

SHEFALEE VASUDEV | on | s e x

# Bedtime Stories

No woman I spoke to confused love with sex or an orgasm with a diamond engagement ring



NILANJAN DAS

**S**ex is not about climax, it's about captivity," said a gravelly female voice on the phone. "I live when I have sex. Who wants to end it with the 'little death'?"

As a relationships writer ("sex beat", as one of my editor chides me), I thought I had a smug view (point) of the bedroom. But these lines blew me.

I must have called 40 women or so for this odd-ball trend

among urban women of seeking sexual relationships without commitment from men ("Sex Only, Please", May 27). Funny, most of them were unknown to me—they were referred by friends and colleagues. Calling up strangers with blatant questions on their sex lives was like pulling the trigger on a deadly little gun. So I was ready for the recoil.

The initial

response to my "sex-only" calls ranged from dead silence to unsuppressed giggles. Some slammed the phone down. I don't blame them. My questions oscillated in mixed-up sexual grammar.

**Past Complex:** Have sex-only relationships left you feeling guilty?

**Present Cliched:** Why have sex with a guy who will never stand by you?

**Present Sensational:** Is sex headier when there are no expectations?

**Future Imperfect:** What will you do if someday you don't find a sexual partner?

And then the reaction I wasn't prepared for: a few women invited me to take a walk with them in their secret garden. Some were sanguine, others doubtful. But they talked with abandon. Some believed that sex

made the world go round and were willing to take risks to turn that hypothesis into reality. Others said sexual ecstasy had nothing to do with Mr Right ladling out a few spoonfuls. They didn't confuse love with sex. Or an earth-shattering orgasm with a diamond engagement ring. They were all Indian, most brought up by mothers who were clueless about the geography of G-spot.

"Sex is a need I don't want to closet," said one. "Sex and love are great when they

are compatible, but having one without the other doesn't destroy the thrill of either," said another. A 33-year-old had me gaping when, via e-mail, she described how she had "trained" a young student to satisfy her sexually. There was no friendship between them. "It was purely sexual, raw and terrific," she wrote. "I was disappointed when he felt demeaned and left."

So, was this a response to the Kama Sutra industry? I don't think so. These girls

were not bragging. Nor were they issuing disclaimers of the I-don't-know-what-came-over-me type. A lot of insightful truths came tumbling out with charming candour. All the women said that the "anything goes" variety of sex was not enough for them. "After all, if sex is the only goal, why settle for anyone who isn't sack-savvy?" asked one.

"They must be saying all this to sound cool and liberated," said one of my colleagues. Come on, guys. Isn't full-blood-

edness the *raison d'être* of sex? Give the devil her due.

Some readers decided to do just that. As a memoirist of promiscuity, I got calls from men asking for phone numbers of the "bad girls". A man called from Vaishno Devi saying he wanted to talk "sex only" with me. Another "agreed" there was nothing like sex. I re-agreed politely. A few asked me out assuring me they were good guys.

That says it all. It's the bad girls who get all the good guys.

ANSHUL AVIJIT | *on* | art and fashion

## Sense and Smelling Salts

All that is trendy and tempting, a magnet for the eyes and a shock for the wallet, is in



**CREATIVITY UNPLUGGED:**  
A video installation at the Apeejay Media Gallery

Photographs by HEMANT CHAWLA

**W**riting about aesthetics in Delhi, the most powerful centre of visual activity after Wajid Ali's Lucknow, traditionally requires composure, compassion ... and some smelling salts. Now, I think you need less of all three. Look at the stuff showing at the Apeejay Media Gallery in the suburbs or in the throne room of India Habitat Centre (IHC), a post-modern imambara cast in Dhaulpur stone and fibre glass. I like these places. On the opening night of an exhibition, the air is congealed with the promise of edgy art and Vin Ballet and throbbing with creators and coaches who nod knowingly and talk about Nan Goldin whom they saw at the Pompidou.

Out here, photo-realism is in, so is