

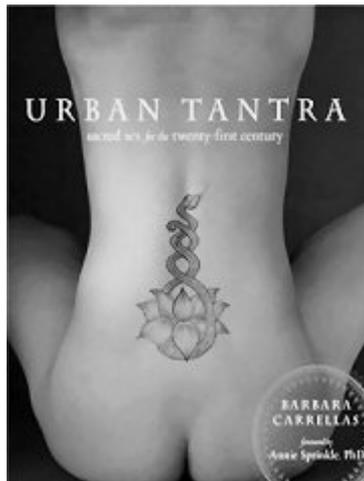
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## Book Review: Urban Tantra

### Sacred Sex for the 21st Century

Reviewed by Dr. Tracie O'Keefe D.C.H.

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Urban Tantra: Sacred Sex for the 21st Century, by Barbara Carrellas

#### Urban Tantra: Sacred Sex for the Twenty-First Century

by Barbara Carrellas  
Published by Published by Celestial Arts (2007)  
I.S.B.N.-13 978 1587612909

**T**his is the second review of this book I have done. The first was for a journal for therapists but for *Polare* readers I want to focus on pleasure - sexual pleasure. I can hear the gasps by some readers at the very mention of sexual pleasure. "But we are oppressed; socially disadvantaged and we carry the cross of gender dysphoria around with us on our backs - how can we possibly think of sexual pleasure?"

Well, get over it. If you have genitals, you can experience sexual pleasure and even if you don't have genitals you can still experience sexual pleasure.

Carrellas in her book teaches you how to use your whole body and mind in your sexually pleasurable experiences, not only on a physical but also a metaphysical and spiritual plane. She is a teacher of tantric sex. And from one who is trans, had an adult life of profound sexual experiences, and works as a sex therapist; I can tell she is good - real good.

Her book is very easy to read, guides you step by step through self and other pleasuring. It totally demystifies tantra, gives you lots of exercises to practise with including masturbation for fun. It talks about hetero, gay, singles, couples, and group sex in a most encouraging and practical way. In the latter part of the book she talks about crossing B.D.S.M. with tantric practices, making both particularly rewarding when brought together.

Since the foreword is by Annie Sprinkle, many of you will know that Carrellas comes from the school of sexual practices and experience and not from the authority of the wizard behind the curtain. Not only that, Carrellas is the partner of Kate Bornstein, the American trans performer and gender provocateur. It seems Carrellas comes to Australia fairly often with a season ticket, route map and a well trodden path to heightened and extended orgasms. Is it not nice to know the teacher practises her own medicine?

Of course, like sailing lessons you can really take what you like from this book. Having an easy nice ride on calm waters or challenging the wave and high-end arousal. But if you take nothing from it, you're already dead. If you have spent a fortune on your penis, vagina, face, breasts or chest, do yourself a favour and spend a little more on this owner's manual for sexual pleasure.

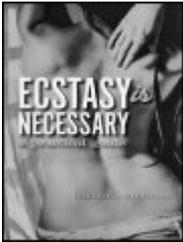
#### Barbara Carrellas

**Edited from Wikipedia:**  Barbara Carrellas is an author, sex educator, performance artist, and certified sexologist accredited through the American College of Sexologists. She facilitates workshops in which participants explore sexuality through her holistic approach that includes practices like erotic breath work and Tantra, and she has lectured at various institutions, including the Museum of Sex in New York City, Vassar College, Barnard College, and the Chicago Art Institute. She is known for her "breath and energy orgasm" techniques, which she says are "orgasms you can have using your imagination and your breath". Carrellas learned the technique during the height of the AIDS epidemic as a way for people to orgasm without physical contact. Such techniques, she says, offers a way for "people to have more safer-sex options". Carrellas spent five years in the 1990s living in Australia but currently resides in New York City U.S.A. and lives with her partner, Kate Bornstein.



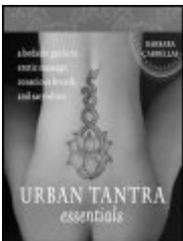
Read more about [Barbara Carrellas at her website](#) .

You Tube user Michael Burns presents this Barbara Carrellas video described as: Urban Tantra®, a radically updated Tantra practice for modern sexual and spiritual explorers and can be used anywhere and by everyone. This workshop is for both couples and singles. It does not include nudity or explicit sexual touch. All genders and sexual preferences are welcome.



**Ecstasy is Necessary: A Practical Guide**  
Author: Barbara Carrellas  
Published by: Hat House U.K. Limited (2012)  
I.S.B.N.-13 978-1848504561.

**From Fishpond Books:** From Barbara Carrellas, sex expert and author of *Urban Tantra*, comes *Ecstasy is Necessary*. This is not your average tips-and-techniques sex book; rather it is an exploratory journey of the sexual self and the infinite possibilities of ecstatic expression. In *Ecstasy is Necessary*, Carrellas teaches readers how to discover, nurture, expand and embrace their authentic, ever-evolving, sensual, sexual self. Everyone goes through different phases of sexual expression and desire, and there are an infinite number of erotic and ecstatic possibilities available at all points along the way. Readers will explore what ecstasy is and learn how it is essential in their quest for their authentic selves. The insights they will gain in their journey with Carrellas will help them confidently approach sex and relationships in a way that works for them no matter where they are in their sexual evolution. Readers will get tools for solving the inevitable challenges that arise, and they will learn about risk-taking and the importance of boundaries. They'll even receive permission not to have sex at all, if that's what's right for them, because it is possible to create ecstatic experiences even when sex itself is not possible, available or appropriate. Using stories and simple exercises, Carrellas helps readers understand how they are wired for sex and relationships, what their personal warning signs look like and what they need for optimum care. Plus, they'll learn how to effectively communicate this information to others so that they can be loved more easily and effectively. As readers discover their authentic sexual selves, they will learn how to create the conditions that allow more and more of their experiences and relationships to be opportunities for - and invitations to - ecstasy.

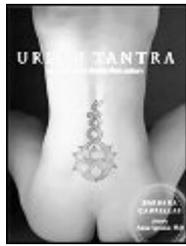


**Urban Tantra Essentials: A Bedside Guide to Erotic Massage, Conscious Breath, and Sacred Sex**  
Author: Barbara Carrellas  
Published by: Celestial Arts (2011)  
I.S.B.N.-13 978 1587610714.

**From Fishpond Books:** In playful, pleasure-centered language, passionate sex educator Barbara Carrellas radically updates traditional Tantric sex practices for contemporary sexual explorers. Carrellas' trailblazing perspective melds spiritually fulfilling sex with today's inclusionary sex positivism. This self-standing, spiral-bound easel book includes sixty-five holistic practices from "Urban Tantra", such as 'Firebreath Orgasm' and 'Erotic Awakening Massage', plus five new exercises for finding sexual and spiritual bliss. Carrellas also shares techniques for expanded orgasmic states and solo and partner play. With sections on Tantra for one, Tantra for two, and Tantra for the adventurous, this book will appeal to both Tantric virgins and fans of the original book looking for a beautiful new format for easy display. Going above and beyond typical position-a-day sex manuals, *Urban Tantra Essentials* guides readers to sensual new heights in sex and spirit.

**Urban Tantra: Sacred Sex for the Twenty-first Century**  
Barbara Carrellas  
Published by: Celestial Arts (2007)  
I.S.B.N.-13 978 1587612909.

**From Fishpond Books:** In *Urban Tantra* acclaimed sex educator Barbara Carrellas radically



updates the Tantric sex practice for modern sexual explorers seeking ecstasy that lingers longer than orgasm. With a juicy mix of erotic how-to and inspired, pleasure-centred spiritual wisdom, this book guides readers through a repertoire of easy-to-grasp techniques and positions for solo and partner play, as well as more adventurous practices. Tantric virgins and curious sex positivists alike will learn and discover how to take pleasure to new levels of intimacy and spiritual fulfilment. The topics include; twenty minute tantra; xxxtasy is not ecstasy; breath and energy orgasms; tantric B.D.S.M.; sex magic; the power of silliness and solo tantra.



**Luxurious Loving: Sub Tantric Inspirations for Passion and Pleasure**

Author: Barbara Carrellas

Published by: Quiver (2006)

I.S.B.N.-13 978-1592332373.

**From Fishpond Books:**  In the fast-paced world of today, couples struggle to find time and energy for sex amidst work, children, friends, family, as well as other commitments. And in general, slow, sensual lovemaking is one element of life to be put on hold when so little time exists. However, what makes love and sex luxurious is taking the time to slow down and really enjoy it.

When you can immerse yourself completely into the experience of either giving or receiving, time ceases, trust increases, intimacy deepens, and you reprogramme the way you imagine, breathe, gaze, move, taste, touch and connect. *Luxurious Loving* teaches couples new, fun, and exiting ways to reincorporate erotic and sensual techniques to their lovemaking sessions. Examining ancient sexual practices and philosophies, such as Tantra and the Karma Sutra, as well as modern sexual conventions, *Luxurious Loving* instructs readers on how to explore each other's bodies.

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The Gender Centre is committed to developing and providing services and activities, which enhance the ability of people with gender issues to make informed choices. We offer a wide range of services to people with gender issues, their partners, family members and friends in New South Wales. We are an accommodation service and also act as an education, support, training and referral resource centre to other organisations and service providers. The Gender Centre is committed to educating the public and service providers about the needs of people with gender issues. We specifically aim to provide a high quality service, which acknowledges human rights and ensures respect and confidentiality.