting dream. Since you've had this since childhood, it is either connected to an issue that began then and you have yet to resolve it within yourself, or it is connected to a recurring behaviour pattern and you still get the dream because you still exhibit the behaviour. Houses in dreams represent the

self so being trapped in the house suggests there is some issue, mindset or behaviour you haven't been able to free yourself from. All the shifting makes me think you may change your mind a lot or there is some sort of instability, and this may be why you can't seem to move on from or get out of this rut. For example, maybe it is a health or weight issue and rather than sticking to a programme you keep back tracking or talking yourself out of it. The aspect of being chased tells us that there is avoidance going on. I can't help but think of the old saying, 'The more things change the more they stay the same.' Is there someone around you who is unstable, who keeps telling you they are going to change but they never really do? The only way to make this dream stop is to make a stand about this, face the issue or person this is connected to and do something about it once and for all.

“I used to experience a recurring dream that my teeth were crumbling and falling. But once I mentioned this dream to a family member a few years ago it stopped and I've never experienced it since.” - Jenna

Teeth dreams usually have to do with communication in real life. Crumbly teeth tend to be connected to weak speech and not getting your point across well enough. Falling out teeth suggest you said something you wish you could take back and put back in your mouth. For this to be a recurring dream it means this has been a recurring behaviour of yours. After an argument or discussion do you often say to yourself, 'Gah! Why did I say that?' Or 'I should have said this!' It could also be connected to a recurring behaviour of not speaking up due to fear of how it would make you look. Regardless, the dream stopped so you must have overcome the behaviour.

A DIGITAL MINDFUL SWITCH OFF REBOOT

SAMANTHA VANDERSTEEN

The digital world is everywhere. It's at our place of work, it's at home, it's in our bag and it even follows us when we go shopping. Even for technophobes it is hard to escape the digital world now, but what impact is it really having on the way we function and the way our minds work? Is it time for us all to have a digital shutdown, power off and reboot?

This situation might seem familiar to you; last thing before bed you checked your emails. Then you got into bed and had a quick nose through Facebook. An email pings letting you know someone has sent you a pin so you go to check Pinterest and have a bit of a scroll through, it would be rude not to after all. After checking the news and finally Facebook again, it's time to go to sleep. Lights are out but now your mind is whirring and it's another 30 minutes before you are even close to sleep. Likelihood is when you wake up again the first thing you will reach for is your mobile and it will start all over again.

A recent survey by domain name specialists Siteopia found that two thirds of people would now admit to "needing" the internet to function. Out of the 2,000 people surveyed they found that on average the maximum time we go without checking social media or emails is 90 minutes. The figure initially

the Other

not any
books?

ALT

Family Books

Closing Down

Closing Down
Buy
anything now!



seems quite shocking but then when you think how integral social media and emails now are to most people's jobs it is actually quite unsurprising. What is more shocking is that one in ten believed they couldn't go ten minutes without checking their social media and 75% of people will have logged on before 9am.

It is important to recognise that no one is suggesting the digital world hasn't improved our lives; making it more convenient to shop, communicate and entertain ourselves anywhere and at any time of day. But it is strange to think that only 15 years ago how we interacted, shopped and amused ourselves was completely different. The downside to all this is that studies are now suggesting that people are angrier, more stressed and anxious than they have ever been with 75% of illnesses thought to be stress-related. Are the two connected?

There was a time when it was considered to be rude to be looking at your phone whilst talking to someone in person, now it is not only tolerated but it has become the norm. The brain's ability to focus both on our phone and hold a conversation is impressive but shouldn't we also give our brain time to concentrate on just one thing or even nothing at all. Ask yourself this question, when was

the last time you sat and did nothing? Literally nothing. Not checking Facebook or your emails or reading the news. You probably can't even remember. With so much going on throughout the day it's no wonder our brains can't just switch off at night.

"People are angrier, more stressed and anxious than they have ever been with 75% of illnesses thought to be stress related."

'Sort Your Brain Out' a new book by Dr Jack Lewis and Adrian Webster recognises that at present the real impact of the digital world on our minds is not backed up by hard data. However taking studies previously conducted into behaviour and how patterns learnt early on stick with us into adulthood, for instance eating habits, we can apply this to technology too, "once a person develops a reliance on technology, not to mention an expectation of regular messages and online updates, they can end up panicked by an interruption to the flow of communication. They may be thrown into a hissy fit when unable to get a connection or, worse still, fall into a spiral of depression when a whole day passes by without hearing the reassuring ping of a message arriving in their

inbox." Whether or not, when it arrives, the hard data goes to prove that the digital world does have a negative impact on our minds, the real truth is that digital is here to stay.

Companies, therapists and 'mindful' organisations have picked up on this and encourage techniques to combat the impact of the digital world. 'Mindfulness' is the buzzword of 2014 with websites, apps and conferences dedicated to it springing up everywhere. No one is suggesting throwing your digital devices in the river and going off to sit in a field and meditate but instead they urge you to be conscious of how you are spending your time online and taking the time to switch off completely at least once during the day.

We might be living in the digital age but with all the information that is now at our fingertips maybe we need to recognise when to switch off and give our minds time to catch up. After all we often have to wait for Facebook to load up so maybe every once in a while we should make Facebook wait for us.

THIN INTENTIONS

WARNING: Reflections in
your mirror may be distorted
by socially constructed
ideas of beauty.

SOPHIE MAGUIRE

In an age where we live out our lives online and blog our way through everything it has become so easy to share our thoughts. Online we can voice our opinions, our desires, and our fears and do it while remaining anonymous. We can bully and blame, leave hate messages and walk away without a second thought. There is no premise of tasting our words before we spit them out and the weight of our words can weigh heavy.

**“Stop calling each other
fat. Or skinny. Smart or
dumb and start calling
each other enough!”**

If there is one thing that worries me most it is the romanticising of mental illness and nowhere is this more evident than on the web. Log on to any blogging platform and you will be met with a plethora of images and words that depict mental illness. Slit wrists, jutting bones and fat shaming. It's all there, just a click away. Anorexia Nervosa in particular is a continuing theme and point of discussion online. Type in 'skinny' and you will encounter an onslaught of emaciated figures; gaunt and pale all sporting the tag #ThinSpiration. There are even blogs dedicated to the illness. 'Pro Ana' sites offer an outlet for a community who take to the internet to show support

for the life threatening illness that effects 1 in 20 teenage girls, with more than 1.6 million people in the UK suffering. The community has personified anorexia as a girl named Ana, a poisonous foe, but for them, she is a confidante and loyal friend.

When I embarked on this feature I had little to no knowledge about eating disorders, other than the shocking statistic that there are more deaths from eating disorders than from any other mental illness, and that it is estimated that 10% of all sufferers die as a result of their condition. I knew that Pro Ana sites existed; I recognised that the media favour the body beautiful and I'm personally aware how easy it is to fixate on ones appearance and weight. But what I didn't know was the dangers these sites present for the people who suffer from this debilitating and life threatening illness.

I decided my first point of call was to emerge myself in the 'Pro Ana' world and spent hours trawling blog after blog. All of which offered worrying tricks and tips for losing weight such as, "friends will only get in the way. Avoid them until you reach your goals". "Wear a rubber band around your wrist and snap it when you want to eat. Food = pain". Some sites even sell Pro Ana wristbands in red braid to help with this tip; they also serve as identification of fellow Ana's.



Visuals seem to be a massive draw on most of the sites I came across, all featuring the famous 'Thinspiration' tabs offering up galleries of the skinniest of models and celebrities, even breaking images down into photo albums entitled thigh gap, arms, clavicle and shoulder blades. Endless images of stick thin women left me feeling inadequate in a short space of time and it had me asking what are such images and portals doing to those already at risk?

"There's bullying and name-calling in Parliament, in playgrounds, at work, and pressure to have a perfect body shape is everywhere we look."

I also found access to such sites far too easy. There are no ages restrictions, no warning signs and it would seem that parents are uneducated when it comes to these sites. I asked a group of 100 mothers with daughters aged between 10 to 20-years about their knowledge of such sites. Shockingly only 20% of mothers I asked had heard of the term Pro Ana and yet many of their daughters had unsupervised access to media platforms; 100% of the daughters had their own laptops,

phones or tablets. And with girls reaching physical maturity at age eight or nine it is time we open our mind to the dangers online and the content our impressionable children can access.

There's bullying and name-calling in Parliament, in playgrounds, at work, and pressure to have a perfect body shape is everywhere we look. But sites like Pro Ana are far more dangerous than any scare mongering headlines. Because these sites pray on eating disorders' biggest weaknesses, they lure girls into a false sense of pretense – they act as a friend and they are stimulating the feeling of inadequacy and worthlessness. Feelings that are acutely common in anorexia and bulimia sufferers, with their toxic message and dangerous life threatening ideals.

We are a nation obsessed with food. We are bombarded hourly with images of tiny models, skinny screen and tabloid celebrities. Our obsession with gyms and exercise fueled by a constant barrage of advertising pressuring us to diet, to eat low-fat low-calorie, 'light' foods and follow 'healthy eating' regimes and we live life on the run, always eating 'on the go'. As if life itself isn't difficult enough with its archetype and expectations, we now have these fanatic sites taking hold and polluting the minds of sick

people and the majority of us are too blind to their existence. So I call for some change, to educate ourselves about the danger of these sites, which are created to tear us down. I call to stop this 'beautifully damaged' facade that so many see as the elusive flaw that should be obtained in order to give off an air of poetic angst. Stop searching for perfect people. Stop avoiding the imperfect. Accept that the two co-exist within everyone and that that is ok. Stop calling each other fat. Or skinny. Smart or dumb and start calling each other enough! Because the world is hard and mental illness is real for those who fight daily with demons that tear them apart. We don't need to glorify such pain. It is the most dishonest disservice to their struggle.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

“No great mind has ever existed
without a touch of madness.”

- Aristotle

JENNA JONES

Ur mind is a truly magical phenomena. Unequivocally strong yet painstakingly fragile, effortlessly simple but still intricately delicate. And perhaps, without our knowing, it is this flurry of oxymoronic terms that have lead us to continually question the fine line between genius and insanity. Steve Jobs, one of the greatest creative thinkers of our time, fully encouraged and nurtured the tincture of madness found in some of the brilliant minds that crossed his path.

“Here’s to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes...the ones who see things differently - they’re not fond of rules...you can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can’t do is ignore them because they change things... they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones that do.” - Steve Jobs

The list of great minds is small but their impression on the world has been anything but. It is the Newton’s, Einstein’s and Galileo’s that have, like Jobs said, ‘changed the world’. Their exhaustive minds continually push the boundaries and challenge what is already

known. They question what is deemed fact and steadfastly refuse to settle for anything less than what their minds demand of them.

"Their exhaustive minds continually push the boundaries and challenge what is already known. They question what is deemed fact and steadfastly refuse to settle for anything less than what their minds demand of them."

So if this is the case, which it seems to be, why are the connotations of genius and insanity so vastly apposed? If the lines are so blurred and thus hard to define how can we shower praise on a so called 'genius' yet evade someone that is deemed 'insane'? Could socio economic factors such as class, wealth, and education have a damning effect on the fate of a creative mind?

Dr Paul McLaren, General Adult Psychiatrist and Medical Director at the Priory Hospital Hayes Grove, believes that this could be the case, as there has in fact been concern about



apparent higher rates of psychosis in certain ethnic minorities in this country, and whether these higher rates reflect the "illness process or a societal bias". Dr McLaren explains that being educated to a higher level could also determine diagnosis, as those people may be more articulate and better able to conceal changes in mood or thinking from others. "If you have more money and resources then you have more freedom and opportunities to harness your illness in ways that society may regard as interesting."

"More than ever we need to champion the acceptance of minorities in our society and dispel the stigma that has become attached to mental health."

But Dr McLaren is quick to add that some illnesses like the mania of bipolar disorder or schizophrenia can produce such "marked disturbances" in thinking and behaviour that they will be perceived as abnormal by most people. "For most sufferers untreated mental illness holds them back. Most people with severe mental illness are struggling to find or to stay in employment when they get ill. There

aren't people going around hospitals looking for people with mental illness with creative potential."

Glenn Wilson, Visiting Professor of Psychology at Gresham College in London also supports the notion to a certain degree. He explains that "sometimes it is a matter of chance or social milieu that determines whether an individual is deemed brilliant or crazy ... in other times and places Picasso and Einstein might have been committed to an insane asylum rather than revered for their original thinking."

At the Priory creativity in patients is encouraged wholeheartedly, with a wide range of therapeutic outlets including arts, drama and music, to stimulate emotional expression and improve self reflection. "Most mental illness, while distressing and disabling, is treatable. People get better and when they do so they can come to see life differently. Their values and what they see as important may change. They may come to understand themselves better and identify creative potential previously unrecognised."

More than ever we need to champion the acceptance of minorities in our society and dispel the stigma that has become attached to mental health. "It is important to talk about

mental illness and help people understand it better," says Dr McLaren. "Most people that we treat at the Priory are productive, working, and often functioning at a high level, who for a period in their lives struggle with their mental health. Most conditions that we see are treatable and people will get back to their pre-illness functioning. People are more likely to be able to tap into their creative potential effectively when they are well."

Oscar Wilde once said: "The public is wonderfully tolerant. It forgives everything except genius" and sadly enough such a poignant statement, penned hundreds of years ago, still rings true to this day. As a society we can be grossly narrow-minded when it comes to the unknown, settling for mediocrity in fear of embracing attitudes that we deem to be too profound or 'out there'. Professionals like Dr McLaren hope that positive publicity such as highlighting the fine line between genius and insanity will help to "dispel the stigma attached to mental illness," and encourage people to listen to others and try to understand them better before casting a stereotypical judgement.

I'll part with this: imagine if the thoughts of the next great creative genius are misunderstood, trapped within the bias confinements of society's ignorant assumptions. What then?..

SLEEPLESS MIND

DIARY OF AN INSOMNIAC

SOPHIE MAGUIRE

The insomnia is torture - it's unrelenting as I lay impatiently waiting in anticipation for sleep to come. My feet twitch restlessly under blankets that feel irritable against my ice-cold skin. A dull ache looms in my temples, and my mind wanders in a desperate search to think of nothing. The night's silence rings loudly in my ears, mocking me as my mind refuses to sleep.

Nightly I battle with the jeering clock; it is an endless reminder of the ever-nearing morning that seems so far from my grasp and it taunts me. With each echoing 'tick tock' 'tick tock' my breathing becomes tense and my eyes burn as I force myself to focus.

7am is bound to come, it always does, gesturing a new day, bringing with it all that I crave - a quiet and restful lightness that will flood my weary head; the nothingness I have been longing for. As the hands of the clock make their last round, the birds begin to sing their gentle song and as the welcomed rousing sun caresses the corners of my drapes casting dappled shadows about my room, my eyes fall heavy. My body is fatigued and as the world begins to wake, I finally fall into the cloudless slumber I thought would never come.



GIRLS ON FILM

LETS TALK ABOUT SEX

SOPHIE MAGUIRE

I have always had a strong opinion about prostitution in Amsterdam's Red Light District. The thought of those women, some of them only girls, parading themselves for the pleasure of men, has always saddened me. The fact that the place is now a tourist attraction angers me to no end. Those who believe that women are there by choice, as some embodiment of sexual freedom and expression must be naive to the fact that prostitution is never a childhood dream and although Amsterdam's prostitution industry is highly regulated, unlike other parts of the world, none of these women 'choose' this sordid occupation. By servicing such 'attractions' we are contributing to an industry that pry on troubled and distressed women with limited choice. That object of desire is someone's daughter; sister; mother and they didn't have a choice. It is a means to an end, which in far too many cases sadly leads to their demise; female prostitution is embedded in a context of felonious activity, illicit drugs, and violence and is associated with premature mortality.

Prostitution in that sense is easy for me to contest; yet when it comes to pornography I have always been ambivalent. Like most people I have watched porn before in adolescent curiosity but have never stopped to think of the consequences. My knowledge

of porn isn't vast and I cannot say it does much for me and my naivety to the world of porn means that I am not offended by it. That was until I listened to a TedX talk by Ran Gavrieli, a scholar of gender studies at Tel Aviv University. He works with youth and adults across Israel in sex and gender studies and works to promote positive body image in a society flooded with sexual imagery filled with negative connotations.

Listening to Gavrieli talk of why he stopped watching porn had me thinking, that if we now live in a world where hardcore pornography is readily available to us 24 seven then this must be having a detrimental effect. So I set about educating myself on a topic that now dominates a third of the internet - sex, or more precisely pornography.

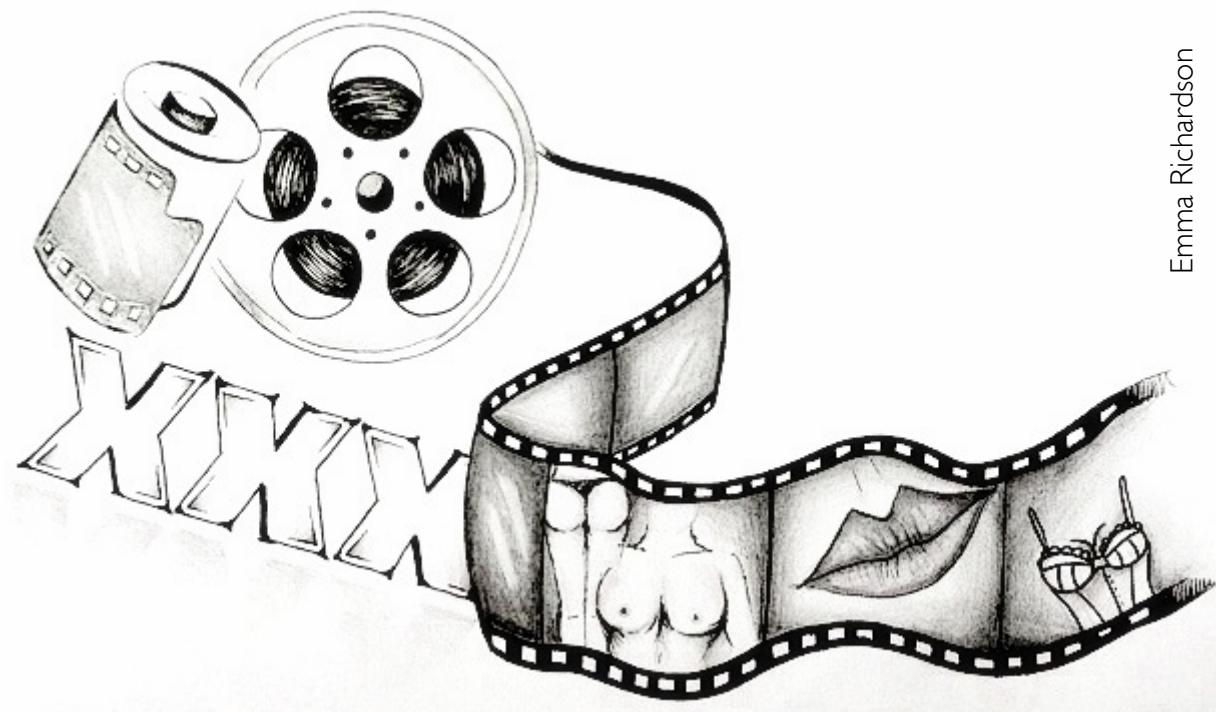
This isn't going to be one of those self-righteous conservative pieces aimed at diminishing sexual liberation and I should state neither am I a prude. It is however an article about the effect pornography is having on our minds and what it is subsequently doing to our sex lives.

Ran Gavrieli stopped watching porn for two reasons: one, in an attempt to change the sex industry and two, to take control of his own personal intimate life. He realised that

his consumption of pornography was bringing anger and violence into his personal fantasies; emotions and desires that weren't there before he started viewing porn on a regular basis. Pornography was directly affecting his relationships, altering his tastes and desires and Gavrieli believes this can happen to us all - that pornography can invade our minds and that this invasion is not conducive to emotional safe sex.

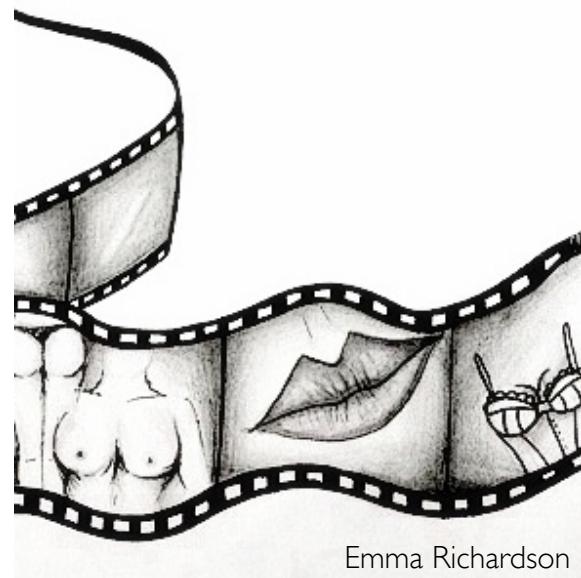
Gavrieli states porn is a genre and that it is not about erotica or healthy sexual

communication, it is about male domination of women - the subordination of women, not only sexually but also in a way of being, it is a general hierarchy. Pornography defines sexual as whatever arouses a man. Browse any porn website and see the categories: gagged, humiliation, brutal; the abuse is endless. Even in its mildest forms the ideas are there. If a man is aroused by seeing a women cry, then it is sexual in the eyes of pornography. This is a dangerous message, one I'm quickly becoming offended by. I now understand how pornography can have a very real affect on



our lives - it is invading our minds and our bedrooms and just as visiting the Red Light District contributes to prostitution there is a direct correlation that by watching porn we are taking part in a demand to create filmed prostitution.

Pornography is sex without hands, claims Gavrieli and I would agree. In pornography there is no interest in capturing any real, normal sexual activity. Kissing, touching and caring are all absent in the place of penetration. Before Gavrieli recognises that the narrative was different. It was a story of sensuality and mutuality. The build up, the communication and touch where pivotal. After pornography



however it appears you lose the ability to imagine and instead try to imitate the images that conquer your mind.

“Stop watching porn. Stop for your own intimate communication and private erotic life, stop because you no longer want to contribute to the sordid industry of filmed prostitution.”

Porn may not agree with our wellbeing, yet it is in our homes and in our faces whether we want it or not. According to Gavrieli our ready access to the internet and mobile phones means that up to 90% of 12 year olds are now watching porn on a regular basis; consuming a media that is both addictive and paralysing. Pornography creates a dependency - a skewed reality and expectation. It teaches men that in sex you are solely valued by having a large penis and an eternal erection. According to pornography being a valuable sexual partner does not relate with being sensual, passionate, attentive or generous. So men become imitators – aggressors, without realising that their view on sexual desire has been manipulated. Gavrieli talks of how much

sexual abuse is actually going on in what is perceived from the outside world as beautiful teenage love stories, and too in healthy adult relations because we do not talk about sex - we just see it. He believes what is happening in the confines of a bedroom are sexual mutations caused by pornography.

It's not just men who are at risk. Girls and women too are directly affected by the viewing and exceptions of pornography. We get the notion that to be worthy of love we must first be worthy of sexual desire and now the definition of sexual desire is so blurred by explicit pornography that the direct correlation is to act like a porn star. Gavrieli speaks of young girls; such as 15-year-old Amanda Todd who committed suicide in October 2012 after her agreeing to be filmed sexually in order to please went viral. This is a fast growing epidemic and trust is being misappropriated resulting in girls being shamed. He claims that women suffer great mortification at the hands of such acts while the men involved are rarely morally addressed, once again highlighting the gender hierarchy.

Clinical depression, eating disorder, school drop out and suicide rates are high amongst sex workers because they became too socially isolated and shamed, claims Gavrieli. They see no more value in life or in themselves. Porn is

not only in our homes, but it is a capital case. It is not a minor phenomenon in our society, but a question of life and death for those involved. Porn is not an embodiment of freedom of speech or of occupation. It is the embodiment of sexual exploration working side by side with human trafficking, rape, pimping and soliciting. For every one porn star with a book deal or a production company there are hundreds of thousands that will not make it out alive. The sex industry will chew them up and spit them out in hooking, brothels and escorting. It is the spectrum of prostitution.

“Our ready access to the internet and mobile phones means that up to 90% of 12 year olds are now watching porn on a regular basis; consuming a media that is both addictive and paralyzing.”

Wherever there is a demand there is a supply - there is a direct correlation between porn and the predatory capitalists soliciting the next fantasy for our pleasure and exploiting them at the victim's expense. By watching porn we are taking part in a demand to create filmed prostitution.

Throughout his talk Gavrieli's message is clear - stop watching porn. Stop for your own intimate communication and private erotic life, reclaim and take responsibility over your own mind and stop because you no longer want to contribute the sordid industry of filmed prostitution. It is a message about not only physically safer sex, but also emotionally safer sex. It is putting aside genderial hierarchy and subordination.

Throwing myself into the world of porn has taught me that we are all vulnerable to pornography, not just young people or men and that we should be very careful with its consumption. Just as we are careful with what we put into our bodies nutritionally, we should also take care about what we put into our minds. But for me the problem isn't pornography alone and while I support Gavrieli's claims, I feel it can be easy to pinpoint blame. Although I have had my eyes firmly opened to some very real and worrying issues surrounding the sex industry, I can't help but feel the real issue is that we just don't talk about sex enough in the real world and as a result people are turning to pornography for education, as way of defining their sexuality and then hiding it out of fear. If we could all just open up about what we do and do not like in the bedroom I think we would all be having emotionally safer sex, not to mention

better sex. So speak up – and do so because until this taboo of talking about our sex lives is lifted I can't help but think pornography will continue with its destructive reign.

“Pornography creates a dependency - a skewed reality and expectation. It teaches men that in sex you are solely valued by having a large penis and an eternal erection.”

There was one quote of Gavrieli's that did resonate this idea and it is this... “our history of silence does nobody any good because silence only perpetuates silence. But breaking it and speaking up gives birth to more sharing - more change. Yes a small one, but a true humble change. An emotionally safe change for all.”

A photograph of a couple lying in a field of tall grass. The woman is lying on her back, her head resting on the man's lap. The man is lying on his back, looking up. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, suggesting sunset or sunrise. The grass in the foreground is out of focus.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN 'LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT'?

SOPHIE MAGUIRE

For me 'love at first sight' is a cliche. It is a narcissistic idea I do not buy into because it is based entirely upon appreciation of who you are looking at, when in reality love, real love, has nothing to do with appearance at all.

Love is sacrificial, patient, and unconditional. The premise of 'love at first sight' itself is conditional, because it relies on the appearance alone. Attraction is a physical relationship of the body and will not uphold like love will in the face of adversity. Love means responsibilities, demands, sacredness, trust, humility, knowledge and more. It is far deeper than what meets the eye.

Love is a consuming relationship of the mind, the body and the soul. Love conquers fear, it eradicates doubt, and is the strongest force on earth next to hope. You must learn to love; and yes for some it happens so quickly, at such a pace that they may think of it as 'love at first sight', but true love, a deep and lasting love, is your soul's recognition of its counterpart in another. Lust and love can be often easily confused, but it has been said that if you ever find yourself in 'love' with two people at the same time choose the second, for you never truly loved the first.

SOMETIMES YOUR WORDS JUST HYPNOTISE ME

SAMANTHA

Most people will be familiar with hypnosis from TV shows; personalities like Derren Brown and Paul McKenna have long used hypnosis and 'mind control' of an audience member to shock and entertain. More recently hypnosis has gained popularity as an alternative therapy or sometimes as a 'quick fix' to problems like smoking and phobias. But how much does hypnotherapy differ from TV hypnosis and is it actually effective or just another fad?

Well, for a start hypnosis is certainly not a new idea having been used in one form or another by people throughout the centuries. Ancient tribal ceremonies often used hypnosis and evidence of trance states being used for both medicine and religion can be found in Egyptian tombs. In the western world hypnosis was generally seen in a negative light until well into the 18th century. It was only when physician James Braid undertook more thorough research into the area of hypnosis that the medical community started to see the benefits of this trance like state as therapy and relevant medical practice.

Back to the present day and it is important to recognise the difference between hypnotherapy and the hypnosis you might see on TV for entertainment. "Hypnotherapy is a

way of addressing a person's subconscious mind, to bring about a positive change to the client's life," explains Carol Mullin, a Hypnotherapist Practitioner. "A hypnotherapist will never be able to make someone do something they don't want to do, as the person is just in a deeply relaxed state, and the conscious mind would alert the subconscious mind and the person would be instantly awake and alert." Still many people today remain wary of hypnotherapy, finding it hard to distinguish between the gimmicks they see on a TV and a recognised medical practice. "TV hypnosis is very different," explains Carol, "there is no therapy involved but it does impact on how people view my profession. I have lost count of the number of times I have been asked if I can make people quack like ducks! TV hypnotists spend an awful long time working the audience before the show for people that are susceptible; they have to have people which will respond quickly and fully."

Carol goes on to explain how a real hypnotherapy session would work, "when a client comes to me, we chat about the presenting issues, history, medical issues and likes and dislikes as it is really important for me to make the hypnotherapy script as personal as possible. When a script is personal, the subconscious mind will be more open to the therapy and more accepting of the suggestions.

After the initial consultation I will ask my client to sit back and relax." Carol then takes her client through some relaxation techniques until they achieve a deep relaxation which is when the therapy itself can take place. "If I was working with a client who was a chocoholic, I could get them to picture the chocolate as something revolting, using strong imagery, so even the thought of putting chocolate in their mouths again would not be something they want to consider. You have to replace the loss of something with the client though, so there is a reward; suggesting they will want to eat more fruit, and getting them to picture standing in front of a mirror feeling so much healthier and loving the way they feel!"

With self-improvement a key part of the way we all live today and so many therapy options available, hypnotherapy is a good solution for bringing about quick results. Carol says that for many issues clients can see results after only one or two sessions but for those with underlying issues or deep-seated problems it may take more. We spoke to a couple who have both tried hypnotherapy with varying results. Steve Mill, had two hypnotherapy sessions in order to stop biting his nails, "I was very surprised that after even one session I noticed a difference. I was put into a very deep relaxed state and spoken to by the therapist, I was so relaxed I think I almost fell asleep but I

was aware of my surroundings and what I was saying the whole time. She discusses the issues that you want addressing and subconsciously your mind takes note and makes the changes. Six months on I'm still not biting my nails, so I would definitely recommend it."

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Steve's wife Caroline has also tried hypnotherapy. The opportunity to have a half hour session arose through her employer and after her husband's success decided to give it a go. "I was curious and had nothing to lose by trying it. I only had one session, I was very relaxed but to be honest I don't think I was hypnotised. I think I would need more sessions to notice a difference." Despite the limited success of her session Caroline would

still recommend this type of therapy, "It has worked for others but you have to want it to work. Keeping a positive attitude is key to this sort of therapy."

Carol agrees that hypnotherapy isn't for everyone, "It won't work on everyone, you have to come wanting the changes in your life. So, for example, if someone comes to me for smoking because their wife sent them, chances are it will fail. Some people are also not good at not having control of the situation, so I would struggle there as well, but I have had amazing results with the clients that want the changes and believe in the process."

"In the western world hypnosis was generally seen in a negative light until well into the 18th century."

Maybe our ancient ancestors had it right all along. But as with most therapies it seems the key is realising that something needs to change and deciding to take that first step to making a positive difference to your life.

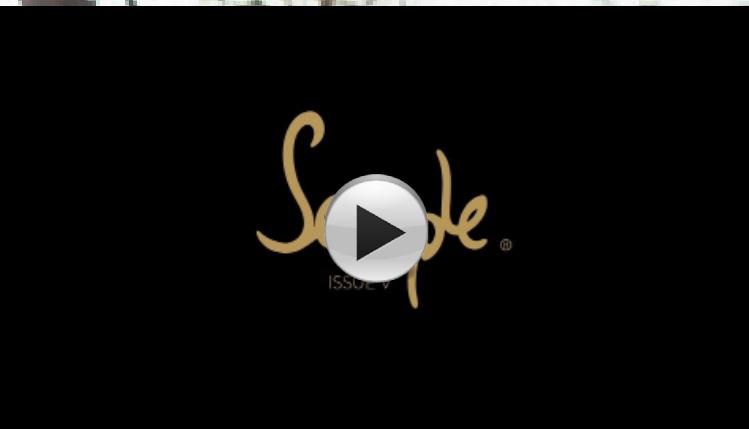
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