

Designing the Future of Sex

Eleanor Saitta



Arse Elektronika 2009



Design and Society

- **Design has a huge effect on our lives**
- **Social desires feed technological change**
- **Social change requires mass disruption**
- **Technological change accumulates**
- **The fictional future can be a mirror**

- **It's going to get pretty weird around here**

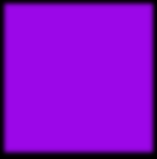




Intimacy

- 1. How can artifacts and services enable new forms of intimacy, and in doing so, alter the constraints under which it acts?**
- 2. Does virtualizing intimacy help or hurt real, modern relationships?**
- 3. Can we qualitatively change the kind of sex we're capable of?**





Identity

- 4. Can redesigning the experience of sexual interaction profoundly change the interactees?**
- 5. Can an artifact alter our socio-sexual identity?**

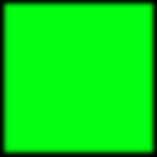




Awareness

- 6. How does making difference visible change society?**
- 7. Can we change sex by intermediating it?**
- 8. Can mediated social awareness empower networks of sexual change?**





Control

9. How can design shift the locus of control in the interactions that revolve around sex?
10. Can we create entire new vectors of sexual control, or erase old ones?





Economics

- 11. Can we enable in people the power to escape rigid heteronormative economic relationships?**
- 12. Can designed changed to sexual economics act as a disruptive social force?**





Framing the Fictions

- **Staying within the realm of the known possible**
- **Designed objects, environments, and systems**
- **Focusing on the sociopolitical context for sex and relationships**

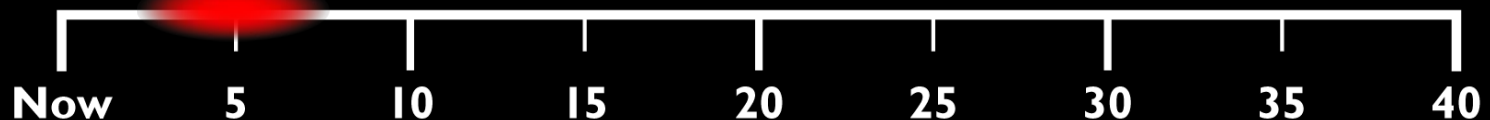




Modern Flagging

■ Identity
■ Awareness

- **Fractured identities complicate situated interaction**
- **(Some people say) Privacy is dead**
- **Why wait for other people to announce themselves?**
- **What does this do to public space?**

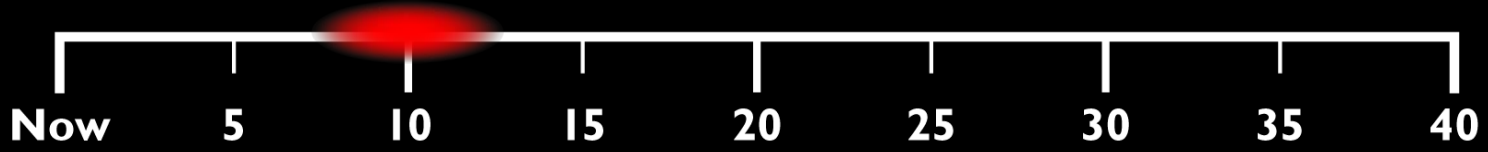




Visible Identities

- Identity
- Awareness

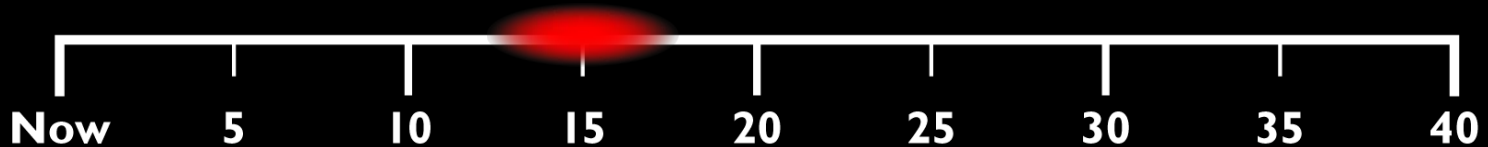
- Fashion has limits as a mode of displaying identity
- Augmented Reality as a site of social identity expression
- The creation of a class of social have-nots



Avoiding Ambient Indoctrination

■ Awareness
■ Control

- Advertising is propagation of cultural desire
- How would a real-world adblock change how we understand our bodies

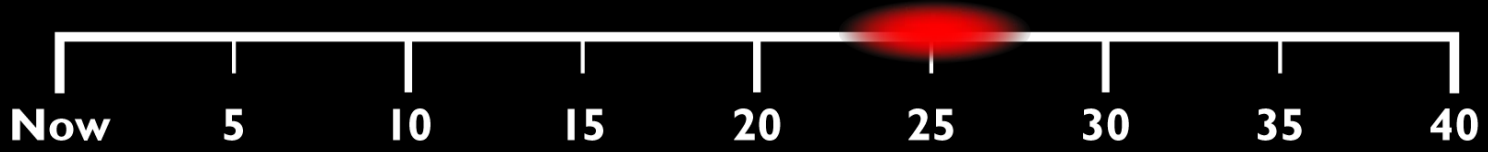




- Intimacy
- Identity
- Awareness
- Control

Making Sex Safe Again

- The sexual revolution
- Late heteronormativity
- Making sex less serious again
- Social interactions with medical implants
- What happens when implants lie

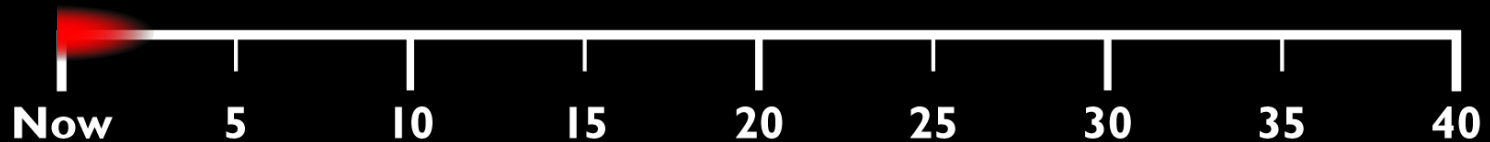




- Intimacy
- Identity
- Control

Orgasm Control

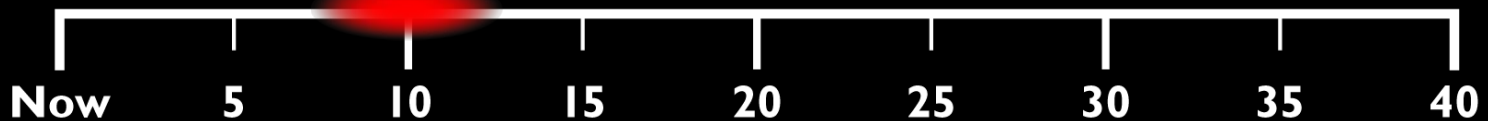
- The push-button orgasm
- Inducing, sensing, suppressing
- Decoupling orgasm from sex
- Remote control and DS
- Monitoring: sex offenders and purity rings
- Sex work



DNA Sequencing for Sex Workers

■ Control
■ Economics

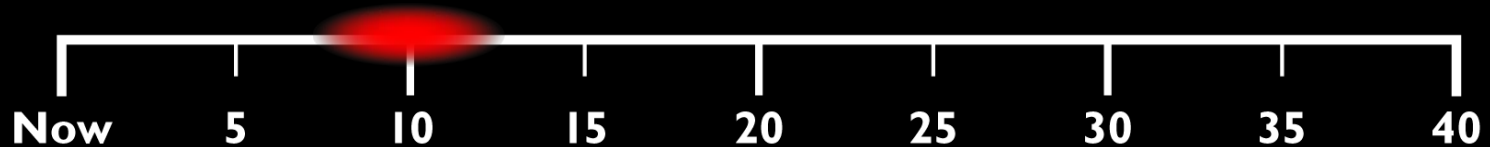
- Sex workers performing heteronormative acts are at a power disadvantage vs. their clients
- Anonymity and identifiability as sources of power and weakness
- Social enforcement



Outsourcing Judgment

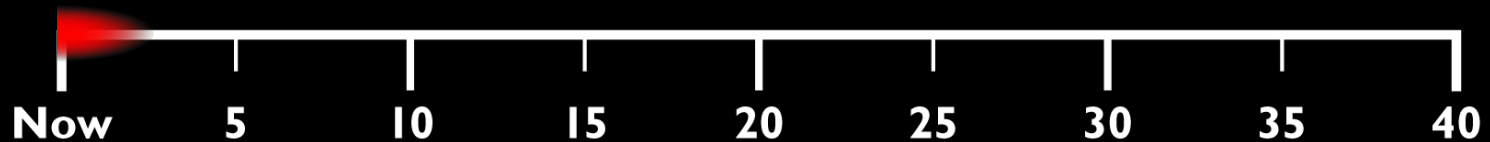
■ Awareness
■ Control

- How much can someone be protected from themselves?
- Can you give away legal control of your person programmatically?



Pulse Bracelets

- **Can we enable remote intimacy with a very low bandwidth communication channel?**
- **What does sensory integration of physiological state do to a relationship?**



Endocrine Management

- **A fairly small number of chemicals control a wide range of our behavior and thought**
- **How does real time procedural control of your neurochemistry affect your life?**
- **What happens if you crosslink your neurochemistry with someone?**





- Intimacy
- Identity
- Control

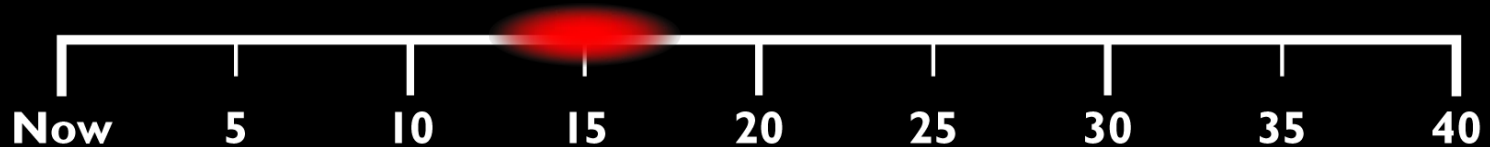
Mutable Appearance

- Can technology speed up body modification and fashion to the speed of social interaction?
- Can we create new channels for emotional expression?



Softbody Tentacles

- Can we profoundly alter the shape of the body without waiting for biotechnology?
- What happens when disability turns into augmentation?

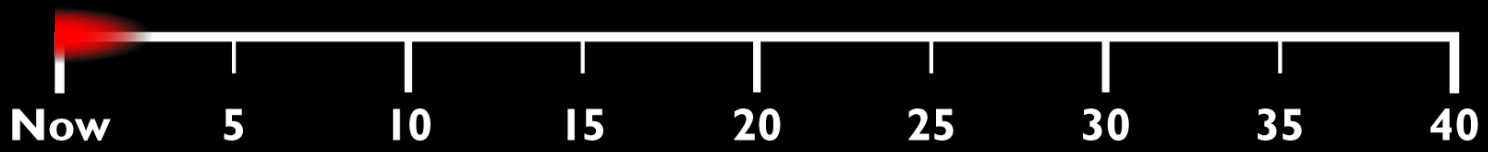




Emergency Bootycall System

- Intimacy
- Awareness
- Control

- Fuck buddies are great
- Scheduling sucks

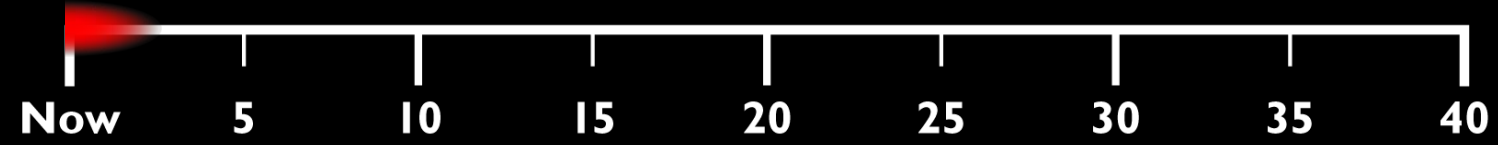




- Intimacy
- Identity
- Control
- Economics

Enabling Nontraditional Reproductive Groups

- Heterosexual sex and reproduction are already separate
- Breastfeeding for the entire caregiving unit





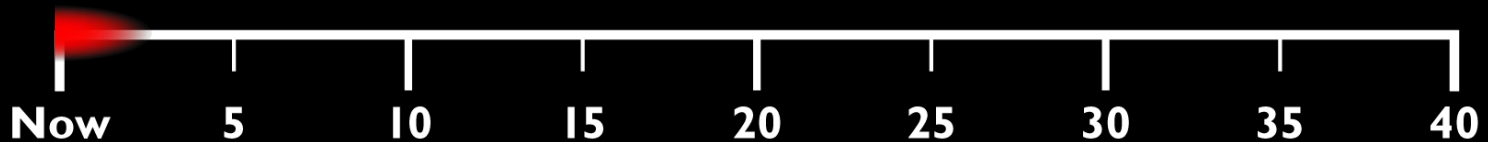
Nontraditional Group Legal Structures

Identity

Control

Economics

- **Why not crack legal relationships open instead of just extending them a notch?**
- **Turn the corporate person into a useful tool for nontraditional relationships**



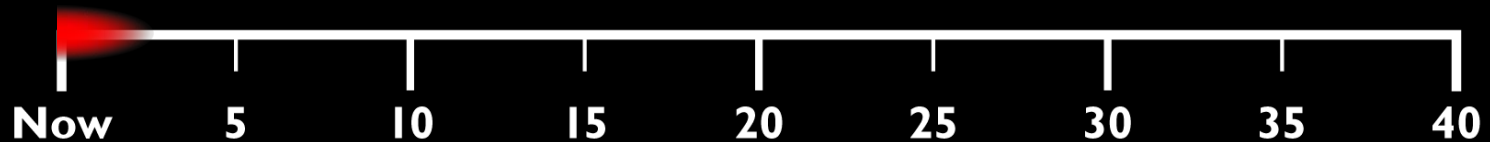
Family Cohousing

Identity

Control

Economics

- Heteronormative relationships are embedded in the built environment
- Raising kids is hard, especially without a way to share income and labor
- Architecture as social liberation



Designing the Future of Sex

Questions?



Eleanor Saitta
ella@structurelight.com