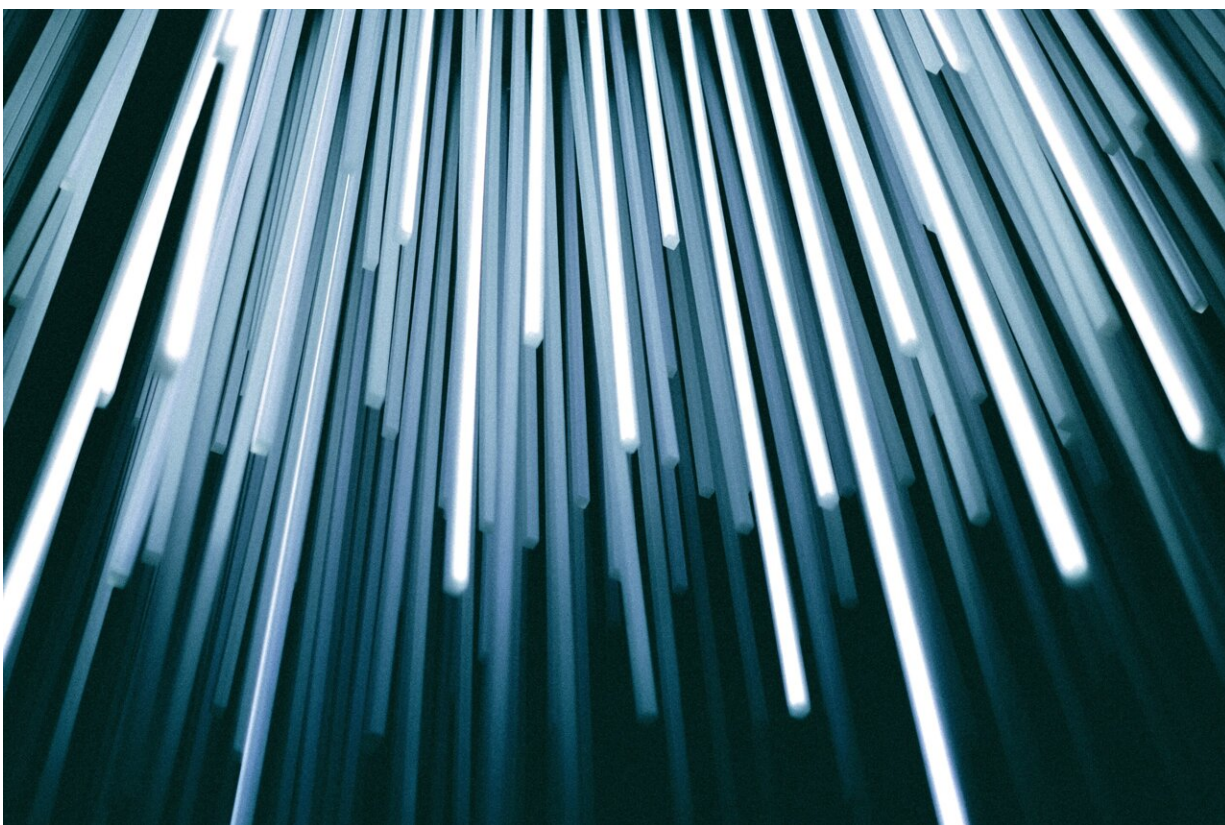


How audio erotica creates the intimate fantasy of a boyfriend experience, without needing a boyfriend

August 31 2023, by Jodi McAlister and Athena Bellas



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The last decade has seen a widespread rise in the popularity of audio media. Podcasts began to emerge during the 2000s, aided first by

technology like the iPod and the launch of dedicated podcast apps, and then the publication of the enormously popular serialized true crime podcast Serial in 2014.

Audiobooks similarly enjoyed a resurgence, abetted by new technology that allowed them to be downloaded to devices. They are now one of the [fastest growing](#) sectors of the publishing industry.

Is it any wonder that erotica and pornography have also found their way into the audio space?

Audio erotica apps

A typical piece of audio erotica tells the story of a sexual encounter between two or more protagonists. Some feature extensive narrative build-up, some jump right to the action—and some feature stories with narrative build-up which allow listeners to jump right to the action.

Stories range in length from 30 seconds to over an hour, and range across a broad narrative spectrum. Everything from cozy nights in between established couples to encounters between strangers in [public places](#) to erotic takes on Greek mythology.

While audio erotica has existed for some time in enclaves on platforms like Reddit, it is now predominantly associated with dedicated apps. Two of the most prominent are Dipsea (founded 2018 by Gina Gutierrez and Faye Keegan) and Quinn (founded 2019 by Caroline Spiegel).

Both apps were founded by women, center women in their marketing, and focus on women as their core audience, although not their only audience: [Dipsea's FAQ](#) states it was "designed with women in mind [...] but the app is a safe space for all perspectives, preferences, and genders," while [Quinn](#) is "made by women, for the world."

Dipsea, Quinn and many other audio erotica apps are rooted in an assumption that mainstream visual porn is often misogynistic, exploitative and unfriendly—if not actively hostile—to women. They position their erotic audio content as an alternative rooted in self-knowledge and empowerment.

Dipsea imagines itself as "an empowering experience that leaves room for your imagination," while Quinn describes their app as "a place to get to know yourself outside of conventional pornography."

Both apps liberally use the language of wellness, and [have been framed as](#) "Headspace, but make it horny."

There are many different kinds of audio erotica stories. The apps have detailed tagging and metadata systems, so listeners can seek out the content they desire (at the time of writing, the top three most frequent tags on Quinn are "praise," "boyfriend," and "[MDom](#)").

Broadly speaking, though, there are two main kinds of audio erotica: third person erotica, with two (or sometimes more) performers enacting a scene, and second person erotica, where one performer directly addresses the listener.

Intimacy in audio erotica

Audio erotica often creates a sense of closeness between speakers and listeners. Perhaps the most obvious reason for this is because it tells stories about intimate, emotionally-charged sexual encounters.

Another important reason for this is rooted in the technologies associated with audio. In particular, [binaural recording](#) techniques (where sound is recorded in three dimensions) and headphones bring the voice of a physically distant speaker into close contact with the listener,

often producing the sensation of someone whispering in your ear.

Audios that feature a performer addressing the listener can produce a particularly intimate effect. In Dipsea's [Tender Worship](#), Patrick confesses to the listener "I feel so connected with you." In Quinn's [Netflix and Chill](#), Anonyfun whispers: "I love taking care of you."

Intimacy is created when performers speak to listeners in a casual familiar tone, tell jokes, chuckle, mumble, yawn, whisper, trip over their words and call listeners terms of endearment like "baby" and "sweetheart."

These audios also often feature performers asking a question, followed by a few quiet beats, in which the listener is invited to imagine their own response. All of these elements create a fantasy scenario that invites listeners to imagine they are involved in an intimate encounter with the speaker.

Intimacy in 'Boyfriend Experience' audio erotica

One of the most popular genres of second-person audio erotica is the "Boyfriend Experience." Audios in this genre further intensify intimacy, partly because they typically take place in a cozy, gentle and comfortable and care-filled domestic space.

Quinn refers to these audios as having "[sweet, loving vibes](#)". Listeners hear sounds like fireplaces crackling, rain on window panes, bath taps running, bed linens ruffling and sock-clad feet padding across floorboards, which create a cocooning, warm soundscape.

Against this cozy backdrop, the boyfriend experience fantasy unfolds: the story is about a man taking care of a woman (the implied [listener](#)). These stories often open with the boyfriend character taking care of

household work and readying the home for the woman's return. In these stories, the boyfriend character is entirely focused on emotionally supporting and sexually satisfying his partner.

For example, Dipsea's [In the Bath](#) features the gentle sounds of Killian preparing a warm bath and tenderly whispering: "lean back and just relax, let me pamper you now. Close your eyes, beautiful. You deserve this."

In this fantasy domestic world, it's the male speaker who takes on the bulk of the physical and emotional work of intimacy in order to prioritize the pleasure of his partner.

This notably contrasts with the well-documented reality where women often take on a "second shift" of unrecognized domestic and emotional labor in their partnerships with men. So this is a fantasy of intimacy as well as of being cared for, instead of being in the often maternal position of caregiver.

There are lots of reasons why people enjoy boyfriend experience audios and audio erotica more broadly. These kinds of intimacy—intimacies which, perhaps, many people do not find in mainstream visual porn—are central to its appeal.

It's not just the content of the narratives which create this (although, in the case of the boyfriend experience, [intimacy](#) is very important to the story), but also the audio mode of delivery.

After all, is there anything more intimate than someone whispering a story into your ear?

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