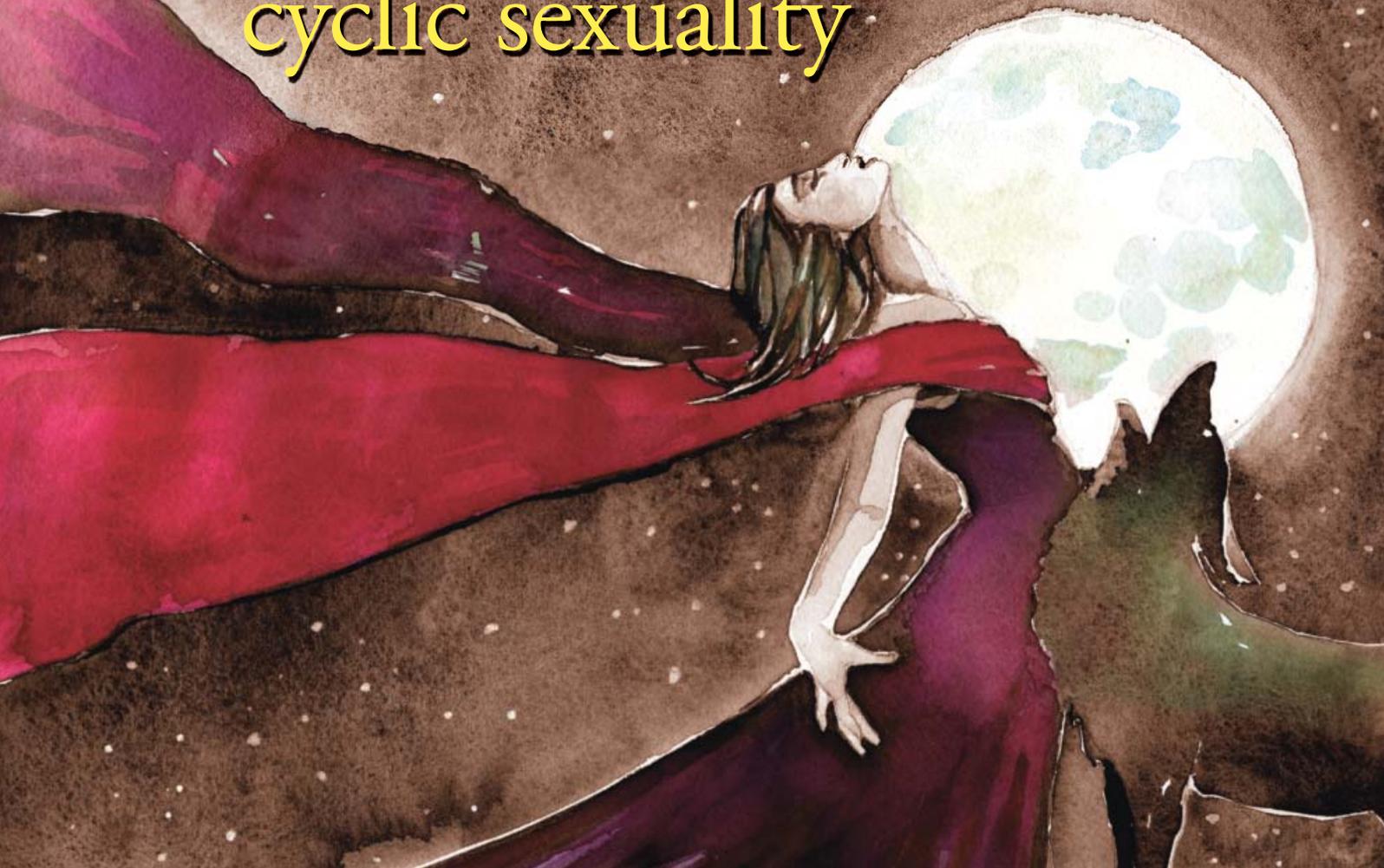


# Understanding female cyclic sexuality



**Miranda Gray** explores the rhythmic but predictable changes in a woman's sexual feelings and behaviour linked to her menstrual cycle and the benefits to her and her partner of accepting this rhythm and 'going with the flow'

In the modern world we are bombarded with images and expectations of what women 'should' do to be sexually desirable or to feel 'sexy'. We are shown the socially 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' faces of women's sexual energies, pleasure and desire.

But the template that we receive from this societal view of women's sexuality is fundamentally flawed and, consequently, many women are disconnected from their vibrant, female sexual energies. Women can feel a lack of self-worth and may carry guilt because they do not measure up to the culturally accepted image of what women's sexuality should be.

There is a basic misconception about female sexuality that is not just perpetuated by the media and the film industry

but is also supported by the medical and therapy establishments, and that is that *women are like men*. This view overlooks and largely ignores a major aspect of female sexuality in the psychology and therapy of sexuality: that *women with a menstrual cycle are cyclic in their nature and experience*.

This cyclic nature is experienced not just in the measurable fluctuations of hormones and chemicals during the month but also in the more subtle, inner dynamics of how a woman thinks and how she perceives herself, her relationships and the world. Her sexuality, sensuality, creativity and spirituality are all blended together in a cyclic journey that she travels each month. What 'turns her on' or satisfies her physically, emotionally and mentally changes from one

phase to the next as her body and the dominant aspects of her awareness and perception change.

Over many years of working in this area and talking with women in workshops and answering questions about my books, it is apparent that, although a woman may look the same throughout the month, in reality she may be thought of as at least four, possibly more, different women, each with different sexual, sensual and emotional desires, needs and dreams. It is little wonder that some women feel guilty that they cannot live up to the media image of female sexuality because it is simply not possible for them to embody one single type of sexuality *all the time*.

## **Menstruation, the Moon and female wisdom**

The menstrual cycle was a major development in the evolution of womankind to a stage beyond the animal kingdom.

Image: Wolf Moon by artist/designer Eyan Myers based in Vancouver ([www.eyanmyerscreative.com](http://www.eyanmyerscreative.com)), an illustration from *Moon Mysteries* ([www.moonmysteries.com](http://www.moonmysteries.com))