

Office Suite Software...After Hours

by **Vesperae**

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When it comes to our individual sexual orientations, genetics determines the basics of which sex (and occasionally, which sexes) we are attracted to, as well as very likely which specific physical attributes and unique pheromones we happen to be innately programmed as animals to find desirable, and to respond to sexually.

What has always been really interesting to me is how often I've read those with a SF attempt to explain their Unusual Desires as if they were discussing their underlying genetically programmed basic sexual orientation: *"I dunno why I find smoking to be sexy...I just do,"* as if they were saying,

"I dunno why I'm attracted to women...I just am."

I suspect that there is this tendency sometimes to want to lump all aspects of our sexuality, both that which is genetically predetermined and that which is learned, together, and to treat sexuality as something of a mystery for which there is no meaningful explanation, or for which there is no meaningful reason to even try to understand it.

But when it comes to having a Fetish, genetics would seem to have little to do with our Unusual Desires beyond the basic sexual orientation that the Fetish develops upon, with Fetishes often even eclipsing and even transcending our basic sex drives, not only in terms of the strength and persistence of the sexual response, but also in terms of the types of individuals that those of us with a Fetish will experience a sexual response to.

And since a Fetish is a learned sexual response – borne of experience, and of reacting to experience, again, and again, and again, often from a very young age – it is profoundly more personal and intimate than being heterosexual or bisexual or homosexual. A Fetish is always the sum total of a personal narrative about the meaning of that which is Fetishized. A Fetish is the result of a *Personal Mythology* that is so important to an individual that it has become iconic and erotic. Meaning and personal significance are the essence of a Fetish.

And I believe that if you can open yourself up to exploring that meaning and personal

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significance – even if you never share it with anyone else, (other than perhaps a committed life partner) – that you'll not only find a lot more peace and personal acceptance with your own Unusual Desires, but that you'll have a lot more fun thinking about and playing with your SF than you ever have. This has certainly been the case for me.

* * *

[Within a year of going online privately at home nearly eleven years ago](#), I found that I had already collected quite a treasure trove of smoking images and clips, but also increasingly discovered that I wanted to experience them in a more "personal" way than merely viewing them by themselves. Looking at a single image or clip made me feel restless, and left me hungry for more. I felt this overwhelming need to not just consume, but to *interact* with the media, and to invest my own *Personal Mythology* about smoking into it as I experienced it.

These urges led me to acquire two personally indispensable tools that I've used constantly ever since that time to explore and entertain my SF – a basic video player/editor that allows for looping, and a slideshow application.

While the appeal of a basic video player/editor should be immediately obvious to anyone with a SF video collection, the benefits of having a slideshow application might surprise you if you've never played with one. The most obvious SF play use of a slideshow would be to load a series of SF images onto slides and view them sequentially with various crops, zooms, image edits, transition effects, timings, sound effects, soundtracks, etc. And beyond these all of these nifty options, you can also typically either export the slide show to a video format, or save the slides as stand alone image files that can then be imported into a video player/editor for sequential playback with a range of timings, as well as combined with other video files and soundtracks.

But the feature of slideshow applications that initially really blew me away was perhaps the simplest one of all – the ability to generate graphic text sequences, either with or without SF imagery. I began to create countless graphic text slideshows that transcribed news clippings about smoking from my personal print archives, from news and SF stories that I found online, as well as many sequences created from my own stream of consciousness as I thought about

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smoking. And through this process of transcribing and writing, I became increasingly aware of and comfortable with the Dark Side of my SF, and I began to remember more and more, and to understand more and more about why growing up during the years following the emergence of the Anti-Smoking Media Campaigns resulted in my persistent Taboo fascination and eventual sexual response to smoking.

And then one night while I was playing around with Powerpoint on [my first iMac](#), I decided to explore a feature that I hadn't paid much attention to before – the ability to insert a video clip onto a slide. I had largely ignored this functionality previously because my knee jerk reaction was

"why

would I want to watch a video in Powerpoint when I have QuickTime?"

But then I thought, "

hmmm...I wonder if I can load and watch more than one

clip at a time...?

"

OMG...Epiphany!!!

Yes. Yes I could.

I discovered that you can use a slideshow program to watch more than one video file simultaneously on a single slide. In fact, you can watch multiple video files at once, and/or listen to several audio files, mute some and not others, and even layer the clips with each other and with still images!

This was *exactly* what I'd been looking for – the ability to juxtapose imagery and sound to plumb the depths of whatever aspect of my own SF *Personal Mythology* that I wanted to connect with at any given time. I could transform any SF glamour clip that I had in my library into the ultimate "

Do It / Don't Do It

" Anti-Smoking PSA with any of the graphic text videos that I'd created, and/or with audio and/or video from any of the actual AS PSA clips that I'd collected. I could play a song from a time that reminded me of an experience that I'd had with smoking as I watched a SF model smoke the brand that the song reminded me of. I could create a contemporary TV cigarette commercial with elements from a cigarette print ad and an SF model clip, and on and on and

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on...

Infinite diversity in infinite combination. Infinite titillation. Infinite pleasure.

While the technology has evolved considerably over the last decade, the basics really haven't changed that much, and with a relatively small amount of money, you can easily start to explore and entertain your own SF more deeply using the combination of a basic video player/editor that allows for looping, and a slideshow application. I'm certainly about as far from a PC expert as you can get, and I'm certainly not qualified to work at an Apple Store Genius Bar, but my hope is that I can at least offer you some basic advice, information, and inspiration here, and I'm also hoping that readers who are PC users will be kind enough to offer their advice in the "Comments" section at the bottom of this column. Maybe we can even get our own little "SF Tech Wiki" going here. And if you'd prefer to remain completely anonymous, you're welcome to [email me](#), and I'll be happy to repost your remarks/suggestions in the "Comments" section for you.

I'm a long time Mac user and am currently using an Intel iMac running Leopard; the latest OS is Snow Leopard. I'm one version behind and haven't gotten around to upgrading yet, partly because the latest OS comes with a new version of QuickTime (QT X) that doesn't support a "Pro" editing license. From what I've read, Snow Leopard does allow you to use your legacy Pro QT 7 version (which is what I have) concurrently with QT X if you have previously purchased the license; so if you're a Mac Leopard user and you're thinking about upgrading and don't yet have the Pro license for QT 7, you might want to get it before you upgrade. The speculation is that Apple is going to eventually introduce a new licensable "Pro" version of QT X, but for the time being it isn't an option.

For pre Snow Leopard Mac users (and perhaps for some PC users who aren't happy with their current media player), I can't recommend highly enough [QuickTime 7](#), and for \$29.99, [the Pro license](#) is incredibly cheap for all of the expanded functionality it offers, including lots and lots and lots of great, easy, intuitive editing features.

[Flip4Mac](#)

is free, and allows all Windows Media Files (ubiquitous across the web) to play perfectly in QT. And

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[Perian, "the Swiss Army Knife for QuickTime,"](#)

also free, is an essential codec plug in bundle for QT that will allow you to play and convert just about any type of media file found on the web.

I'd love to hear about what video player/editors PC users like (and what they cost) in the "Comments" section below!

To my knowledge, there are three main slideshow/presentation applications currently available, and all are bundled as part of "office suite software" packages.

For Mac users, there is really only one outstanding choice, and it's a tremendous deal at \$79.00. Keynote is part of [iWork](#), which also includes Pages, Apple's version of MS Word, and Numbers, Apple's version of MS Excel, unfortunately currently only available to Mac users, although there is some speculation floating around that Apple might eventually go cross-platform with it.

The second choice is MS Powerpoint, part of the [MS Office Suite](#) at \$279.99. Not really a viable option for a Mac user, since it's not only much more expensive, but in my opinion, Keynote blows away Powerpoint in terms of functionality and stability, at least in the Mac version. Probably best for PC users who also need or desire Excel. (The consensus seems to be that MS Excel is much more robust in terms of functionality than Apple's Numbers, but Apple's Keynote and Pages, which are more graphic intensive, are better than MS's Powerpoint and Word, although for most household accounting purposes, Apple's Numbers is more than sufficient as a number cruncher. iWork also allows you to save all files in Windows compatible formats for sharing with PC users.)

The third choice, OpenOffice.org's Impress, part of the [OpenOffice Productivity Suite](#), is free, and is available cross-platform. I haven't used it, and haven't seen too much feedback about it online, but if you're a PC user, or a Mac user on a tight budget, you might want to give it a try. And if you have Impress and you've used it, I'd love to hear what you think about it in the "Comments" section below!

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I put together a demo that I hope will give you at least a general idea of the sort of things that you can do with a single slide of a slideshow/presentation application and several media files.

Here are the individual files that I've combined in the demo for you to download and experiment with in a slideshow/presentation application.

The first is a snippet of a recent [Smoking Fetish Video](#) update with the Lovely Georgia:
[GeorgiaSample.m4v](#)

The second is a snippet of a music file:
[SampleMusicTrack.mp4](#)

The third is a graphic text track that I created years ago in Powerpoint, imported into QuickTime, and saved as a stand alone video file:
[SubliminalText_2sec.m4v](#)

Here is the demo showing how I combined them, compressed and spilt into two parts:
[SlideshowAppLayeringDemoPart1of2.mp4](#)
[SlideshowAppLayeringDemoPart2of2.mp4](#)

Here is the same demo as a single large HD file
[SlideshowAppLayeringDemo.mov](#)

And here is what the finished combination looks like, exported to a video file:
[GeorgiaLayeredMix.m4v](#)

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Vesperae's discussion and DS multimedia forum:

[The Sublime Desire of Cigarette Smoking](#)