

(COMEDY)

“I MAKE FUN OF IDEAS, NOT PEOPLE”

We're a bit in love with award-winning comedian Sara Pascoe. She speaks to *Stylist* about her leftfield new show

Whoever said sex isn't funny was wrong. It's a riot. At least it is when Sara Pascoe has her say. The comedian's new tour of her Edinburgh Fringe show – *Sara Pascoe Vs History* – is inspired by sexual anthropology and covers everything from the evolution of breasts to the perils of pornography. But while it might be all laughs on stage, Pascoe tells us the show is actually inspired by some serious issues.

“I got the idea for my show from a book about sperm selection. I'd just started a new relationship and at the time I was reading *Sex At Dawn* by Christopher Ryan and Cacilda Jethá, which says monogamy is not a natural state for humans. It says that, millions of years ago, women were very sexually active, but post-Victorian anthropologists like Darwin ignored this because they lived in a culture where women *definitely* weren't sexual. I found it really interesting.”

“Monogamy isn't easy. We have to forgive our failures. If you're in a relationship and you fancy someone else, it doesn't mean your relationship isn't working. We used to be monkeys. Our lights are on. We notice attractive people. I think we feel torn between our animal pasts and how civilisation tells us we should behave.”

“I'm on the fence when it comes to porn. We talk about the prevalence of pornography, and that's because it feeds on an urge that's naturally there, yet allows us to carry on our relationships. But that doesn't mean it's not damaging for some people. Teenagers are growing up in a crazy world because of the internet. Sex education should be about online pornography, sex crimes and what consent *really* means. How the hell are they supposed to find that out for themselves?”

“Comedy doesn't have to be cruel. For a while, the majority of successful comedians were a bit misogynist, a bit ageist, a bit fattist and a bit homophobic. Now it seems comedy has more heart and empathy. I started out in panel shows and the easiest jokes are the ones making fun of someone's appearance. So I never let myself make them. Personally, it feels like bullying. Instead, I make fun of ideas and ideologies. It's more challenging to create victimless comedy.”

“I defend Miley Cyrus in my show. We should give her the benefit of the doubt. Everything I have read suggests she has been manipulated by men. But Miley's response is, 'It's for me, I'm sexual and I'm enjoying it.' Maybe she is into it, in which case we have to respect that. If we just censor things, we're denying female sexuality.”

Sara Pascoe Vs History; various UK venues until 5 February 2015; sarapascoe.com

SARA HAS MASTERED
THE ART OF KEEPING
A STRAIGHT FACE