

Hot to Frot

By Alan Bennett Ilagan

For years I've been doing something that I've always considered a little odd, perhaps even subversive. It's a sexual act that I thought had no official description or wording, and it's something I've had a hard time describing to my friends. It turns out that what I've been doing my whole life, and constituting as sex, is frottage, or "frot" for short. Finally, a sophisticated name (of French derivation, no less) for a difficult-to-fully describe practice. I just never knew I was so commonplace.

It seems that frottage is a widespread, growing activity that a number of men engage in (and probably many more, like myself, are engaged in it without really knowing that's what they're doing). Webster's Dictionary defines it as "sexual gratification from rubbing against the body of another person." My partner refers to frot as "swordfighting", but it is more commonly called "cock to cock" or "dick to dick" sex. Pretty self-explanatory, though numerous variations exist. According to the description given by Luke Shelton and Bill Weintraub in "The Man2Man Alliance", frottage is "full-body, phallus-on-phallus sex, done face-to-face and heart-to-heart." Basically, it's a hand-job using other parts of one's body.

For some of us, this is our limit ~ we never get to full-on, well, full-in, anal sex. This may be due to a number of reasons. Let's face it, anal sex is sometimes a messy affair, and the accessories and preparation required for it to be done safely can seem excessive. It also may not be the most comfortable of acts when one is lucky enough to have a partner who is well-endowed (though many would consider this a precious problem to have). Frottage is a viable alternative for those who are averse to anything anal.

Some consider frot to be more masculine than anal sex, which a few frot proponents consider unequal, degrading and dangerous. While there are undoubtedly more risks involved in anal sex, the idea that it unequal and degrading and less masculine is rather suspect. There are many who claim that anal sex is far more masculine and intimate ~ the ultimate expression of man-to-man love.

Shelton and Weintraub are decidedly against this view. Experts in the art of frottage, both give good reasons and make a number of valid points in their arguments favoring frot over anal sex. They assert that frottage is done "without any surrender or sacrifice of either's masculinity." In my limited experience with anal sex, and from what I hear from many gay men, the acquiescence and enjoyment of the receiving "bottom" is a choice that that person makes on his own, except in cases of rape. To assign "surrender or sacrifice" is to ignore the choice implicit in such sexual transactions.

Shelton and Weintraub go on to write: "...the erotic pleasure in anal penetration is so minimal, and, when joined with promiscuity, the dangers anal presents to its practitioners and the community so great, that it's difficult to conceive of a practice more ruinous or less enjoyable taking center place in a sexual subculture."

First of all, there are more than a few men who would argue that anal sex is extremely enjoyable, for both parties, and contains the ultimate "erotic pleasure". I've known men who can ejaculate without touching their cocks simply by getting a good butt-fuck. And I've known other men who find no greater erotic satisfaction than sticking their pricks in and out of some hot guy's ass.

Second, it is generally agreed upon that there are more bottoms than tops in this world. How to account for this deliberate decision of the majority to actively engage in something "degrading" other than by the extreme pleasure afforded the participant? To claim that such pleasure is minimal seems rather dubious.

What's surprising about the literature and rhetoric of the anti-anal stance is the refusal to allow for different sexual practices. There is the slightest whiff of self-hatred and intrinsic homophobia in all of this. Shelton and Weintraub make some reasonable points, but none are fully questioned or explored. It is extremely dangerous, particularly in this troubled time, to judge someone else's sexual activities. To join in such judgment and condemnation is risky business at best, and to lash out against "effeminacy" in the gay world is ludicrous and self-defeating.

However, despite Shelton and Weintraub's hasty dismissal of all things anal, they are refreshingly pro-sex, and committed to the sexual expression of love between men. They wisely argue for our sexual freedom, while condemning promiscuity, citing historical examples all the way back to ancient Greece. (It's compelling evidence, but there is also a history of anal sex in such times, and very little known of frottage.)

Another debate regarding frot is whether or not it is completely fulfilling or if it's simply a weak substitute for full-fledged anal sex. True, some men resort to frot only when they're tired or not in the mood to go through the motions of safe anal sex, and for them it may be nothing but a brief purgatorial stop-over until they can go all the way. But for a lot of us, frottage is as good as, if not better than, anal sex.

Personally speaking, frot has always been fulfilling for me and my partner, as well as for all of my previous relationships, and there is great enjoyment and pleasure in it. It can be an end unto itself, and a happy end at that. It is also safer than anal sex, and doesn't necessarily require condoms or other paraphernalia. Questions of which is more masculine or effeminate are irrelevant. Do what feels good for you and let the rest of the world worry about the rest.