

SEXUAL EMPOWERMENT

Changing the way we talk and think about sexual wellbeing at The University of Manchester



OUR AIM:

The sex education system in the UK is still not where it needs to be. With organisations like Sexpression and Brook working tirelessly to fight for more open, honest and safe conversation about sex and wellbeing, we hope that [The Student Wellbeing Team](#) can contribute to this discourse.

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It is important to remember that in a sex positive space, there is often emphasis on being open about our sexual desires and empowering people to talk about and take ownership of their body and their sexuality. But it's important to highlight that sex positivity is about respecting everyone's differences, and championing all genders, sexualities and sexual orientations. People on the asexual (ace) spectrum can be sex-positive too!



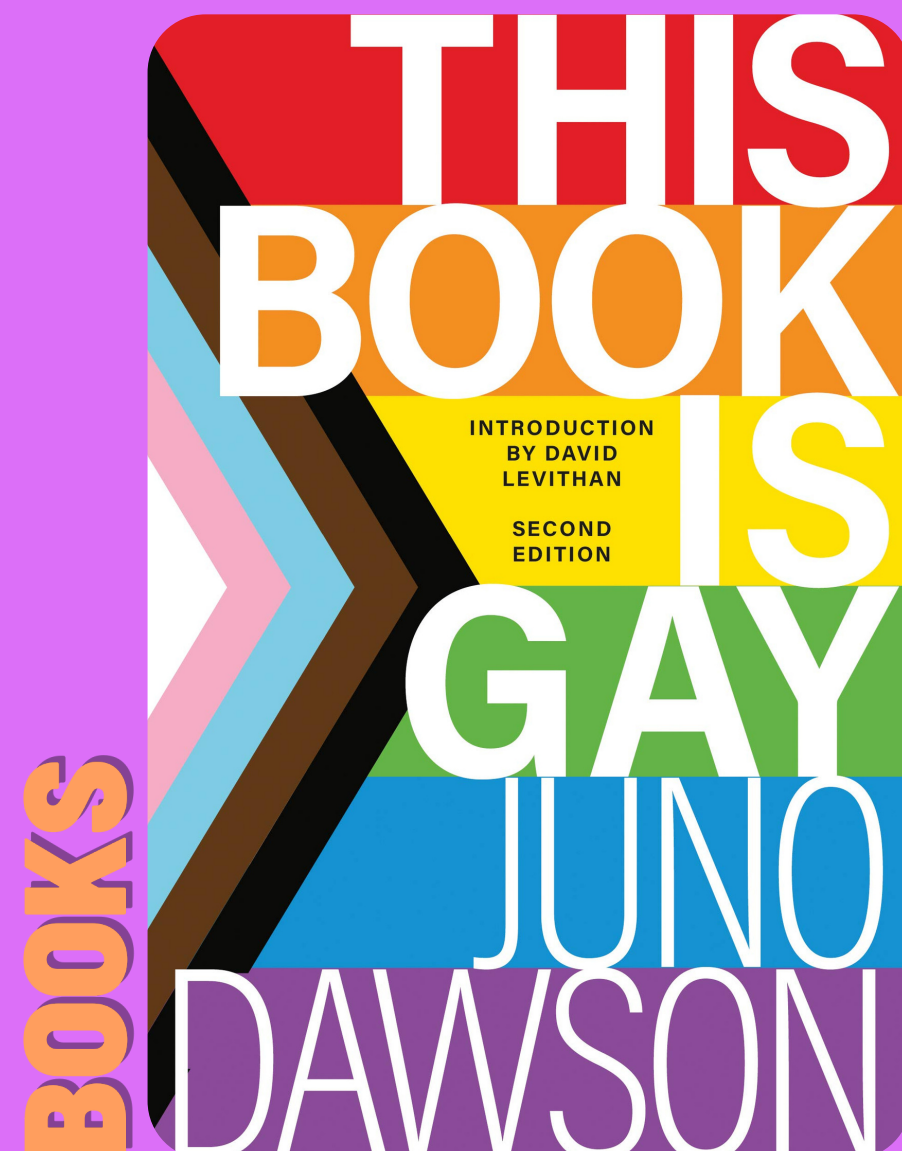
WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HERE BY SAMRA HABIB

A lot of the sex-positive content out there is written by and for white, cisgender, heterosexual readers. This is partially due to the ways in which sex-positivity, as a concept, has sometimes been misrepresented to mean that sex is always empowering. This misrepresentation ignores a history in which women of colour have been treated as “vessels for sexual desire,” racialised and sexualised in a way that makes the possibility of liberation through sex feel impossible. So Habib’s memoir about growing up as a queer, Muslim woman in Pakistan fills a gap, giving readers a glimpse of how one’s sexual identity can be dangerous. Still, by the end of *We Have Always Been Here*, Habib has been able to find a way to live her truest self.



PLEASURE ACTIVISM EDITED BY ADRIENNE MAREE BROWN

In Brown’s book, she shares essays, interviews, profiles, poems, and more to illuminate the importance of what she refers to as pleasure activism. “Pleasure activism is the work we do to reclaim our whole, happy, and satisfiable selves from the impacts, delusions, and limitations of oppression and/or supremacy,” she writes in their introduction. To that end, she shares how women—particularly Black women—might embrace pleasure without shame.



THIS BOOK IS GAY BY JUNO DAWSON

There’s been a huge push in recent years to make sex education curricula more LGBTQ-inclusive, and I think that some of the books mentioned above are a huge step in the right direction. This book is another great entry in that vein, with light-hearted advice on gay stereotypes, dating conundrums, gay sex, and more. Dawson describes the book as an essential instruction manual for everyone, regardless of gender or sexuality. But what she doesn’t mention is that it’s also a ton of laugh-out-loud.



SEX EDUCATION



I MAY DESTROY YOU



NORMAL PEOPLE

SEX EDIT SEXUALITY

'Sexuality' is a holistic term for someone's sexual behaviours, attractions, likes, dislikes, kinks and preferences. Sexual orientation makes up a part of someone's sexuality, and sexuality is sometimes used interchangeably with sexual orientation. However, it covers more than just who a person is attracted to. Your sexuality is what you enjoy and how you enjoy it, whether that is about partners or activities. (Brook, Sexuality 2020)

Discovering and exploring your sexuality at University can be both a liberating and isolating experience. It is important to remember that you are not alone in this and many other students may have a similar experience. The SU website have outlined some of the main issues LGBTQ+ students are faced with:

- One in five LGBTQ+ people has experienced a hate crime or incident because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the last 12 months.
- 25% of LGBTQ+ students perceive a barrier to them accessing wellbeing services in our University.
- 52% of LGBTQ+ people experienced depression in the last year, compared to 25% of straight students.

SPOTLIGHT ON:



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The SU are working hard to ensure wellbeing services and support are in place for LGBTQ+ students. Below we have signposted to student-led campaigns and support services. There are 2 elected LGBTQ+ officers at Manchester Students' Union if you have any queries, questions or want to know more about how to access support.

- Kieran Brierley (kieran.brierley@manchester.ac.uk)
- Ana Porumb (ana.porumb@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)

Connect with the LGBTQ Students' Campaign and society on social media:



Keep an eye out on @uomwellbeing for student testimonials!

SEX EDIT SEX AND DISABILITY

We need to talk about sex and disability. Normalising dialogue around topics that are seen as taboo is one of the most effective ways to combat stigma. Disabled people exist on the same spectrum that non-disabled people do. They can love sex, be asexual, be heterosexual, be LGBTQ+, love all kinds of touch, only like certain types of touch etc. There is no one-size-fits-all answer when talking about sex and disability. One of the most important things to remember is that everyone's relationship with sex and sexuality is unique.

“I mean I have had people say to me, ‘If you’re blind, how do you have sex’? And I’m thinking, what kind of sex are you having You can feel connected in other ways”

In this video two young disabled people discuss sex and disability, their experiences and the changes they'd like to see. The Let's Talk About Series... was created in partnership with @ippf_global and @undressingdisability to give young sexual health advocates a platform to discuss their thoughts, experiences and recommendations on 5 key topics relating to sex and relationships. (Brook, Sex and Disability Campaign 2021)

MUST-FOLLOW INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS



SPOTLIGHT ON:



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Undressing Disability:

Enhance UK's 'Undressing Disability' campaign seeks to challenge public perceptions, aiming to raise standards in sexual health and sexual awareness for disabled people.

Having a disability can be a very isolating experience. As well as physical barriers, there is still a huge amount of prejudice towards disability amongst the general public. People often hold the misguided notion that disabled people can't, don't or won't have sex. There is a stigma that unfortunately is often internalised by disabled people who often suffer with self esteem problems as a result.

Changing these perceptions takes time, but is hugely important, not only so disabled people can rightfully feel attractive, but so that they can access the sexual health and education they deserve, and be recognised as sexual beings by their loved ones, support workers and the wider general public. The Undressing Disability campaign has the desire to remove this taboo at its very roots.

PODCAST:



**UNDRESSING
DISABILITY**

enhance the uk

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SEX EDIT SEXUAL PLEASURE

"Sexual wellness is as fundamental to our health as physical and mental wellness. It is the ability to love yourself, understand the intimate parts of your body and take care of its needs. Our sexuality is a living breathing part of who we are. It shapes our relationships, our self-esteem and it connects our mind and our body"

Jingjin Liu, Co-founder of ZaZaZu: Sexual Wellness Platform

SPOTLIGHT ON:



KAMA: Mindful sex

Click here

PODCASTS



Why Is Female Sexual Pleasure Still A Taboo?



What I Learned Talking to Strangers...



[Fumbling - PJ Cunningham](#)
([Monobox @ Home](#))

University of Manchester Drama society is proud to present to you PJ Cunningham performing her monologue 'Fumbling' as a part of our their monologue series 'Monobox.'

TW: Sexual References, References to Body Image Issues/Eating Disorders

PJ is a second year student studying BA Drama and Film! ☆☆☆

READING RECOMMENDATIONS