



YES, WE FUCK

Written by Antonio Centeno Ortiz, social activist and coauthor of the documentary “Yes, we fuck”
with Raúl de la Morena.

Functional diversity. Language resistance too!

There are many ways of being in the world. Some walk with feline elegance, others slide like electrons over magnetic fields in their wheelchairs. For certain eyes light can sculpt images with celestial precision and for others simplify the universe to a tone and its peace. The vibration of the air unleashes melodies in certain ears and in others the silence of bees sipping. There are minds absorbed in the pursuit of the Higgs Boson and others retracted upon themselves in a succession of mirrors without beginning or end.

One of the intrinsic characteristics to the idea of humanity is that of its diversity. In particular, functional diversity is an indisputable reality. There are different ways of working, of doing things in our interaction with the world, with others and with ourselves. However, not all forms of being are welcomed. Society has been organized as if everyone moves, sees, listens, perceives and understands in the same way. Even worse, as if the idea of converting spaces and social processes into homogenizing machines to produce a sort of "normal human being" would be desirable to get rid of all the uncertainty and complexity that diversity entails, at the cost of losing all of its creative potential. Some of the people suffering systematic and systemic discrimination due to our functional differences have named ourselves "people with functional diversity"¹ for a decade, as a form of resistance to these processes of normalization.

It is not a change of nomenclature but a political position that refuses to classify people according to abilities linked to the idea of productivity and the idea that people is isolated from the community

¹ Term coined by M. Lobato and J. Romañach (2005) in the Independent Living Forum.

-without being able to count on others. Instead of focusing on how unproductive the citizen is by disconnecting him/her from the rest, we propose to situate the axis of thought in how society improves as a whole by endowing people with the necessary supports -relations without domination- so they contribute to the community with the richness of its diversity.

"Yes, we fuck!" If we all fuck, we fuck better.

The successful evolutionary response of human beings to their extreme fragility (we are born with skull bones not yet welded so that a huge but immature brain can exit through the pelvic canal) has always been weaving communities of heterogeneous individuals that cooperate with one another. At some point in our history we lost the direction, cumulative craving diverted "common sense" towards the idea of homogeneous individuals competing with each other. However, the 20th century showed us how these mythological ideas of "normality" and "self-sufficient individual" can generate the worst of possible societies, the most invisible world we could imagine, which most crude and paradigmatic expression was the Nazi Germany by Adolf Hitler.

However, in the last decades we have accumulated empirical evidence that social processes obtain better results for the population as a whole when they include human diversity in general and functional diversity in particular. Examples of the latter are transport, urbanism, pedagogy, architecture... Thanks to thinking about different ways of working we have achieved a safer and more comfortable transport, a more livable urbanism, pedagogy with more and better tools, a more friendly architecture, etc. These benefits are for everyone, not only for people with functional diversity, but it is the presence of the latter that has been the inspiration and the engine to achieve these social transformations towards a better life.

Everything indicates that the same thing should happen in the field of sexuality. If we all fuck, we fuck better. Do you imagine what it would be like to include in the hitherto narrow territories of desire and pleasure all bodies, all forms of moving, feeling and understanding? Here seems to be a pending revolution. We speak about revolution because it dynamites the hetero-patriarchy that hijacks our bodies and desires at the service of capitalist reproduction; a revolution because it claims pleasure for the abject bodies, the same bodies that are unproductive for that capitalist system. This is the political potential that gives meaning to a project like the documentary "Yes, we fuck!", a look at six stories about the sexuality of people with functional diversity that challenges the whole

population about how we build the relationship with our own body and with others through desires and pleasures in a scenario of capacitive² and sexist oppression.

Alliances creep-queer, the rebellion of monsters.

We will describe in the following sections of this article how the process of making the documentary had a value in itself, while it generated a meeting space for different political movements linked to the body and sexuality: feminisms, transfeminisms³, functional diversity, LGBTI⁴, sexual workers, "gordx"⁵ activism ... A context of radical resistance in which the ones naming ourselves "people with functional diversity" have begun to move towards the re-appropriation of the insult "creep", in a similar way of what has been done with "queer."

Meeting others has generated experiences that have raised such stimulating projects as "Pornorthopedics" (collaborative design of accessible sex toys), "Nexos" (a postmodern creep-transfeminist short film), "Assex" (a self-managed group for sexual assistance), and "Mutant Picnics" (playful encounters of queer and creep communities). There are difficulties in this process of confluence, such as the scarcity of spaces that are both accessible and queer-friendly, or the different level of politicization of each group. Nevertheless, the affinity in speeches and the flourishing personal ties that are woven point to a deep alliance that has only just begun.

We have similar discourses because we share similar life experiences which have to do with having suffered the weight of a look that despises difference, which pathologizes it to depoliticize it and thus to corner it and crush it in that dark alley that is the terrain of "the personal". We are not going to let this continue, we have found ourselves to follow the path together, to rescue all the potentiality of our bodies and our vulnerability, to celebrate the difference and to re-politicize inequality, and to embody a revolt from the margins, from the abject. The rebellion of monsters is underway, and perhaps if it goes slowly is because it goes far.

Daily stories. Fuck as you live and live as you fuck.

Obviously, as with general population, the experience of sexuality in people with functional diversity should be developed mainly in the daily domains of friendships, couples, poly-love sporadic

² A system of oppression that divides the population into two categories, capable and incapable, from the primacy of certain capacities over others and measuring them by isolating the individual from the community.

³ Feminist activism that questions the male-female binarism proposing greater fluidity in both identity and sexual orientation.

⁴ Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex.

⁵ The term 'gordo' (masc.), 'gorda' (fem.) means 'fat' as a pejorative adjective in Spanish.

relationships, etc. We know that this is not the case today. There is a marked inequality generated by material and symbolic barriers. In this sense, affirmations such as "there are people with functional diversity who can only fuck if they pay", are biased (they are neither more nor less certain than for so many other human groups) and play the sad role of self-fulfilling prophecy by reinforcing that collective imaginary that expels people with functional diversity from pleasures in everyday areas.

The documentary shows two stories linked to everyday life, from the conviction that one fucks as s/he lives and lives as s/he fucks. That is to say, if one has a life on his/her own being able to freely assume responsibility for everyday life, establishing relations of non-domination, it is very probable to equally have a free sex life, rich and pleasant. And, conversely, if you live a free, rich and pleasant sexuality, you will forge an irreducible will to have a life of your own, an independent life.

It should be understood that "independent living" does not mean doing things without support but having responsibility and control over the needed support to freely link with others. The denial of the right to a self-determined life goes hand in hand with the denial of the right to a free and full sexuality; both violences are being mutually fed. Both women with functional diversity and people with intellectual diversity have suffered more than anyone the weight of this double denial, hence the importance that the daily life stories collected in the documentary are carried out by a woman with physical diversity and a group of young people with intellectual diversity.

[Post-porn⁶ and ejaculation of pussies⁷. Recovering our bodies and their representation.](#)

If up to now we have highlighted the connection between daily life of people with functional diversity and the experience of an emancipated sexuality, it is also true that much of our relationship with the sexual fact is circumscribed more to thinking than to practice, more to our management of the images produced by culture, pornography and science than real experiences. Put another way, the representation of sexuality is important not so much because it shows a reality but because it builds it. Hence, the other two stories of "Yes, we fuck!" are workshops that focus on the importance of re-appropriating our bodies and their representation -one about post-porn and functional diversity, and the other about the ejaculation of pussies.

⁶ Political and artistic movement that re-appropriates the visual language of porn to propose other representations of sexuality with other corporealities, identities, desires and practices.

⁷ Term used by trans feminist activists to refer to "female ejaculation".

Post-porn as a political tool that seeks to recycle that powerful machine of creating subjectivity that porn is, tells us about a diverse sexuality in bodies, desires and practices free of sexism and "capacitism", empowering subordinate subjects in a non coitus-centered practice and sexualizing the entire body. In short, the ideal audiovisual language to create a new collective imagination about the sexuality of people with functional diversity through a self-presentation that materializes the transit from objects at the service of other glances to subjects enunciating our own desires and pleasures.

The visualization of the ejaculation of pussies, a reality ignored by the patriarchal science until the popularization of the internet, claims the knowledge from the embodied experience and the recovery of pleasure in female bodies, in a sexuality much beyond reproduction. When a blind woman also participates in the workshop, the common struggle that feminisms and people with functional diversity share is made even clearer by "unpathologizing" our "corporealities" and rescuing them for a pleasure that is useless in the eyes of a capitalist who is as capable as sexist.

Sexual assistance and inclusive prostitution⁸: tools for empowerment.

Two of the documentary stories are focused on sex work, one on sexual assistance and the other on inclusive prostitution. They are not the same, although both share the same forms of sex work with a great potential for empowerment both for the people with functional diversity and for the workers.

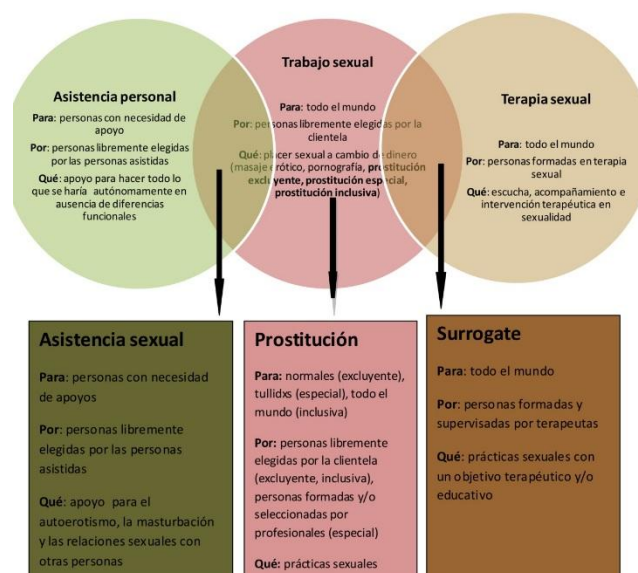
Sexual assistance is a support for sexual access to one's own body: to recognize it, to explore it, to masturbate it, are actions usually done by oneself, but some people with functional diversity require support of sexual assistants. In the same way, sexual assistance can provide support before, during and / or after engaging in sexual practices with someone else. In short, the sexual assistant is not someone to have sex with, but someone who supports you to have sex with yourself or with another person.

We do not propose to limit the tasks of sexual assistance for moral reasons but because we circumscribe them to where the materialization of the right to access our own body comes from. The proposed actions are those that the person with functional diversity could do by him/herself in the absence of functional differences. It does not include practices such as coitus or oral sex, for

⁸ We refer to prostitution that addresses all kinds of corporealities, including functional diversity in general and intellectual diversity in particular.

example, because no one carries them out with themselves; they always require another person. And the other bodies are accessed by agreement, not by right. In the field of paid sex, it is the space of inclusive prostitution (if the goal is pleasure) or surrogate⁹ (if there is a therapeutic intention).

Understood in this way, sexual assistance is a field of intersection of two already existing labor figures: personal assistance¹⁰ and sex work¹¹. The first one share with sexual assistance the justification of its necessity (support to do tasks in the way determined by functional differences) and the role that plays each part, in the sense that it is the person with functional diversity who assumes the knowledge and the responsibility to decide at each moment what and how the assistant should do. In sex work, on the other hand, it is the working person who has the knowledge and responsibility to decide what and how to proceed. However, some sex work such as prostitution or erotic massage do share tasks such as stroking or masturbating with sexual assistance.



These coincidences between sexual assistance and personal assistance in justification and roles, and with some sex works in practices, draws three possible scenarios to determine who should develop it as a profession:

⁹ Figure of sexual therapy aimed at the general population, not just people with functional diversity. Surrogate may have sexual practices with the patient under the supervision of a therapist.

¹⁰ Personal assistance is a support for the self-care of the person with functional diversity, so it is the person who decides who, for what, how, when and where s/he attends.

¹¹ By "sex work" we mean any activity that aims to excite and/or provide sexual pleasure in exchange for money. It is the case of prostitution, sexual assistance, pornography, surrogate, erotic massage, etc.

a) Individuals who provide personal assistance and those who do sex work (prostitution, erotic massage) decide among themselves who performs (or refuses) to carry out sexual assistance.

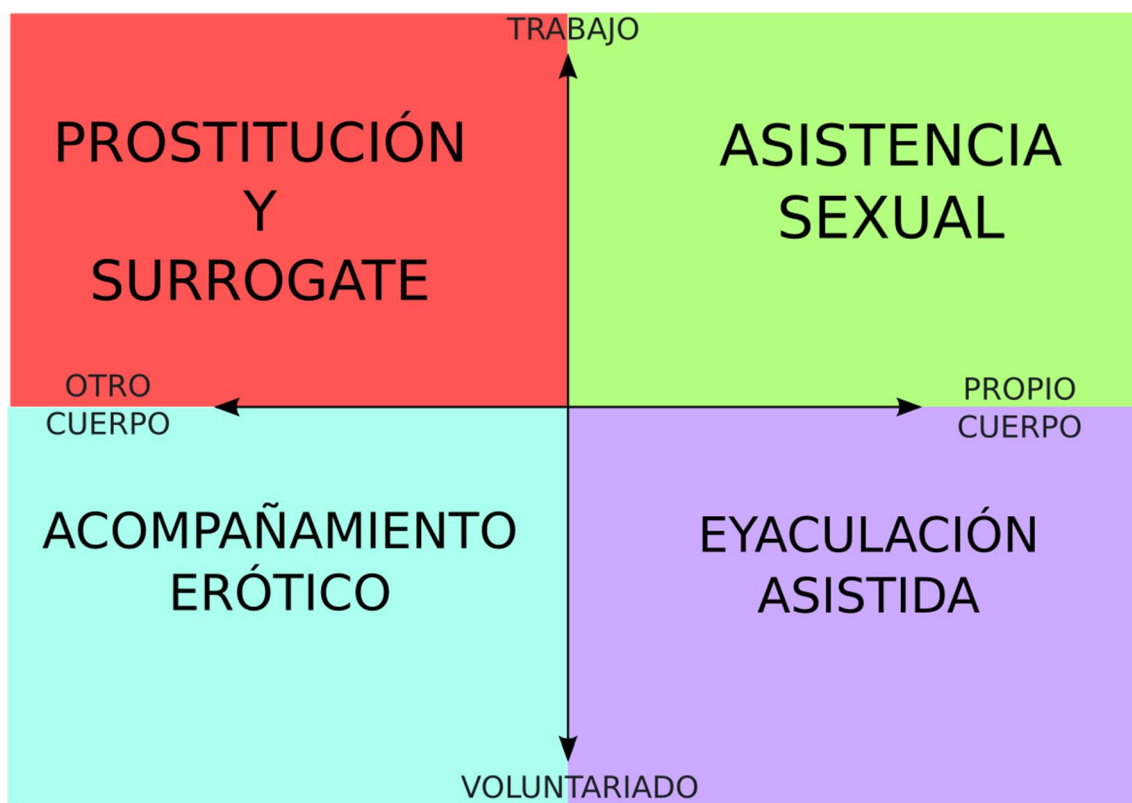
b) Sexual assistance is carried out by both personal assistants and sex workers (prostitution, erotic massage).

c) A new workforce is created within the sphere of sex work with the roles of a personal assistant, called 'sexual assistance'.

In our view, option (c) is clearer and offers better prospects of articulating a political proposal that makes sexual assistance a right. It generates concrete obligations for public authorities, especially in terms of funding.

Going back to the tasks of sexual assistance, it is important to keep in mind that masturbating someone or helping them to have sex with another person has an important erotic load. Feelings and emotions can be intense. That makes more difficult to manage the bond and maintain roles and expectations. Un-eroticize sexual assistance seems neither possible nor desirable, and therefore we will have to continue learning and sharing strategies and guidelines to facilitate deal and a good harmony between the assistant and the assisted. Having a clear definition of sexual assistance is necessary because it helps to delineate tasks, roles and expectations, but it is not enough.

Part of the confusion about what is sexual assistance is given by the reduction to a single point of what actually are two fundamental axes to define the figure. On the one hand, there is the axis of what body is sexually accessed; it is not the same to accede one's own body than to accede another's. On the other hand, the axis of work: a professional activity has nothing to do with a volunteer one.



Sexual assistance is located in the labor field of the access to the own body. The term *erotic accompaniment* is a concept coined by the 'Tandem team' project (they use '*intimate and erotic accompaniment*') and *assisted ejaculation* is the one used by the Japanese organization 'White hands' (only for men). Obviously, the lines separating one from the other are neither straight nor clear. Even so, it is important to try to order the concepts so both those who receive the sexual assistance and those who provide it can understand better the practices, legal implications, roles and expectations that come into play.

Logistics matters. About funding and training.

There is a tendency to call "sexual assistance" all sexual work done with people with functional diversity. It is sometimes argued that prior compulsory training converts special prostitution¹² into sexual assistance. Something surprising and difficult to accept, since paying for a service that includes sexually accessing another body is clearly about prostitution, regardless of the personal characteristics of people.

¹² We refer to prostitution that serves only people with functional diversity, not the general population.

This conception of training can be stigmatizing for sex workers (they are ignorant if I do not train them), for people with functional diversity (they cannot take care of themselves) and feeds corporatist temptations (this job can only be done by anyone who is trained by me). The more training the better, but always under the perspective of a right at the disposal of the working person, never as a previous filter that hijacks knowledge and limits personal freedom. When someone is going to touch our body, the freedom of choice must be absolute, because it gives many more chances that the service is satisfactory than the intended authority that grants any degree. People with functional diversity have the best knowledge about their bodies, and what is not known has to be learnt, as it is for the rest of the population. It is not by turning every activity of our life into a pedagogical beating that we become experts on the job.

There is a fundamental problem related to economics. The extraordinary expenses, the exclusion of the educational system and the labor world, a rickety pension system, mean that the income of people with functional diversity are, on average, lower than those of the rest of the population. This makes it difficult to agree on prices that satisfy both parts. It is again crucial to distinguish between sexual assistance and inclusive prostitution, as well as recognize its complementary role. Understanding the first as a tool to materialize the right to the own body is possible in the medium / long term if public powers assume their responsibility in financing it. By understanding the complementary role of the second, we will be closer to guaranteeing labor rights for working people.

We speak of a "complementary role" in the sense that sexual assistance empowers by breaking the barrier of sexual access to one's own body, and inclusive prostitution empowers by facilitating experimentation, play and the joy of sharing sex with other bodies. The first is only necessary for some people whose functional differences require such support and is therefore a fundamental right that must be financed by the State. The second, however, does not respond to the specific needs arising from functional differences to exercise a right because it is a common service to the entire population (such as education, leisure, housing, trade...). We know that it is much better for common services to be inclusive: this improves them for the population as a whole, while converting common services into 'special services for special people' does not transform socially and leads to a world with ghettos that perpetuate isolation and segregation. We start from a reality in which prostitution is mostly exclusive but at the same time special prostitution is not the answer. We must work to achieve inclusive prostitution.

Thus, sexual assistance and inclusive prostitution are different sex jobs in their justification, roles, expectations, possible practices, the people to whom they are addressed to and their configuration

as a right, but complementary in the process of opening the range of possibilities for people with functional diversity to live one's own body and the link with others from desire and pleasure.

	Physical access	Professio nal	Training	Assist ed's role	Sexual Practices	Assisteds
Sexual assistance	own	work	volunte er	boss	masturbat ion	need of support
Erotic accompaniment	companio n	voluntee r	?	?	anyone	functional diversity
Special prostitution	prostitute	work	compuls ory	client	anyone	functional diversity
Inclusive prostitution	prostitut e	work	volunte er	client	anyone	anyone
Surrogate	surrogate	work	compuls ory	patien t	anyone	anyone
Assisted ejaculation	own	voluntee r	compuls ory	patien t	masturbat ion	need of support

In the margins of the margins: gender and intellectual diversity.

We said that sexual assistance shares justification and roles with personal assistance, and this should help us understand how this figure is articulated for people with intellectual diversity. The way of making decisions is structured in three cases, depending on what the person with intellectual diversity can decide:

a) By him/herself. No one intervenes.

b) With support. Another person (the personal assistant) informs and accompanies in the process.

c) S/he cannot decide, neither with support. His/her will has to be interpreted by the personal assistant

If we understand how the decision-making with personal assistance works, we will understand how sexual assistance works for people with intellectual diversity: exactly in the same way. Undoubtedly, the process is more complex than with physical diversity, but it is perfectly viable and absolutely necessary. If someone has seen systematically denied his/her right to make decisions it is people with intellectual diversity who are cornered in the margins of the citizenship for the sake of a "protection" that in many cases almost nullifies them as people.

And it is also from those margins of the margins where women with functional diversity begin to claim their sexuality in general and sexual assistance in particular. Machismo and 'capacitism' are fed back to deny their right to their own body, desires and pleasures, placing them in a position of greater invisibility and less public voice than the rest of women and men with functional diversity. No proposal on what and how sexual assistance should be developed, including what we have presented in this article, will make sense if it is not possible to incorporate the voice and experience of women with functional diversity in the areas of debate and political decision-making. In this sense, it is possible to emphasize the great work of Soledad Arnau in the activist and academic field, as well as the incipient interest in the political field of Senator Virginia Felipe.

[Masturbating mums and whores who cry? Independent Living NOW!](#)

One of the most tremendous iconic images that are exhibited to justify special prostitution is that of mothers who are willing to masturbate their children with functional diversity and whores who burst into tears when contemplating deformed bodies. This presents us with an imperative necessity, irrepressible to the point of breaking the taboo of incest and which cannot be solved by prostitution because it is not inclusive.

I do not doubt that behind this tremendous image there are very hard real stories, but it is also true that there are many other stories equally real and diametrically opposite. We have previously argued why we believe that sexual assistance and inclusive prostitution are better options than special prostitution. We do not have statistical data to describe more precisely the complex situation that we want to transform because it is a hidden reality, relegated to the dark basements of 'personal tragedy'. It is more necessary than ever to remember that the personal is political, and shed light on the question also from the incarnated experience.

When I acquired my functional differences (tetraplegia) at the age of 13, my mother became my caregiver. For many years I was denied the opportunity to learn how to take care of myself. Public authorities drained the package with the humiliating and miserable 'child allowance'. My family's income was more than humble so it made it impossible to hire the personal assistance I needed to self-care. Thus, the expectations, preferences and rhythms of my life had to be subordinated to survival in maternal care. My mother could explain the same about herself, of course. The maternal filial bond could not be more distorted. As time passed and I went into adolescence first and youth later, things were going to get worse. In particular, I lacked the slightest intimacy and my body only existed as a problem, where desires and pleasures were not spoken. Of course, there was no support to explore that terrain and I could not do it myself, so it could only be a source of frustration.

This began to change when I got my first income, via study grants and endless tutoring. I contracted my first (few) hours of personal assistance and went sporadically to prostitution services. By the way, when there were tears it was because of discovering that my body hid more possibilities for pleasure than predicted by the men in the doctor coat. All very precarious, all at the cost of impoverishment, but those were my first spaces of freedom and privacy.

Over time and money payed by my mother and myself -a high cost both personal and economic- I finished school, had a good job, went to an official housing and obtained enough personal assistance to live alone and without impoverishment, that is to say, financed by the public powers. Throughout this journey, sexuality was not delayed until having achieved 'the important'; it was an experience from the beginning indispensable for the ideas of freedom, intimacy and self-determination to make sense. If we are not allowed to live through desire and pleasure, there is no possible citizenship.

Throughout this process I learned -I am still learning- to let myself be cared for by those who love me when I want, and to assume all the responsibility and control over my support to take care of myself and others. I learnt to distinguish also the sexual encounter (lovers, whores, girlfriends) from sex with myself (sexual assistance). Just like the personal assistance returned me my mother as a mother, sexual assistance gave me back my body to be with myself playing, exploring and experiencing pleasure.

To rescue our lives and our bodies there are no shortcuts and we cannot afford procrastination. It is a complex road that requires finding the right questions from the beginning so as not to lose track. We will know that we have asked the good questions when the answer is clearly "independent living, NOW!"

BIBLIOGRAPHY

-Documentary 'Yes, We Fuck!' (2015), 60 min. Antonio Centeno, Raúl de la Morena.
www.yeswefuck.org