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 Dild-O's Cereal  
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### Annotated Bibliography

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. Mariner Books, 2007.

In this graphic novel, Bechdel explores her relationship with her abusive father, focusing on their queerness and shared interest in literature. It delves into her first period, her explorations of gayness in the library and in bed, and her coming out. It analyzes how being a closeted gay man contributed to her father's suicide. By including these aspects, Bechdel provides an excellent example for exploring sexuality and repression in comics.

Bechdel, Alison. *The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For*. Mariner Books, 2008.

This compilation of comic strips spanning 25 years follows a cast of mostly lesbian women as they navigate jobs, relationships, and family. This comic is considered the origin of the Bechdel Test, a basic test for the representation of women in media. To pass, a film or book must contain a scene where at least two women talk independently about something other than a man. As a staple of women's representation, *Dykes to Watch Out For* is a perfect place to find examples of female cartoon characters.

Boyle, T. Coraghessan. *The Road to Welville*. Signet Book, 1994.

Boyle's novel follows a cast of characters situated in Battle Creek, MI, where Dr. John Harvey Kellogg runs a health resort and surgical hospital called the Sanitarium. Will and Eleanor Lightbody are guests at the San. Charles Ossining and Goodloe Bender come to Battle Creek to form a cereal company called Per-Fo. Yet another storyline follows one of Dr. Kellogg's adopted sons, George, who consistently wreaks havoc at the San. This novel ultimately espouses the absurdity of many of the health claims made by Dr. Kellogg and the burgeoning cereal industry, and highlights profit as the ultimate motivator for these industries.

Carney, Michael. "Brian Chesky: I lived on Cap'n McCain's and Obama O's got Airbnb out of debt." *Pando.com*, 10 January 2013, <https://pando.com/2013/01/10/brian-chesky-i-lived-on-capn-mccains-and-obama-os-got-airbnb-out-of-debt/>.

In this brief article, Carney explains how Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia sold their original cereals, Obama O's and Cap'n McCain's, for \$40 a box in 2008. They sold \$30,000 worth of cereal. They used this marketing success to bolster their pitch for funding for their startup Airbnb.

*CerealMotel.com*, Cereal Motel, 2021, <https://cerealhotel.com/>.

Cereal Motel is a small company in the UK that sells four "grown-up" cereals: Vice Crispies, Sugar Tits, Porn Flakes, and Booty Pops. The boxes are colorful and busy; they have prize offers and word searches on the back. Each has a sexualized feminine cartoon mascot. The company markets itself as a "no-nonsense, *bitch please* brand of cereal". Its website is highly modern, simple, and fashionable.

Cheyne, Andrew D., et al. "Marketing Sugary Cereals to Children in the Digital Age: A Content Analysis of 17 Child-Targeted Websites." *Journal of Health Communication*, pp. 563-582. JSTOR, 10.1080/10810730.2012.743622. Accessed 21 June 2021.

Cheyne, Dorfman, Bukofzer, and Harris assess cereal company websites that have been made for children and find that they are effective in marketing their products through advergames and immersive product-based online realities. This is concerning considering the high sugar content of cereals and the freedom companies have in collecting cookies and personal data about minors through these websites. This essay cites some surprising statistics: in 2013, cereal companies ranked third highest in food marketing towards children, more than ninety percent of US households had ready-to-eat cereal on hand, and children under eighteen ate cereal an average of 3.7 times per week. These statistics confirm that the cereal industry is significant in US households, especially for children.

Chute, Hillary. *Why Comics? From Underground to Everywhere*. Harper Collins, 2017.

In the chapter "Why Sex?", Chute explains that pornographic comics have been sold in the US since the advent of the "Tijuana Bibles" of the 1930s and '40s. Comics provide a space to be unapologetically graphic and creative, as is evident in works by artists like Rober Crumb, Lynda Barry, Phoebe Gloeckner, and Aline Kaminsky. Beyond being pornographic, comics have historically provided space for womens' experiences of sex and violence, which are often suppressed and censored. This theme is also talked about in the chapter "Why Girls?". Comic books are often seen as boyish items (think of the prevalence of male superheroes), but Chute argues that stories of womens are becoming popularized through the introduction of popular women superheroes and autobiographical books like *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi and *One Hundred Demons* by Lynda Barry.

Dean, Rowan. "Cereal sex titillates new audience." *Financial Review*, 2104, <https://www.afr.com/companies/media-and-marketing/cereal-sex-titillates-new-audience-20140407-ix7vm>.

In 2014, Kellogg Australia created a sexy campaign for their Crunchy Nut cereal. The ads were executed by a digital agency called VML and satirized late-night sex phone lines. Consumers could call a phone line after 8:30pm to hear thirty minutes of puns such as, "spoon me . . . lick my lips. . . let's rip open the box . . . pour it all over yourself". This campaign was aimed at adults eating cereal as a late-night treat. Dean gives a brief overview of John Harvey Kellogg, a celibacy advocate and the brother of Will Keith Kellogg (the founder of the Kellogg company), and remarks on how much he would have disapproved of these ads.

Dimoldenberg, Amelia. "We Took to the Streets to Ask: Who Is the Most Fuckable Cereal Mascot?" *Vice.com*, 29 January 2016. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/pp4k88/we-took-to-the-streets-to-ask-who-is-the-most-fuckable-cereal-mascot-403>.

This article is one among many articles that sexualize cereal mascots. Although cereal mascots are made to market food to children, these articles demonstrate that 1) mascots can appeal to adults as well as kids, 2) mascots can be memorable and well-known, and 3) cereal mascots can be well-rounded enough as characters that they have personality outside of their original context. Three other articles bolster these conclusions:

Patterson, Erik. "Snap, Crackle, and Pop: The Sexiest Cereal Mascots?"  
*Gleek.com*,

<https://gleek.com/snap-crackle-and-pop-the-sexiest-cereal-mascots/>.

ScottZ. "The Hottest Cereal Mascots, Ranked by Hotness."

*ScottOntherocks.wordpress.com*, 23 April 2019,

<https://scott0ntherocks.wordpress.com/2019/04/23/the-hottest-cereal-mascots-ranked-by-hotness/>.

"The 7 Sexiest Cereal Mascots." *BuzzAnything.com*, 2017,

<https://buzzanything.com/the-7-sexiest-cereal-mascots/>.

Fraction, Matt and Chip Zdarsky. *Sex Criminals*. Image Comics, vol.1, 2017.

In this comic, Suzanne finds out that time stops when she orgasms. When she meets Jon, a man with the same power, they work together to rob banks to raise money to save Suzie's beloved library. This comic highlights the isolation inherent in sexual experience in a culture where sex is taboo. This isolation is obvious when Suzie stops time: she is able to move through the world without anyone aware of her. It is also evident in the smaller details of the story, such as Suzie's mother calling her a "whore" when she asks a question about masturbation and the porn that Jon finds hidden in the woods. Although isolation is a major theme of this story, it is also a story about finding a trusting partner to share your experience. When Suzie and Jon learn that they experience "The Quiet" together, they are released from the isolation and authority of the rest of the world.

Johnson, Joshua. "Then and Now: The Evolution of Cereal Mascots." *DesignShack.net*, 2011,  
<https://designshack.net/articles/graphics/then-and-now-the-evolution-of-cereal-mascots/>.

In this article, Johnson describes the changes in cereal mascots from the 60s to today. Generally, mascots have become more human-like in shape and face structure. Stylization has moved from broad, flat shapes to rounded and shiny figures. There is much more action on cereal boxes, both in mascot movement and in their faces (specifically seen in tall, oblong eyes).

Jones, Michael Owen. "Food Choice, Symbolism, and Identity: Bread-and-Butter Issues for Folkloristics and Nutrition Studies (American Folklore Society Presidential Address, October 2005)." *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 120, no. 476, 2007, pp. 129–177. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/4137687](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137687). Accessed 21 June 2021.

Jones explores the vast array of symbols in food and extrapolates on the need for nutritionists and folklorists to work together to make dietary recommendations. By

investigating cultural and individual food symbols, experts can gain a better understanding of how people make food choices, and in this way, advise them more effectively.

This essay provides a compelling case to explore the symbolism behind cereal. At first glance, cereal is an original American product, a breakfast food, and a sugary treat. The term “granola” can be used to describe someone that enjoys outdoor exercise and is environmentally-conscious; perhaps a modern-day hippie. Cereal is a quick meal for an over-worked nation. It can induce nostalgia for people that ate cereal as children.

Kellogg, John Harvey. *Plain Facts for Old and Young*. Segner and Condit, Iowa, 1881. *Project Gutenberg*, 2006, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/19924/19924-h/19924-h.htm>.

John Harvey Kellogg (the creator of the first flaked cereal and the brother of the founder of the Kellogg Company) espouses his beliefs about celibacy in this book. His claims are backed by the science and pseudo-science of the times, as well as his own research as a physician and surgeon. The most pertinent claims are those of diet and sexuality. Kellogg insists that a vegetarian diet low in sugar, caffeine, and spice, will help reduce sexual urges. From Kellogg’s view, orgasms can damage the nervous system and are bad for overall health, especially when sex is not being used for procreation. He devotes multiple chapters to the “Solitary Vice” of masturbation and its debilitating moral and physical effects.

Integral to my project is the comparison and satirization of the history of cereal health claims, of which J.H. Kellogg is the original source. The inspiration for cereals mass-produced by both the Kellogg and Post companies came from the kitchens of his health resort in Battle Creek, MI.

Madden, Rob, director. ‘Classic Cereal Commercials From the '80s’, *YouTube.com*, 30 June 2020, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ai1vBlxnELc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ai1vBlxnELc).

This video gives 29 examples of breakfast cereal ads from the 80’s. Most commercials had at least one animated mascot and children engaged in a brief storyline. Oftentimes, an antagonist is trying to take the cereal and the protagonist must defeat them and save the cereal. Oftentimes, the mascots are popular characters from other areas of pop culture such as Nintendo games or “The Flintstones” cartoon. There are a great variety of shapes and colors in the cereal and marshmallows, and many of the boxes had toys inside. All of the commercials espouse that they are “part of this nutritious breakfast”: a breakfast of toast, an orange or orange juice, and milk. The cereal “Total” goes further than that: it does not engage in a child-oriented storyline, instead it features a middle-aged woman on a game show comparing the nutrient content of “Total” to another cereal. A serving of “Total” meets the one hundred percent daily value of most vitamins and iron. It’s almost a vitamin pill. Based on this sample of video commercials, cereal companies were focused on selling stories to kids and promises of health to mothers in the 1980s.

Madden, Rob, director. “Classic Cereal Commercials From the ‘90s”, *YouTube.com*, 20 August

2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OadQ5vIZ8aE>.

This video catalogs four and a half minutes of cereal commercials from the 1990s. Compared to the compilation from the 80s by Rob Madden, these commercials have fewer mascots and are targeted towards older children. These videos emphasize the “fun” and delicious aspects of their cereals without a storyline. Many of these cereals brand themselves as benefiting performance in various activities, such as biking or test taking.

Miller, Tracy. “Sex plus cereal equals Sexcereal, the granola that promises to spice up your bedroom life.” *New York Daily News*, 2013, <https://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/health/sexcereal-breakfast-cereal-sex-life-article-1.1296617>.

Sexcereal is a granola created by Peter Ehrlich that promises increased sexual health. There are two kinds, one for men and one for women, with different fad ingredients like maca and bee pollen. This marketing tactic is unusual among cereal and granola producers; although granolas often tout their health benefits, companies do not focus on sexual health. This is one outlier example of cereal marketed to adults using sexual imagery.

Mr. Breakfast. “The Cereal Project.” *MrBreakfast.com*, 2021, [https://www.mrbreakfast.com/cereal\\_home.asp](https://www.mrbreakfast.com/cereal_home.asp).

This website aims to catalog all of the cereals sold nation-wide in the US. Mr. Breakfast writes that cereal marketing was and is revolutionary, and that through the evolution of the cereal box, we can witness American history. So far, Mr. Breakfast has collected information on more than 1,300 cereals.

Norton-Wright, Terry. *When art becomes work*. Terry Norton-Wright 2012.

In 2002, Mariska Majoor wrote *When sex becomes work*, a manual for those considering sex work in the Netherlands. It includes chapters such as “Relationships”, “Why do you want to work?”, and “Drugs and alcohol”, and is written from experience in a personal style. Norton-Wright replaces “sex” in this manual with the word “art” to force the reader to consider the relationship between these two types of work. These two scripts are posited back to back in this hardcopy version.

Because Majoor’s work provides first hand accounts of prostitution, it is an ideal source for understanding how sex work can be empowering. Her manual explains that a prostitute ideally enjoys their work, is comfortable creating and enforcing boundaries, and makes financial gains. She puts lots of thought into the ways that taboos around sex work make the life of a sex worker difficult. It is evident that there is a lack of openness and acceptance about sex work even in the Netherlands, which has legalized it.

*OhJoySexToy.com*. Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan, 2021, <https://www.ohjoysextoy.com/>.

This website contains an abundance of information about sex. This main attraction of this website is sex toy reviews in the form of comics by Matt Nolan and Erika Moen, but it also contains sex how-tos, body positivity comics, interviews,

information on safe sex, etc. It provides an ideal example for creating comics about sex that are inclusive and informative, but not dry.

Parasecoli, Fabio. "From Store to Screen: Food Porn, Professional Chefs, and the Construction of Masculinity in Films." *The Taste of Art*, edited by Silvia Bottinelli and Margherita D'ayla, Univ. Arkansas, 2017.

In this essay, Parasecoli explores the relation of professional cooking in films to porn and gender roles. He concludes that women are domesticated through their relationship to food, whereas the skill and professionalism of men is highlighted in food films. Additionally, Parasecoli compares food films to porn (called "food porn"). Both films attempt to satisfy a bodily desire viewer without actual physical interaction. To do this, they rely on over-emphasized sounds and visuals to compensate for the lack of physical presence. Both porn and food porn integrate videos of other people experiencing pleasure, either in what they are feeling or eating, that the viewer relies on.

"Trying Out Sex Toys." *PleasurePie.org*, 2018,  
<https://www.pleasurepie.org/articles/trying-out-sex-toys>.

Pleasure Pie is a small activist organization in Boston that focuses on sex-positivity and sex education. Their website provides information on their projects, and zines, contains interviews, and has links to Boston-based sex resources. There are colorful sex-related illustrations that can serve as examples for my project. This article, specifically, conveys one person's experience trying out sex toys and the ways in which it impacted their sex life. It provides advice for finding sex toys when there is such a large selection to choose from.

Tiernan, Greg, et al., directors. *Sausage Party*. Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2016.

This movie follows a sausage named Frank. He lives in a grocery store called Shopwells, where the groceries believe that humans buy them to bring them into a heavenly place called the "Great Beyond". This movie satirizes animated films made by Disney that are targeted towards children by being as raunchy as possible. It is based on sexual connotations of food that already exist in our culture; for example, Frank pursues a hot dog bun named Brenda with the intent of "getting inside" her and "filling her up". The foods have taboos around sex just like humans. Frank and Brenda don't leave their packages to be together because they want to stay "fresh" for the Great Beyond; instead, they just "touch tips". The movie ends with a store-wide orgy that shows total contempt for sexual taboos.

Severson, Kim. "A Short History of Cereal." *NYTimes.com*, 2016,  
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/02/22/dining/history-of-cereal.html>.

This article briefs the history of cereal from the first granolas to the 2000s. This article explains the trends of cereal marketing, starting with the religious cereals of the late 1800s, to the child-centered and mascot-marketed cereals of the 1900s, to the return of healthy and whole-grain cereals starting in the 2000s.

Watson, Tom. "Tom Watson's speech in full: Help make the UK healthier or we will regulate

you.” *CampaignLive.com*, 30 January 2019,  
<https://www.campaignlive.com/article/tom-watson-s-speech-full-help-uk-healthier-will-regulate/1524270>.

In 2019, UK Member of Parliament Tom Watson delivered a speech to the Advertising Association, castigating them for their promoting sugary foods to kids. At the time, the UK had the worst obesity rates in western Europe, and a plague of type two diabetes and rotten teeth among children. Watson specified cereal as the “biggest source of free sugar intake” for kids under the age of ten and said that cereal packaging needs to be regulated. He wanted cartoons to be removed from the advertisements. He framed this information with an Ipsos Mori poll stating that politicians were more trustworthy than advertisers; the latter needed to change that image by making reliable statements about products’ nutritional value.