

Sex with robots

Presentation by Chloé De Bie (Postgraduate Sexologist, trainee clinical psychologist) based on her master thesis presented to obtain the degree of Master in sexology, June 2012 (Obtained with Magna Cum Laude).

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In this presentation I try to explain what fascinates men in sex robots. I start by giving an overview of the scientific literature that I found on this topic, very briefly since very little has been written about it.

I have tried to find clues within the fields of technology and sexology. First I'll discuss different types of robots and the precursors of the sex robot (like the sex dolls and sex machines) after which I'll discuss the available literature on sex robots.

The emphasis shall be on the exploratory qualitative study that I conducted and that I want to share with you. Especially because it's the first in his kind. For me as a sexologist and trainee clinical psychologist. I think it's important to focus more on the psychological influences that sex (and love?) with robots can evoke.

Therefore I organized focus-groups with six heterosexual men, aged between 20 and 40 years, who were interested in or had experience with sex toys. My research question was: "What fascinates men in sex robots?". I analyzed the data on the basis of a thematic analysis.

I shall talk about the fact that the fascination of men regarding sex robots was mainly focused around the tension about being "real/not real" as a woman of flesh and blood. I will elaborate on that during my presentation.

The goal of my presentation is to make you realize that more psychological studies on the subject of sex with robots is needed.

We are surrounded by robots. We encounter them in our daily life and our modern world cannot function any longer without them, so we have to be sensitive to and take into account the psychological consequences and the consequences (sex)robots will have on human relationships.

My presentation will not only provide you with information on the current knowledge of sex robots, but it also raises questions about human identity and, by extension, about human experience of love and sexuality; and about what we do expect of our sex partner and what insoluble tensions we will have to deal with during our lives.