Intimacy is dying and sex is boring



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STAFF WRITER

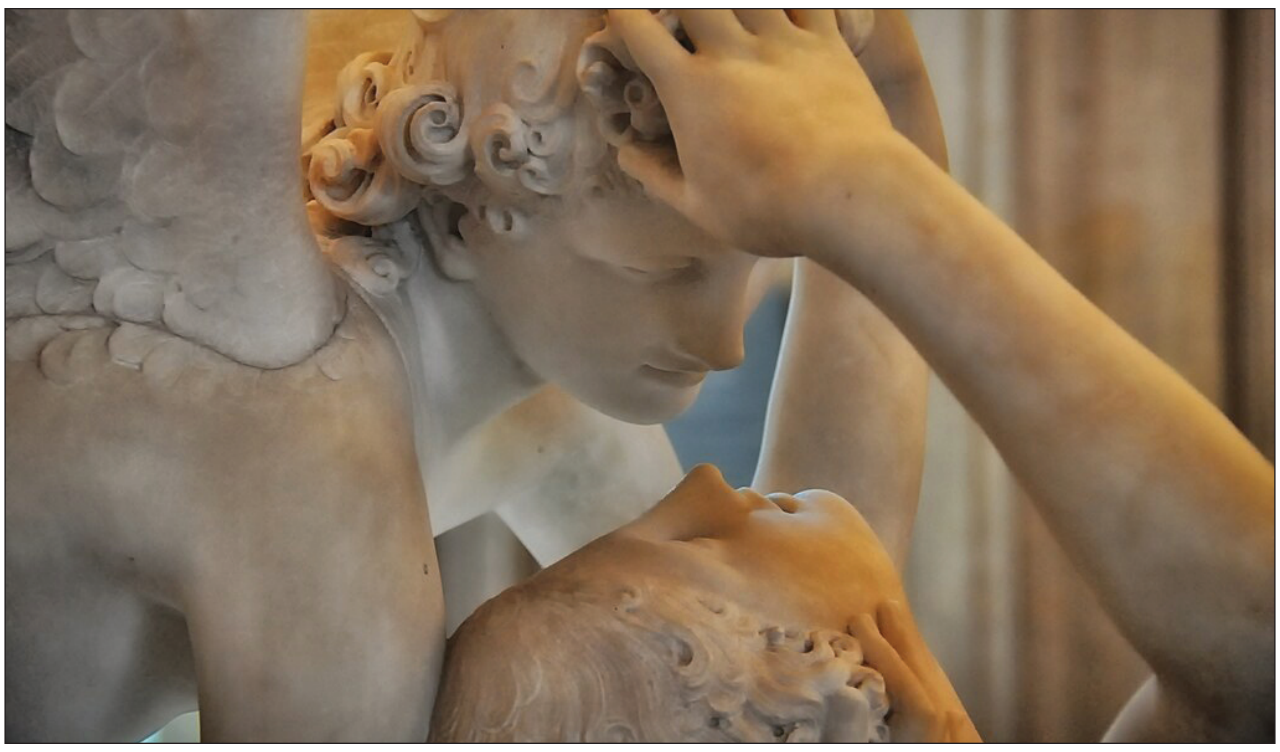


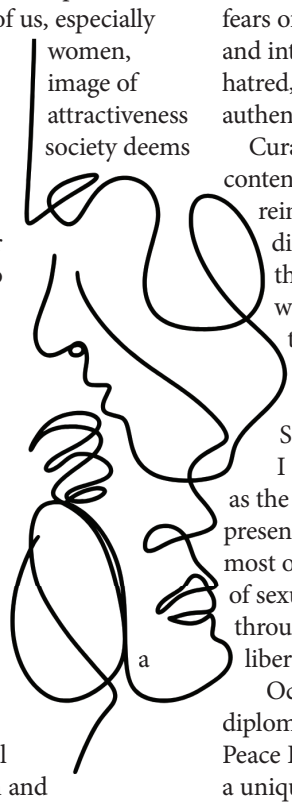
IMAGE FROM FLICKR

I find it ironic that in a culture so obsessed with romance and surrounded by sex, the art of intimacy and eroticism is dying.

We have been taught to be imitations, curations and images, rather than human beings capable of love and worthy of knowing.

Humans often confine ourselves to an idealized picture of desirability rather than exploring the transcendence of our authenticity.

Unrealistic beauty standards portrayed by the media have pressured so many of us, especially young women, to fit an image of attractiveness that society deems worthy enough to love, or at least, to objectify.



Social media provides us with a platform to display our most idealized selves, serving as a feedback loop for superficial validation and comparison.

It punishes rebellion against systemically prejudiced and patriarchal standards, provoking fears of inadequacy and internalized self-hatred, discouraging true authenticity.

Curated and edited content distorts reality and reinforces unattainable digital beauty ideals that impact self-worth, according to a Feb. 10, 2025 North American Behavioral Health Services article.

I define intimacy as the purest form of presence and eroticism the most organic expression of sexuality, both bred through the radical liberation of self.

Octavio Paz, a Mexican diplomat, poet, and Nobel Peace Prize winner had a unique perspective on eroticism.

"Eroticism reveals to us another world, inside this world," Paz said. "The senses become servants to our imagination, letting us see the invisible and hear the inaudible."

In a capitalist landscape, the explosion of social media and online dating has taken away the practice of intimacy and eroticism through the commodification of love and a manufactured fear of rejection.

Online dating offers the illusion of infinite options, making it easier to indulge in multiple sources of validation rather than seeking to understand one's self or another being.

There is an overemphasis on physical appearance, which promotes a disposable view of relationships and poses a risk of deception, according to a Nov. 7, 2019 Psychology Today article.

As a collective, we are fed ideals that are not our own, beauty that can never be achieved, lifestyles we do not lead and information that clouds our individual judgment.

I am not necessarily rallying for strict monogamy, but intimacy and eroticism can only live when connection is honest, patient and curious.

Social media allows us to scroll when we are bored or when we disagree and it serves as a distraction from our own feelings and thoughts.

Our attention spans are dwindling, creating a culture driven by instant gratification, according to a June 29 article from The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

We are constantly consuming but still constantly hungry, looking for ourselves in places where we are not – identifying but not embodying.

When we avoid the totality of self in an effort to gain external validation or to protect our own ego, we demote our substance to a burden rather than a blessing.

This over-identification with external things plagues our ability to see ourselves stripped down and raw, ergo, our allowance to show our truth to others.

With so many platforms to present ourselves as a certain person, our individual nuances and complexities intentionally get lost in translation.

Love is sold as some type of achievement or product, rather than a deep experience of self.

Dating platforms operate as businesses that profit from human desire, presenting love as a product facilitated through algorithmic matchmaking, according to a Sep. 21, 2024 Easy Sociology article.

In this way, love has become something to be earned or bought instead of personified, making heartbreak a loss of asset, rather than proof of compassion.

Similarity, sex and sexuality has become a way to measure a partner's value, instead of being recognized as an intrinsic and powerful flow of creative energy.

Intimacy and eroticism have no sturdy home in this day and age, but like any belief and practice, it is our responsibility to foster the depth we so desperately crave.

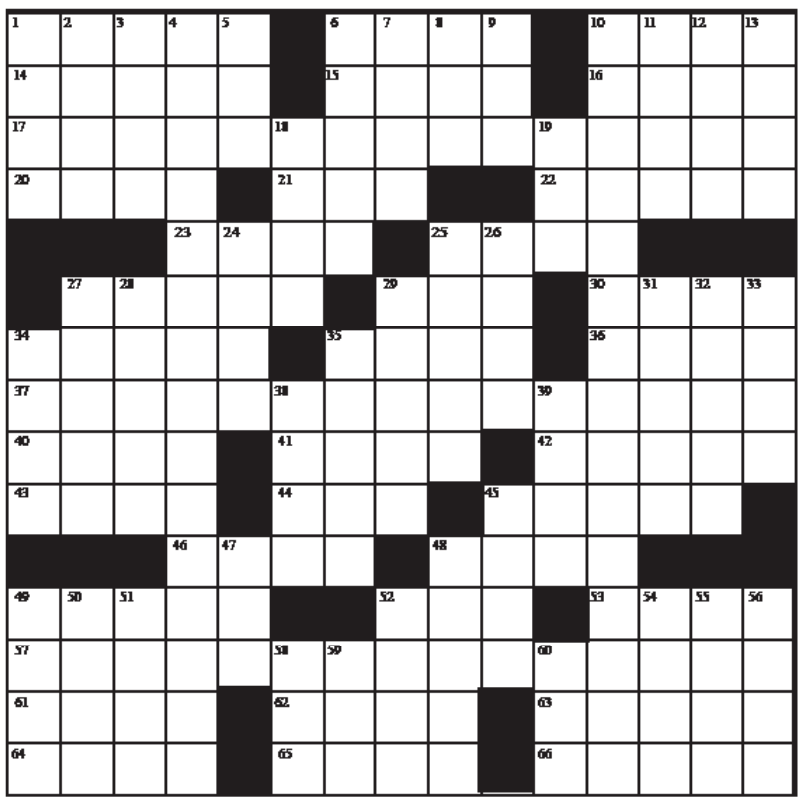
In Georges Bataille's book, "Eroticism: Death, and Sensuality," he writes, "Man goes constantly in fear of himself. His erotic urges terrify him … but man can surmount the things that frighten him and face them squarely… he can be rid of the curious misunderstanding of his own nature that has characterised him until now."

We are so scared to be seen unfinished, to be touched imperfectly, to be known with our flaws, and maybe, to be anyone at all – it is not failing itself we fear, but rejection from others when we are being truly honest.

Follow Shinju on Instagram @shinju.kang

CLASSIFIEDS

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

1. Barely talks
6. Comes out with
10. Angler's action
14. Popular island
15. Expedition
16. Regarding
17. Holes 1, 2 and 3
20. Unwavering
21. Certain Wordsworth work
22. Tops
23. Some wild ones are sown
25. Duel prelude
27. Past or future
29. Motorists' org.
30. Postmortem bio
34. Transform, as a Power Ranger
35. Squalid neighborhood
36. Like hens' teeth
37. Holes 4, 5, 6 and 7
40. Gin flavoring
41. Barn topper
42. John, Paul or George (but not Ringo)
43. Desperate cry
44. Palindromist's preposition
45. Beef treat
46. Fringe benefit
48. Al dente
49. Virus carrier
52. Caterer's container
53. They're made to be supportive
57. Holes 8, 9, 10 and 11
61. A big fan of
62. Marquee material, perhaps
63. It's not quite par for the course
64. Respite
65. Bridge defender, maybe
66. Nobel or Celsius, e.g.

DOWN

1. Cincinnati nine
2. Diamond family name
3. Musical mark
4. Holes 12, 13 and 14
5. Librarian's admonition
6. Drywall supports
7. First name from "Laugh-In"
8. "Why, certainly!"
9. Follow a Vail trail
10. Holes 15, 16, 17 and 18
11. Responds in "Jeopardy!"
12. Proofreader's direction
13. Contents of some chests
18. Semiquaver, e.g.
19. Org. with many guards
24. Pale as a ghost
25. Make use of a skillet
26. Paragon of meekness
27. Sheer linen or cotton
28. "Gentleman Jim" portrayer
29. Sans company
31. A dyeing art?
32. Sardonic humor, e.g.
33. It may be pitched
34. Moonshine mix
35. Fire starter
38. Lasting leader?
39. Software customer
45. Cause of bad luck, perhaps
47. "Xanadu" grp.
48. Leader's place
49. Abu Dhabi honcho
50. Stable locks?
51. Some are carpenters
52. Abduction vehicles, supposedly
54. Go ballistic
55. Scored on serve
56. Terrier type
58. The loneliest number
59. Princess' annoyance
60. Air rifle ammo

SUDOKU PUZZLE

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

	5				2	9	1	
								3
6		3						
			6		9			1
	3	7						5
					8			4
9						5		
2				4				8
	1	4						

JOKIN' AROUND

Why did the IPA beat the Pale Ale at Basketball?

Because it had more HOPS!

SOLUTIONS

AUGUST 28

B	B	C	■	A	H	E	M	■
R	O	O	■	B	A	L	I	■
U	N	P	R	O	V	E	N	■
I	F	Y	O	U	O	V	E	R
S	I	C	S	■	C	A	R	E
E	R	A	S	E	■	T	V	A
R	E	T	■	T	H	E	A	L
■	■	■	U	H	S	■	■	■
S	O	U	P	I	T	C	O	U
R	E	L	I	C	■	E	N	S
O	R	Y	■	■	P	L	A	T
■	■	■	S	P	E	L	L	D
R	O	S	I	T	A	■	A	N
O	R	E	G	O	N	■	T	O
C	E	S	S	N	A	■	E	V

H	E	M	■	A	G	A	T	H
A	L	I	■	R	A	S	H	E
R	O	V	E	N	■	C	L	I
O	V	E	R	H	E	A	T	■
C	A	R	E	Y	■	■	R	A
T	V	A	■	S	M	I	L	E
H	E	A	L	P	H	A	B	E
U	H	S	■	■	A	E	C	■
T	C	O	U	L	D	■	C	P
E	N	S	■	S	H	O	R	N
P	L	A	T	O	■	A	R	E
S	P	E	L	L	D	I	S	A
A	N	A	T	H	E	M	A	■
T	O	G	O	■	G	I	G	■
E	V	E	N	■	E	E	■	■

5	7	4	1	9	3	2	8	6
8	9	3	7	2	6	4	5	1
6	2	1	5	4	8	3	9	7
7	1	5	4	6	9	8	3	2
4	8	2	3	1	5	7	6	9
3	6	9	8	7	2	5	1	4
2	4	8	9	5	1	6	7	3
9	3	7	6	8	4	1	2	5
1	5	6	2	3	7	9	4	8

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