



Ellyn Daniels Stand-up comic, writer, actor and model.

THE BLOG

Let Amy Schumer Make You Feel Icky So Your Daughters Can Be Free

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KEVORK DJANSEZIAN / REUTERS

I was trying to write a show for The Edinburgh Festival Fringe. I had writer's block and started flipping through Netflix. I came across Amy Schumer's *The Leather Special*. It had a one star rating, which intrigued me. I was curious to see how bad it was. Instead, I was blown away by how good it was. I watched in amazement as Amy performed with a new level of freedom, confidence and physicality. She had broken through to a new dimension as a comedian. It was truly awe inspiring. The content was honest, relatable and fucking hilarious. How the fuck did it only have one star? I couldn't figure it out.

I assumed it might have something to do with her saying she would push a man off a mountain if he told her performing oral sex on women wasn't his thing. It was misogynistic men who'd given her special a shit rating.



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I stuck with that conclusion until I talked to a girlfriend who told me she didn't like *The Leather Special* because it'd made her feel uncomfortable. She found it to be crude and icky. "I mean, she was talking about how her vagina smells. How gross can you get?" I wondered if my girlfriend's vagina had never smelled and thus she found the prospect of that one day coming to pass a terrifying one.

I found Amy's admission that her vagina smells like "a small barnyard animal" on its best day, comforting and more than that, freeing. Because vaginas do not smell like flowers, or peaches or other allegorical terms used to describe them. They do often smell more bestial than floral, and I imagine taste more sour than sweet. But despite that fact, Amy Schumer will push a man off Red Rocks if that man says performing oral sex on women "isn't his thing." Thank God! I will help her push him. How many women have performed oral sex on men without having those men do the same for them? I have. And I have encountered some pungent penises in my day, but that hasn't stopped me from wanting to give my partners pleasure. However, when those men didn't do the same for me, or worse, only devoted a half-hearted minute or two to the endeavor, I invariably would wonder, "Oh, God, does it smell bad?", instead of thinking, "what an asshole" and getting



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I felt liberated and inspired by Amy's honesty. Why did my friend feel so irritated by it? Probably for the same reason people felt compelled to tell Amy that posing semi-nude for a Pirelli Calendar pic was "brave" (something she covers hilariously in her special). Because women have been shamed for years, hell, probably since the beginning of time. We are shamed for talking openly and honestly about sex, we are shamed for having sex, we are shamed for not having sex, we are shamed for being too fat, we are shamed for being too thin, we are shamed for not wanting to show off our bodies, we are shamed for showing off our bodies, we are shamed for performing fellatio, we are shamed for not performing fellatio, we are shamed for orgasming too loudly, we are shamed for not being able to orgasm, we are shamed for having careers, we are shamed for not having careers, we are shamed for having children, we are shamed for not having children, and worst of all, we are shamed for aging. How dare we demand that a man do the same for us sexually as we do for him? How dare we admit that we don't love the taste of semen? And how dare we pose nude if we don't have six pack abs? We are all human beings in these amazing bodies that allow us to go on this incredible journey known as life. Why shouldn't all women feel comfortable posing nude for a photo? Why shouldn't all humans feel comfortable posing nude for a photo?

I asked a male friend of mine to watch *The Leather Special* to get his thoughts. His conclusion: it worked because she wasn't playing the fat girl, but instead saying, "I might be overweight but I am still a sexual being". Huh? That was what he had gleaned? The problem with that conclusion is that Amy Schumer is not fat. She is probably an American



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posed semi-nude. Why is it bold for a woman to claim her sexuality or brave for her to pose semi-nude for a photo? Why aren't those things normal? The answer to that question is the same answer to this question: Why did my mother used to tell me, "clothes look better on the hanger, honey. The thinner you are, the better clothes will look on you. That's why models are so thin." Because we have been sold a ridiculous standard of female beauty which is extremely far off from what an average healthy body looks like, so we can all be driven to hate ourselves and then buy products that might help us look like the people we see in magazines. In the meantime, we should all shut up and hope we can find a man who will go down on us. Maybe there is a product we should buy to make that more pleasant for him?

Amy Schumer is not fat. Vaginas smell. Men need to go down on women and talking about all of that is what makes Amy Schumer brave; not her posing semi-nude for a photo. And expressing what it truly feels like to be a woman in a man's world is not crude, it's liberating. Maybe watching *The Leather Special* makes you feel icky now, but it might free your daughter from feeling ashamed later.

Thank God I had watched it. I was ready to write my show. And I was going to start with how I became a bulimic teenage model.

Emotional Terrorism is at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe from 3rd - 26th August at 9pm at *Just The Tonic* at The Caves. Tickets can be bought here: [Just The Tonic](#)

Ellyn Daniels will be performing Emotional Terrorism in London on the below dates:

Wednesday 26th & Thursday 27th July - The Courtyard Theatre, Hoxton, 7.30pm [Tickets](#)

Friday 28th & Saturday 29th July - Hen and Chickens Theatre, Islington, 7.30pm [Tickets](#)

Sunday 30th July - The Rosemary Branch Theatre, Shoreditch, 2.30pm and 7.30pm [Tickets](#)

For more information about Ellyn see www.ellyndaniels.com