

Men are from Mars, women are from Venus

And Sue Johansen is from Winnipeg — two views on a sex guru

**SUE JOHANSEN:
JEDI MASTER**

BY KARAN SHETTY

Sue Johansen is the Yoda of sex. While she may not be able to do anything as cool as the Jedi mind trick, she can tell you way too much about the clitoris and the penis. But how did Sue become this omniscient sex guru who can hold the attention of a packed McInnes Room for more than two hours?

It all started in a high school birth control clinic in Winnipeg where Sue worked as a registered nurse. Evidently Sue felt she had some sort of calling for dispensing sex advice and decided to further her knowledge on the subject through university course-work. She then started teaching other sex-ed teachers and landed herself a radio show which snowballed into the Sunday Night Sex Show on the Women's Television Network. Sue's ability to put people at ease with any fears they may have concerning sex has landed her a sizeable following.

Sue's appearance also has something to do with her position as a Canadian pop culture icon. Not too many people are all that used to a lady the age of their grandmothers speaking frankly on topics which are usually confined to locker rooms and schoolyards.

In the short time I had before Sue took the stage and addressed more than 300 Dalhousie students last Friday, I was able to get in a few questions on current sex-related issues which are getting a great deal of media attention.

Gazette: Do you think pornography should be considered a genuine movie genre?

Sue: No, I have a great deal of discomfort with pornography. Erotica I think is wonderful stuff, but porn — bondage, gagging, whipping — I'm uncomfortable with that stuff.

Gazette: Where do you think the line is drawn between erotica and pornography?

Sue: If it makes me uncomfortable it's porn. But if I can like it and find it sexually stimulating, then it's erotica...some women do get turned on by hardcore porn, so it's a personal choice.

Gazette: Do you think most of the publicity directed towards teenagers about safe sex and abstinence falls on deaf ears? Do you think they're so inundated with information they've stopped paying attention?

Sue: A horrible question, but true all the same. We went about teaching you guys all wrong. We tried scare tactics. The first AIDS lesson where you have a coffin with a skull and crossbones doesn't work. It never did.

Gazette: What would you say is the biggest misconception people have about sex?

Sue: It depends if you're a male or female. The biggest male misconception is number one that you've got to bring her to cataclysmic orgasm every time you have

sex and two, to be a good lover you've got to have a big penis. Females believe if he says he loves you it's okay to have sex.

As a Canadian cult hero of sorts I asked Sue what she thought of her American counterpart, Dr. Ruth.

"She has no medical background and her degree is not in counselling," Sue scoffed. "Her post-grad degree, get this, is English!"

When asked who would win in hand-to-hand combat, Sue responded: "I wouldn't bother fighting her. She has moved on. She's not doing it anymore. She went too public, and shot herself in the foot, and lost her credibility. You have to be very careful in this business and she wasn't."

Obviously Sue is well aware her fame may be fleeting but she is careful to safeguard her reputation and maintain credibility by refusing to sell out to the media.

HAVIN' SEX WITH SUE

BY AVI LAMBERT

Sex with Sue would be a little intimidating. Sue knows the way the mind and body work together to make a sexual experience satisfying and anxiety-free. Yet, she doesn't pass on this knowledge like a hilltop-sitting guru, instead Sue gesticulates, makes funny faces and tells bad jokes where appropriate.

Her delivery and presence make her seem less of a condescending authority and more of a cross between a sex ed teacher and a locker room coach. Sue's jokes break the ice when you'd normally be holding your breath from embarrassment. I got the impression it's easy for Sue, either by her routine or her love of teaching, to relate to people.

I quickly got the feeling Sue's lecture was for the benefit of the women in the room, both directly and indirectly. She was talking mainly about organs I don't have. It seemed dispelling the myths of the female and male orgasm — females don't always need to have them, and male ejaculation isn't necessarily an orgasm — was to make sure us dumb male animals wouldn't keep rogering away, and feeling guilty if we didn't help our partner reach orgasm. Her saying, "this should take a lot of pressure off all the guys in this room" still wasn't convincing for some reason. A sex educator with different equipment would probably have given the same gender-slanted discussion.

It was nice to hear her demystify openly things we all know as natural, like masturbation — and I hope I'm not putting a noose on my own neck. Sue actually got *right into* that part of the discussion. Hmm.

Whenever I hear that the clitoris has as many sexually sensitive nerve endings as an entire penis, I get jealous. Sue holding up a huge invisible fish and then shrinking it to the size of a pea didn't help my petty jealousy either (the fish and the pea are used for description of her hand gestures — at home, please replace with what fits).

Women talk about women things because they are women, men talk about men things because they are men. Not the most intelligent sentence, but how does Sue know we stand in front of the mirror posing and admiring, smiling satisfyingly at the shapeliness and size of our knees? Yeah, knees.

It would be nice if there was a guy somewhere like Sue who could take the mystery out

of all the myths and social conventions of the sexual parts of the male body. Someone who can say with honesty and personal experience that it's the way you use it and not how

big it is.

Are our bodies, Adam and Eve, so different? I say yes, and I say this happily. *La vie serai blase autrement.*

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