

# Porn, toys, handcuffs, plus one repressed columnist



**SCOTT FESCHUK**

*Warning: This column is about sex and includes some risqué language. Now that I've ensured my largest readership ever, let's begin.*

Patricia McCarthy is explaining how to talk dirty during sex. Let go of your inhibitions, she says. Stop using clinical terms (vagina) and start “getting creative.” (Okay! Uhh... Captain Vagina?) Oh, and don't forget timing. “Once, on a first date,” McCarthy recalls, “a guy told me over coffee that his [“creative” word for penis] was eight inches long. The information was good, but the timing just wasn't right.”

My pen moved smoothly along the page of my notebook. *Don't tout wang size at Starbucks.* Got it. Wait 'til lunch at East Side Mario's.

McCarthy was offering her lexical guidance in Ottawa at Sexapalooza, an “adult-themed consumer trade show” that last weekend attracted thousands to the romantic confines of a dank convention hall crammed with porn DVDs, crotchless lingerie, pubic hair dye, leather masks and hoods, handcuffs, vibrators, bigger vibrators, more vibrators, and one repressed *Maclean's* columnist who spent the whole time convinced the ghosts of his ancestors were watching as he browsed the latest in dominatrix attire.

“There's no magic formula for talking dirty,” McCarthy continued. “You can't say that this word plus this word plus this word equals orgasm for your partner.” Oh, I don't know about that: “I'm” plus “George” plus “Clooney” seems to work pretty well for George Clooney.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Sexapalooza didn't score big on the subtle scale. Just steps inside, organizers had erected a comically oversized vagina, out of which people excitedly jammed their heads for photographs. The show also marked the first time since the 1989 *Star*

*Trek* convention that I heard a woman yell into a microphone: “There are so many dildos in this place!” (And once again, I want to apologize to the organizers of the 1989 *Star Trek* convention for my mother's behaviour and her uncalled-for description of sci-fi enthusiasts.)

Travelling next to Hamilton in late February, Sexapalooza has the novelty of being about the countless uses of (and substitutes for) humanity's naughty bits—but in many

could just use a towel,” he said dismissively.

The nearby Dungeon sounded ominous and was touted as the centrepiece of naughtiness at Sexapalooza—but turned out to be a small patch of exhibition hall separated with thin black curtains. Inside, an overweight woman lounged contentedly in a cage the shape and size of a dog crate, while a man showed off an astonishing array of whips and a creepy smile. Across the way, a sad-seeming burly fellow in a brown leather skirt was

locked into a snug stand-up cage. A woman wearing a studded collar jabbed him with a prod. (Alas, security in the Dungeon proved lax at best, for the next time I saw the leather-skirted man he was eating a hot dog at the food court. He looked happier.) Visitors to the Dungeon could avail themselves of the opportunity to purchase the latest edition of *Whiplash* magazine, which features the National Mistress Listing. Criticize the Liberals all you want for the gun registry—but you never hear a peep about cost overruns in the National Mistress Listing.

Meanwhile, as McCarthy moved to conclude her dirty-talk lecture, her words were drowned out by noise from a nearby booth: a gruff male voice passing from microphone to loudspeaker. “Let me help you find the G spot,

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ways it's like any other trade show, right down to the salesman slipping on a headset microphone and luring over a crowd to demonstrate the *amazing* features of his *remarkable* product. Usually it's a vegetable chopper or stain remover. This time it was the Bondage Bed.

Every hour or so, with the help of a volunteer (usually a fat guy or a hot babe), the huckster demonstrated how the Bondage Bed would not only keep your “guest” from slipping out to watch CSI but also eliminate the tricky weight-balancing issues that apparently come with doing it like a porn star. After the show, a curious woman took down an I Like It Doggie Style kit from a nearby rack, turned to her man and asked: “What do you think?” The man, briefly intrigued, noticed that the “kit” consisted of a strap that loops around the woman's waist. “You

guy! Come on, guys. Let me show ya.” Tempting, sir, but... ummm... I've got a 3:15 cage fitting over in the Dungeon.

### Two Things I Learned at Sexapalooza:

1. If you think Stephen Harper is hostile to the media, then strap on a camera, take out a pen and notepad and try to have a chat with an attractive, tiny blond woman as she is purchasing a seven-inch glass dildo. Now there's some hostile for you!

2. The thing that gets most women going, that revs their engines, that fires up their libido is... dark chocolate. So claimed sex therapist Sue McGarvie, anyway. My date to senior prom would argue that actually it's my Lou Rawls impression. **M**

**ON THE WEB:** For a photo essay from Scott Feschuk's trip to Sexapalooza, visit his blog at [www.macleans.ca/feschuk](http://www.macleans.ca/feschuk)