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ANTIQUE VIBRATOR MUSEUM

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April 28, 2014 · by akonecki · in SEE · Leave a comment



Photo courtesy the Antique Vibrator Museum

For a store that took vibrators out of the dark, seedy shadows of the downtown porn shop and onto the shelves of brightly lit storefront spaces, it isn't surprising that [Good Vibrations](#) decided to celebrate the sex toy with its very own museum. Tucked into the corner of Good Vibrations' flagship store on Polk Street, the [Antique Vibrator Museum](#) chronicles the vibrator from its "innocuous" beginnings as a medical tool to treat the disease hysteria* (!) through its current candy-colored, multi-speed, star-spangled iteration.



Photo courtesy the Antique Vibrator Museum

As explained by museum curator and sexologist Dr. Carol Queen, early vibrators—I'm sorry, "massagers"—were utilized by physicians to induce "hysterical paroxysm" (in case there was any question, that would be orgasm), which would help rid women of the terrible disease. Jokes about the "magical healing power" of orgasms aside, it's bizarre to see how paradoxically prominent yet essentially veiled female sexuality was (and, I would argue, still is—though I'll refrain from getting out my soapbox and saying anything further on that matter). "Be a Glow Getter." What?? Historical ads touting similarly eye roll-inducing claims pepper the museum's display cases, proof of a long fixation on the apparent health benefits of "personal massage," yet nary a mention of good ol' fashioned masturbatory satisfaction (gasp!). Speaking of veiled messaging, if I have to use one more quotation mark-encircled euphemism, I just might get hysterical myself. Thank goodness for places like Good Vibrations and the Antique Vibrator Museum for tellin' it to us straight and bringing vibrators out of the wishy-washy realm of "health" aids... without treading into the smut-filled realm of the back-alley movie house.



Photo courtesy the Antique Vibrator Museum

Check out the collection in the museum's online [gallery](#), or visit in person to take a tour and pick up that strawberry flavored lube you've been meaning to stock up on. To schedule a tour, call the Good Vibrations Polk Street store at 415-345-0400.

A final note—these antique "vibes" are behind glass, so this San Francisco novelty is categorized under "SEE," but if all those cords, cranks, and nodes got your juices flowing (you little minx you!), feel free to engage your other senses by taking your saucy self shopping through Good Vibrations' vast array of modern vibes. And dildos. And nipple clamps. And... um, you'll have to excuse me now. I have to go, er, take care of something...

*Yes, "hysteria" was regarded as a disease encompassing "female ailments" such as emotional distress. Oh lord, there are no words...

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