

# WOMEN'S SEX TOY PARTIES KEEP THE FOCUS ON HEALTH



By KAREN C.L. ANDERSON

**M**Y NAME IS SUSAN and I hate sex because I get hot and sweaty, the equipment doesn't work very well, and my ankles get banged up."

The small group of women sitting on Susan's patio crack up with laughter. The next woman says, "My name is Terri and I hate sex because it's time-consuming and yucky!" More laughter.

These women don't really hate sex; they are just being good sports at a recent Pure Romance party. As an ice-breaker, the Pure Romance consultant running the party, Raylene Taskoski, asked everyone to write down their most dreaded chore and why, then introduce themselves by

saying, "My name is... and I hate sex because..." For Susan it was vacuuming and for Terri it was cleaning the bathroom.

"Some women DO view sex as a chore," says Taskoski. "My job is to help them figure out how to enjoy it. Once they understand the mechanics of their own arousal and desire, they can figure out how to operate their own bodies."

Pure Romance is one of several direct sales companies that offers in-home sex toy parties and

Taskoski, who is from Lisbon, has been a consultant for two and half years. She says that while there's definitely money to be made as a consultant, she really enjoys the interaction with women and she feels that she can truly make a difference in their lives.

"Think about it ladies, when you see an advertisement for men's sexual health, it usually concerns his pleasure. When you see an ad regarding women's sexual health, it's about burning, bleeding, itchy, smelly. It's not about our issues, not about our pleasure!"

Taskoski's presentation is half jokes and fun and half frank discussion and education. "It's surprising how many women don't know their own anatomy," she says, noting that 20 percent of women say they have never had an orgasm or aren't sure if they have. "Not sure?" she asks? "They'd know if they had."

She rattled off some other statistics and information:



■ “The average woman takes five to 45 minutes to prepare for penetration and it can take her nearly 15 minutes to have an orgasm. The average man can orgasm in three minutes.”

■ “A woman’s number one sex organ is her brain. Your brain has to send the signal. If you’re thinking about taxes, the cobwebs on the ceiling, or ‘do I look fat?’ the signal is NOT being sent.”

■ “There are three common medications that will affect your libido: birth control pills, heart and blood pressure medications, and antidepressants.”

■ “There’s a common over-the-counter medication that will affect lubrication: anti-histamines.”

■ “If you’re not aroused and lubricated, you’re not having good sex.”

■ “Don’t ever put anything into your vagina (product-wise) that you wouldn’t put in your eye.”

The good news, of course, is that there are products out there for every situation and Taskoski focused mainly on those for arousal and lubrication. With catchy names like Just Like Me (a water-based pH-balanced lubricant), EX-T-CEE (a mint-scented and -flavored arousal cream that is air-activated), and Time In A Bottle (a prolonging cream that slows down the level of a man’s arousal), these products are designed to level the playing field for women. Or, if you’re providing “oral favors,” a little “Lickety Stiff” will help speed up the process.

During the party Taskoski passed around body glitter, warming balms, and massage lotions. Then came fantasy card games, manuals on sexual positions, and a heart-shaped massager that is heat-activated. Pure Romance also offers a line of bath aids and beauty products. Coochy is a unisex conditioning shave cream that can be used on all areas of the body. Taskoski says even men can use it to eliminate ingrown hairs. “Besides, every man needs a little Coochy on his face.” Ba-dum-dum.



And finally, the hardware: vibrators and other appliances in various shapes, colors, and forms, for pretty much any function you can imagine. Some are flashy and high-tech with their own remote controllers and LEDs, while others are simple and have no bells and whistles. And for those who like to rock out, the Vibro Pod, which operates in concert with an MP3 player (the vibrations are activated by the bass in the music).

Taskoski also provided an anatomically correct description of what happens to a woman’s vagina as she becomes aroused and orgasms, as well as how women can find their own G-spots.

Pure Romance, she says, offers a wealth of resources through its Sexual Health Research Department, but she always tells women who attend her parties that they should check with their doctors if they have serious concerns about their health.

Pure Romance touts itself as a company that not only helps couples maintain intimacy within their relationships but is also a national ambassador for women’s sexual health. It offers several sexual health programs and initiatives such as the “Sensuality, Sexuality, Survival” program (for women who have survived cancer and cancer treatments) and The “Naked Truth” College Tour.

It also has a nonprofit foundation, named after its founder, Patty Brisben, which provides research and education for women and health care providers regarding women’s sexual health. The company has committed to fund research over the next five years at the Center for Sexual Health Promotion at Indiana University (home of the Kinsey Institute).

At the end of the party, Taskoski invites guests into a room set aside for ordering. “I call it ‘Vegas,’” she says, “because what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas,” she says with a wink.