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## Orgies are the way to ease social tensions, claims US judge

Oliver Burkeman in New York

Friday October 1, 2004

[The Guardian](#)

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He is the conservative bastion of the US supreme court, a favourite of President Bush, and a hunting partner of the vice-president. He has argued vociferously against abortion rights, and in favour of anti-sodomy laws.

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But it turns out that there is another side to Justice Antonin Scalia: he thinks Americans ought to be having more orgies.

Challenged about his views on sexual morality, Justice Scalia surprised his audience at Harvard University, telling them: "I even take the position that sexual orgies eliminate social tensions and ought to be encouraged."

It seems unlikely that this is what President Bush meant when he promised to appoint more judges like Scalia to the court, should the opportunity arise. Crucially, Justice Scalia is one of the judges in favour of overturning Roe v Wade, the landmark judgment protecting abortion as a constitutional right.

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One audience member also asked the judge "whether you have any gay friends, and, if not, whether you'd like to be my friend," the Harvard Crimson newspaper reported.

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"I probably do have some gay friends, but I have never pressed the point," Justice Scalia responded. He offered no clue to the logic behind his claim that orgies eliminate social tensions.

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Nobody asked him whether he was familiar with Rick Moody's novel *The Ice Storm*, turned into a movie by Ang Lee, which appeared to suggest the exact opposite.

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