

Let Me Count the Ways



Sex often takes a turn. It could be a slight turn from the norm, a diversion (from the Latin *di* and *vertere*), or a complete U-turn away from that which is normal, a **perversion** (from *per* and *vertere*).

According to Alfred Kinsey, a large number of people treat any kind of **sex** other than that involving a single man atop a single woman as abnormal. Other groups are less judgmental, considering such varied activity, creative and healthy.

Think you'd like a **spot of perving** (c. 1925, Aust.)? Fine. But only in moderation. As Voltaire reminded us upon declining a second invitation to an orgy, "Once a philosopher, twice a **pervert**."

Let Them Eat Cake

Everyone needs a break from the ordinary and the commonplace. An old blues song celebrated the wife who provided "**cornbread** for her husband and **biscuits** for her back-door man." According to J.L. Dillard (*American Talk*), both **cornbread** and **shortin' bread** were Southern black expressions for "coarse, undistinguished, and routine sex." It was what the French used to refer to as **le pain quotidien**, "the daily bread"—the **act of kind** done in a perfunctory manner, as in a longstanding marriage.¹ **Biscuits** stood for both worldly women and out-of-the-ordinary sexual activity, especially when **hot**. The **cold biscuit** (dull, perhaps unattractive, and only a leftover at that) was something else. When woman was serving, the **hot biscuit got it on** with the **biscuit roller**, one especially adept at the practice. More recently, Kinky Friedman of The Texas Jewboys took yet a different approach with "Get Your Biscuits in the Oven and Your Buns into Bed," (1992) thus incurring the wrath of Feminists who found his tastes all too stale. He and his male cohorts, however, can claim a higher motive, their predilection for **buns**, **biscuits**, and **muffins** clearly demonstrating that man cannot live by bread alone.



Suppose eating, not sex, were the taboo of our century? Suppose it was illegal for more than two people to eat together and suppose even they had to get a license for it and eat in secret while children were fed alone in dark closets? Suppose our billboards and newspaper ads, movies, and books and art devoted themselves to pictures of food—but never one glimpse of anyone eating?...Wouldn't it result in secret, general passions to try esoteric foods? And wouldn't people like to get together, law or none, and talk about the tabooed subject?

—Philip Wylie, *Opus 21*, 1949