

- all possible worlds imaginable -

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Nakedness and sexuality in contemporary mind and society

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“The passions become evil and malignant when regarded with evil and malignant eyes.”

Nietzsche, *The Dawn*, §76.

Something is amiss, something involving our most fundamental biological programming, the pictures we have drawn of it and the explicit beliefs we have attached to them. We may have now recognised certain errors of our former ways, but we have not addressed them as we might have: we have *reacted against* our errors rather than dissolving and transforming them. Over the course of a *specific* historical evolution, just one of *many* possible historical evolutions, the naked form has come to be uncoupled in the most bizarre of manners from a ubiquitous aesthetic which is *purely* sexual. The latter is splayed and displayed, freely and unabashedly, has become literally inescapable. The former retains its puritan role of shame and dissimulation and would be practically invisible if the collective libido did not drag it on stage for its climax.

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Start with a framework (others are possible): our species has evolved from the first forms of life. This implies an obvious fact: the most fundamental aspect of our being is that we are *alive*. This in turn implies that whatever it is *to be alive* is something we share with everything else that lives: life is the universal predicate that regroups all living species. Therefore, whatever the *conditions* of being alive are, we are absolutely beholden to them. Evolution may be seen as an effect, a consequence of these conditions: life, as we know it, implies evolution *necessarily*, even if we do not know why (and we do not).

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But, whether you believe evolution to be something that is understood or not, it is painfully obvious that we do not *live* like a species aware of its own evolution. We live like a species fixed in time and space. Nor do we live like *individuals* aware of their own evolution. Simply ‘believing in evolution’ grants no upper hand whatsoever in understanding *what is actually happening*. If evolution is true then it is true *in fact*. It is *happening*. Given that we are *alive*, it is happening *in us* even as we think on it. In definite, it is the very condition of our being able to think on it. A cyclical situation of this sort, where an element contains the condition of its own existence, we call *transcendental*. The most ‘progressive’ elements of our society hold evolution to be *fact*, but not one of them internalises evolution as an inherent and transcendental reality. Relative to the workings of society, merely holding evolution as fact matters as little as believing the earth to be flat. As a *member* of society, believing in evolution merely as information to be known, as trivial fact, serves no practical purpose whatsoever. Consequence: when it comes to contemporary social issues, no finger-pointing of other ontological belief systems holds water. There is no more simplified, ecclesiastic ‘them’ to blame for any current state of things. There is only an ‘us’; playing along consciously or in ignorance, reacting against, or else trying to transform. But insofar as there may be a reason for any state of society continuing to exist, if blame *can* be placed, then we are all to blame equally, because no mere belief about evolution can be of any use if it not be internalised and then manifest in *how we live*. This has clearly never yet been done. Socially and morally speaking, virtually every person who believes in evolution nevertheless *acts* like a human who believes itself to have been specially created. We have, in fact, no idea *how* to live as a species authentically aware that it has evolved. It would seem obvious, however, that if we do wish to live in an ‘evolved’ society, then considerations about evolution should be present in all discussions regarding its workings. Sexuality, due to its perceived ‘necessity of biology’ status, is among the most fundamental of all society’s inner workings.

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Indeed, it would seem that the most fundamental, twofold characteristic of all biological life is the drive to survive and *to survive through reproduction*. To fulfil this objective, organisms must constantly try to achieve optimal internal homeostasis in response to whatever external environmental changes may occur. Homeostasis is that internal state of an organism which is most favourable to its survival and reproduction. Any changes which

negatively alter this homeostasis must, if possible, be taken care of. If this not be possible, the organism will either no longer be able to reproduce or will, more critically, die. As humans, we are as equally tied to this reality as the most basic lifeforms ever known on earth. What, then, does set us apart?

Man has evolved the unique capacity to *imagine* a world that differs from the one he directly experiences, to project that world over the present one and then, if he be convinced that his projection will be better for his future homeostasis than the current reality is for his present homeostasis, he can get to work transforming his present real world into his future possible world. Let us call this the ‘possible world’ model of human invention and creativity. This capacity provides man with the ultimate advantage, over all other terrestrial species, when it comes to *controlling* the external environmental changes so threatening to perfect homeostasis. This model can be used to understand the birth of architecture (imagining naturally occurring shelter one has experienced but in places where it does not naturally exist, then building, improving and perfecting that shelter), the birth of engineering (imagining a solid trail, such as humans and animals make over land, but that extends also over water, then building a bridge of some type which, in turn, can inspire other types, and so on), and various other feats of man’s increasing complexity.

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The reason we call it a ‘possible *world* model’ is that it needs to account for a very large range of imagined distinctions between the present (real) world and the projected (possible) one, from the tiniest to the vastest of differences: everything from imagining a world where your hair is a different colour to imagining a world where everybody is seen as equal and can move freely in society. In other words, man’s possible world mental faculty is just a useful way of representing how it is that he can conceive change upon and in his environment: it is *not* a description of what is actually happening between his brain and the world. It is just a useful tool for understanding: an *heuristic* tool.

Let us accept then, in the heuristic frame of mind just evoked, that the possible world model is a universal feature of man, underpinning his most basic problem solving abilities and stretching beyond the horizon of his richest political, scientific, and artistic utopias. As a universal feature, it can be worked upon, expanded, refined, focused in various directions: it can, in a word, be individualised. As a universal, biologically rooted feature, it also implies ‘healthy’ and ‘pathological’ modes of functioning as well as an accompanying faculty of judgement. This judgement is of an economical nature: will the homeostatic benefit of the

projected possible world be worth the work necessary for its realisation (work which will imply a certain cost to present homeostasis)? An optimally healthy functioning of the possible world faculty will always judge this question correctly and consistently improve homeostasis, allowing the individual to flourish and reproduce with vigour. A pathological functioning will produce, for example, something like the fervent believer in any kind of *afterlife* of rewards reserved for those who live ascetically in *this* world. In this case, the projection of the possible world has flown beyond the confines of the individual's biological existence. The rewards promised to the brain in this future possible world override the drive towards *biological* homeostasis, since the ascetic lifestyle consists of slowly deteriorating organic homeostasis, depriving the physical body of various needs, often with a specific, destructive bent for reproductive function.

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In the framework we take here, the ascetic agent convinced of rewards in the afterlife is living within a certain possible world *interpretation* of his own homeostatic drives. Precisely, although he certainly thinks it the case, the agent is *not* suppressing these drives. Rather, the fervour of the ascetic relies entirely *upon* these drives which underpin his very cognitive capacity to aim for rewards *beyond* the present real world. *The same mechanism which enabled man to imagine and realise a world with buildings and bridges also enabled him to imagine a world beyond this one where the rewards would be eternal life in absolute comfort or, in other words: in endless, perfect homeostasis.* Such an example is at once strong testimony to the sheer power our possible world mental faculty wields (beating even our inherent vital drive towards biological homeostasis) and also a warning that other, perhaps seemingly less critical distortions of our drive toward biological homeostasis are also possible and, indeed, are already in place.

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Knowing that homeostasis is a matter of both survival *and reproduction*, and also that man's possible world mental faculty represents something selected by evolution because of its success in wagering present use of energy against improved future homeostasis, what then, specifically, of the reproductive element in this equation? Firstly, looking at physical concerns of shelter, warmth, company and nourishment, it is easy to see how the judgement faculty weighing *work now* against *benefit later* applies. Becoming very slightly more abstract, it is nevertheless still quite easy to see how imagining a possible world in which, for example, the

agent's homeostasis is assured by other agents who do his bidding would also be judged as favourable, albeit perhaps more complex and potentially risky to realise. Much has been made, in philosophy, psychology, anthropology and sociology, of these latter elements of human innovation and invention. Much less has been made of the fact that the agent, in attempting to assure perfect homeostasis, is by the same measure beholden to purely reproductive necessities, notably; the availability, accessibility, and condition of the necessary material for reproduction.

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The hypothetical proposition behind this choice of vocabulary is that *purely* reproductive considerations do not allow for seeing the other organism, or person, outside the equation of their use or threat to reproduction. This is largely, though not exclusively, how reproduction works throughout nature and can be seen in male animals battling each other for mating rights to the fittest females. As humans, our possible world mental faculty has added a rich, profoundly aesthetic and creative element to this battling for mating rights. It also seems to have profoundly altered the brains and possible world faculties of those excluded (by themselves or by others) from access to mating, potentially since the very emergence of the species.

Because the hierarchy of humans in general, and of males specifically is not, or is no longer, governed by physical strength, but rather by the far more complex, multiform and unpredictable mental faculty of possible world invention, the physically weaker have many options open to them when it comes to reproduction. It is all a question of how good a world creator, a *demiurge* one can be. Similarly, insofar as we see each other as something more than just a means to survival or the necessary material for reproduction, this is also something we have, as a species comprised of interwoven members, *imagined* and *created*.

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[A brief aside: the fact of our visions of each other (as lovers, life partners, wives and husbands, rather than purely biological and mutual necessities) being something we have imagined and created is absolutely not a basis for labelling them as 'just illusions'. The act of imagining and creating these relationships is something that happens in reality: it is *a part of reality*. These relationships are *real*. The capacity to imagine a possible world is significant for the very reason that it *is* possible to *realise* it, meaning that it cannot be cast aside as mere illusion. The greatest of care must be taken when employing terms such as illusion and reality:

from the perspective of the human mind and its most fundamental physiological workings, there is no illusion without reality and no reality without illusion. What we imagine is inspired and fed by what we experience as real. In equal measure, what we experience as real is informed by what we have evolved and imagined as short cuts and heuristics enabling us to successfully and economically interact with a medium of infinite depth and complexity: the sum totality of *what is actually happening*. Neither pure reality nor pure illusion can be experienced by man. For man experiences everything within the confines of his real, physiological self: the infinite depth of the smallest drop of pure reality is too complex for the human brain to render conscious and must be simplified in some economical but ‘illusory’ sense or another. This is not a belittling interpretation, just as it would in no way be belittling to show a palette of basic colours to the awe-struck admirer of some beautiful painting and say, “The incredible beauty you behold was created using just these.” The better we know our palette and our brushes, the better we can create with them.]

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As has already been stated, mankind’s extraordinary capacity to imagine a possible world and then transform his environment into that possibility is a homeostasis assurer that far outstrips any kind of physical strength or resistance nature can provide an organism with biologically. The weakest man who can imagine and construct a floating device will survive far longer than the strongest man relying on his own strength to save his organism from death by drowning. In this way, a male who would certainly lose a physical battle with another male can still, wholly justifiably, convince potential mates that he is a better assurer of homeostasis for them and their future offspring than his physically stronger counterpart. To put it in simple terms: offering somebody the world is perhaps not the exaggerated turn of phrase it may at first appear to be. We *do* offer each other worlds: the possible worlds we are projecting and (more or less) planning to (more or less) realise. It is a banal fact of our everyday experience that this presenting and offering and, to put it crudely, selling of possible worlds can be conducted in a sincere or an insincere manner. As a result, it is also of great benefit to be able to judge between those who sincerely intend to realise the possible world they offer and those who have simply understood that the best pitch, though no intent of realisation may accompany it, can very often guarantee immediate access to the objective at hand. Remove the ‘possible world’ vocabulary from this description and the remaining scenario is any bar or gathering where various individual tactics and strategies are being employed in order to secure sex with the best available mate(s).

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However, the *individual* dynamic is secondary in a discussion about the relationship between nakedness and sexuality in contemporary society. It is the interwoven social dynamic which matters most here. Possible worlds have already been mentioned in which an agent or a specific group of agents have their own homeostasis assured for them through the work or provision of other agents they have coerced into this yoke. The existence of social classes based not on physical strength is the only ‘proof’ needed to see that this coercion, power manipulation, etc., occurs on a widespread basis. Moreover, each individual human being is constantly presented with the more or less realised possible world visions of other agents, amongst which a sorting out must be conducted: which are positively useful for my homeostasis? Which are positively useless for my homeostasis? Which can I ignore at no risk to my homeostasis? Which come with a high risk to my homeostasis should I choose to ignore them? This latter set of possible worlds includes those wielded by authoritarian figures or systems.

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Now, imagine, as far as is possible, what the natural state relationship between nakedness and sexuality is, *natural* meaning prior to the whole multitude of *possible* world interpretations of this relationship coming along to cloud things up. It is clear that nakedness is a concept we define *negatively*, in other words, that nakedness as a concept exists *only because humans are clothed*: nakedness just is the *absence* of clothing (hence the ‘negative’ definition). One cannot, strictly speaking, talk about a naked dog or a naked ape. The actual advent of clothing in our evolutionary history is shrouded in thus far impenetrable mystery: did man begin to clothe himself because he was less resistant to the elements, or did he become less resistant to the elements as a function of his constantly improving capacity for sheltering his organism in various ways (clothing as well as architecture, etc.)? Nevertheless, it is obvious that sex (a concept which is defined *positively*) must necessarily be more ancient than nakedness, since animals also have sex, something which in itself also does nothing to belittle human ‘love-making’. It is just a fact of life and evolution.

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In terms, then, of *what is actually happening*, there was, in nature, absence of clothing and there was sexual activity, the latter being a more or less frequent extension of the

ubiquitous former. However, and most importantly, there was no *necessary conditional* relationship between the two: the animal sex drive may be motivated, among other things, by mating displays but certainly not by the mere ‘nakedness’ of potential mates. At some point, and for whatever actual reason this may have been (see above), our proto-human ancestors began to clothe themselves. That much is a fact, that is something that *actually happened*. From there, however, one must tread very carefully: there are things that are known, but there are also very, very many things about which we can only hypothesise and, more precisely, about which we have *already* been hypothesising, as a species, for thousands of years: things which are now largely just *accepted* as a true state of the affairs. Nonetheless, they remain mere hypotheses, the *possible* worlds a historical minority came to *realise* over many generations and across an expanding majority of the present ‘civilised’ human population.

Hence, the biblical account of man’s expulsion from the garden of Eden leads us to believe that Adam and Eve’s desire to be clothed *just was* their new-found prudish urge to cover their reproductive organs. They became aware of their nakedness and, the authors of Genesis tell us, they felt *shame*. Of course, the authors of Genesis, although technically situated *closer* to the historical event at hand (the *real* event of our ancestors clothing themselves for the first time, which the authors’ community *interprets* into the possible world narrative contained in the first chapters of the bible), had absolutely no privileged access to the genuine, factual hows and whys of man’s first wardrobe experimentations. One thing we do know, with great evidence, is that countless *other* interpretations of the same event exist and have existed for just as long as (and in some cases longer than) the Judeo-Islamo-Christian one. However, as above, the historical seniority of an interpretation in this instance is absolutely no indication whatsoever of greater accuracy: to think so is to ignore the mind-bendingly vast lengths of time in question, periods which dwarf the 3,000-5,000 or so years since the Judaic, Greek, Mesopotamian, etc., possible world interpretations first began to take form. The actual ‘event’ being interpreted is situated at some incredible depth in the bedrock of *prehistory*, quite possibly involving whatever common ancestor we, as Homo-sapiens, have with the Neanderthals, who also clothed themselves. For now, the *only* access we have to this event is via the full plurality of interpretations we can give to the fact.

So, the three major world religions (though not the only ones) to share precisely the same *shame* based interpretation of mankind’s first foray into fashion are Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. These three religions, equally, account for the almost total eradication from Europe and then the Americas of almost all other interpretations of *what actually happened*. Thus, whatever over-riding interpretation we may be living in today, regardless of our being

more ‘Darwinian’ or more ‘atheist’ than we were in the past, it is still primarily informed by *that* specific interpretation which equates nakedness with shame.

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One alternative basic interpretation is that our ancestors began to clothe themselves for some (any) other reason and that the fact of the reproductive organs being thus covered was merely a collateral effect. Any tradition holding the reproductive organs as sacred, mystical elements of nature, to be revered and worshipped, clearly cannot interpret them as sources of shame. Many such traditions exist and the fact of them being, for the most part, what we now call ‘primitive’ traditions has no ultimate bearing on their value as valid interpretations. *Our* global interpretation just happens to be of a kind that vilifies any tradition which worships the reproductive organs and which holds nudity, on a societal and community level, to be a celebration of life and of man. This does not mean that these cultures were not clothed. It just means that they attached no concept of shame to nakedness. As something to be celebrated, to be worshipped in and for their very function as the fertile life givers, the reproductive organs in such interpretations were *the literal opposite of taboo*.

By contrast, the longest and most deeply rooted interpretation of unclothedness in our society is one of taboo. Taboo is, in its most fundamental role, a very real and psychologically violent form of control. Down through the history of our society, the punishments for breaking this particular taboo have been as multifarious as they were nefarious, everything from stonings to beatings to exile to ridicule and back to beatings: anyone wishing to interpret nakedness as anything *other* than taboo (as a celebration, for example) had to face the consequences. Extremes of this attitude still exist within *all three* of the major religions to espouse this interpretation. A diluted and deformed view of it has become the majority norm.

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The Judeo-Islamo-Christian tradition imposes an interpretation of nudity *and* sexuality: both are to be controlled in the absolute. Sexuality is to be confined to marriage alone, and it is the priest class who presides over the weddings. Sex is an action necessary to reproduction (and must be assured for the continual *realisation* of the possible world of the religion in question); some form of nakedness is necessary for this. Thus, the only context, apart from *cleansing*, where nakedness is to be tolerated is within the maximum privacy possible within which reproduction can still occur.

But, because sex can be practised, more or less, in secret, it was always this aspect of

the tradition which was going to be most threatened by surges in more fundamental, physiological drives to achieve more immediate, biological homeostasis. Social, group celebrations of nakedness, such as those known in other interpretations of our ancestors' adoption of clothing, are, of course, far riskier enterprises in an oppressive environment than sex between just two individuals. Even as we move towards more modern, 'progressive' times, the will, urge, desire, whim, or just openness to being publicly naked is interpreted, for the most part, as a reflection of sexual deviance, with only small pockets at small moments in time truly attempting to interpret it as something (anything) else (celebration, artistic inspiration, etc.). The 60s hippy movement is probably what comes most reflexively to our western minds in this regard: this movement, in its 'hippiest' form, was about freedom of spiritual (including intellectual), sexual *and* corporal expression. Nakedness was to be cleansed of shame. Nudity was no longer to be taboo.

The ultimate fallout of the hippy movement was that a sexual freedom revolution of greater magnitude than had been known to the species for time immemorial began to sweep, with more or less speed, across all of the western world. Nevertheless, beyond the hippies themselves, it remained almost exclusively a *sexual* freedom revolution, fed in large part by widespread availability of contraception – the means, for many, to definitively avoid proof of their extra-marital deviance, namely, a child. However, integrating and, more so, manifesting new interpretations of nakedness remained as subject to risk as ever. Most seemed content with the personal gratification freer sexual activity had brought them. However, the fact of sexuality exploding while nudity retained most of its implicitly shameful connotations created, and continues to create, socio- and psycho-sexual imbalances and tensions whose effects *and* causes are but little spoken of, despite the fact of their working directly upon the most primordial drives, not only of man, but of *all life and of the very nature of living itself*. This brings us back to the comment made at the outset: sexuality and nudity have become uncoupled in the most bizarre of manners. Sex is now far more present than nakedness, as paradoxical and ridiculous as this might seem were it to be explained to certain 'primitive' traditions.

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Following this orientation directly into today's situation, sex is now used to sell anything and everything. Overt sex, but not nakedness. Selling one's sexuality is more socially acceptable, more widespread and, consequently, less likely to incur open judgement than nakedness, even where this tends to the aesthetically non-sexual. Those who are naked

have ‘loose morals’ and can be treated accordingly. Those who use *just* their sexuality for their own financial gain, career success, celebrity status, etc., are ‘smart’ and ‘know how to play the game’. The line between what counts as sexuality and what counts as nudity has now, of course, reached absurd proportions: as long as the reproductive organs and, in the case of women, nipples are hidden, then one is still to the side of ‘smart’. Flesh, sexualised through very basic aesthetic norms, is on display everywhere in the popular media; *all* flesh except the most ‘shameful’ parts.

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Capitalism is an opportunistic player in the relationship that has been established between nakedness and sexuality. Capitalism recognises the fact that sex sells *because* nudity remains taboo. Sex sells *because* we are fundamentally prudish about the naked form, in keeping with our millenia long Judeo-Islamo-Christian heritage. In the past, Christianity cashed in by turning the natural sexual drive to reproduce into a sin called “impure thoughts and deeds.” Through this it was able to exercise great power over the masses. Today, the mass media draw on the same source, interpreted and manifest in a skimpy new outfit, to exercise a new kind of power and control over the masses.

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The result of this, in terms of the collective libido, is that all the sexual energy underpinning our natural biological drive towards reproduction, which forms part of our *living impulse* to attain homeostasis, is focused on the remaining tiny veils in the vast landscape of ever-present sexualised flesh and, of course, what these veils hide with singular intent: the reproductive organs. Consequently, our society worships neither the phallus nor the yoni: it vulgarises and fetishises the genitalia, making an offensive, taboo word of every sexual term given to them. The ways in which this ambient fetishisation are cashed in on are as vast and multiform as one should expect, given mankind’s incredible capacity for proposing seductive possible worlds in order to coerce others.

The entire western pornographic aesthetic is the ultimate reflection of this fetishising of the reproductive organs. It has come to be dubbed as a ‘phallogentric’ aesthetic but, more broadly, it is quite simply ‘genito-centric’. It cashes in on providing the ‘deprived’ masses with a surplus of the only thing the popular media must hold back in order to keep the inherited mass coercion machine turning. However, in its most widespread forms, it works *by accepting the sovereignty of the global ‘shame’ interpretation and revelling, not in nakedness,*

but in the act of breaking taboos. In a possible world interpretation where this taboo just did not exist, the pornographic aesthetic (visual and ‘narrative’) would very unlikely be the same. The vocabulary and imagery employed in western pornography (a fruit of *our society* and the interwoven beliefs of *all* of its individual members) is evidence enough of the fact that those depicted are seen as moral deviants: indeed, the most widespread pornographic aesthetics rely entirely upon its characters being seen in this way.

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There can be no shock whatsoever in recognising that the constant presence of non-naked sexuality is likely to create a very particular kind of compulsion to see what is specifically hidden. *On a cognitive level*, the individual presenting their sexuality to the individual members of a large public from the safe cover of a magazine differs very little from the individual presenting themselves for sex *in the flesh* to a mate who is driven by life itself to reproduce. In both cases, sex is explicitly presented to the mind and so, necessarily (the brain tells itself), the reproductive organs will be made accessible (uncovered) and reproduction will occur. In the natural state, sex is not presented to an individual unless sex is what is going to happen. The human organism and brain have evolved to respond to *this* state of affairs.

Thus, the mind in contemporary society is constantly presented with what it experiences, psycho-physiologically, as opportunities for sex. This response is engrained in the very deepest of its evolutionary roots: it is not so much an interpretation as it is the biological necessity for the brain to recognise and act on *real* opportunities to reproduce. In our evolution, the omnipresence of illusory offers of sex is not something our primitive ‘drive to reproduce’ neural patterns and somatic responses are tuned to. Those who profit from representations of sexual offers rely on this being true: the primitive brain pushes the agent to purchase the magazine, the film, the product, etc., because this act of purchasing is interpreted back down to it as the next necessary action to *real* reproduction. This could explain why the aesthetic of contemporary sexuality (the poses, genital dissimulation methods, facial expressions, flesh appearance enhancers, etc.) is so easily recognisable: it relies specifically on the fact of the brain being *able* to recognise and act upon what it takes to be opportunities for reproduction as quickly and as successfully as possible.

Nakedness, for western man, has become a uniquely sexual aspect both because it is almost never seen in any other context and because the vast majority of clear sexual offers the brain is exposed to in daily life hide what must be accessed if successful reproduction is to

culminate from these offers. Sexuality without nakedness is everywhere. Nakedness without sexuality is practically inexistent. In a natural, non-conceptualised state, nakedness in and of itself is not an automatic trigger for sexual cognitive behaviour: this has been true down the whole history of the evolution of sex.

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So, this quite literal and intense co-optation of the human brain's most primal drives (for profit, for assurance of individual homeostasis through the abstract medium of money extracted from others through coercive illusion) could not fail to produce and perpetuate activity which breaks the norms of *other* conceptual aspects of society: ethics, morality, justice, privacy. This is precisely the situation western man finds himself in today, where any extent will be gone to in order to access the nakedness of an individual whose sexualised image is frequently on sale to the public eye. In turn, *interpreting* the conceptual crossover between, say, sexuality and morality is an extremely complex and muddy endeavour. Large numbers of more or less opposing visions of morality clash with each other in a conceptual space that hovers directly over the question of tampering with primal sexual drives for personal gain.

Morality, however, is an unreliable friend when it comes to accessing *what is actually happening*. It simplifies. It ignores undesirable facts. It seeks only information that will support its current state and finds this information in its own interpretations of infinitely complex and ambiguous events, events whose real explanations would require, precisely, an understanding of the most basic and fundamental conditions of life itself and what these conditions have developed, through evolution, for their own furtherance.

Morality is not needed for studying the human brain and placing it in its evolutionary context, for looking at how it reacts in specific situations, for asking what is best for it. Not a moral 'best', but an economical 'best': the economy of energy used versus homeostasis gained, not forgetting that human aesthetic pleasure is an inherent part of human homeostasis. Questions of how society should be organised, of what it should contain, of what it should hide and what it should show, should all begin with considerations of this 'best', with a certain responsibility placed on those who sell unrealisable possible worlds and condemn the realisation of others, all for their own personal gain. Involving oneself in tampering with the very primal drives which have kept life going on earth for over three billion years is as risky as it sounds. It *also* produces collateral risk for how individuals interpret each other in real life, in society: as far as sexuality goes, it is the omnipresent unrealisable possible worlds that

are the benchmark against which reality is to be judged – a judgement heavily infused with conflicting moral concepts.

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The endless solicitation of the sexual dimension of the human brain through physiologically vacuous offers of reproduction, constant cul-de-sacs in the road to homeostasis, cause stress to the brain because they represent so much ‘wasted’ energy (reproduction is achieved only in the tiniest minority of sexual offers the modern human brain identifies and processes in its daily life). Perhaps this stress has beneficial side effects. It may do, but this would have to be researched, and to be researched it would first have to be acknowledged. Responding to times when the sexuality situation spills over and disrupts the ethics and (non-sexual) morality of a society, it is not good enough to give answers of a purely moral nature: one has to go deeper and question the very (neurophysiological) nature of what the global sexuality situation *actually is* on a cognitive level. If it is left wanting in that regard, then some other possible world may need to be thought up and realised. Not one which reacts morally *against* the old situation but one which *makes itself out of it*. This is what evolution does: the variations recorded in the boughs of evolution through natural selection are *made out of* what has come before. Acting as an ‘evolved’ society requires that we aim for the same ideal.

It is all a case of imagining other possibilities. Imagining, to give *just one* example, a world where nakedness was *more* acceptable but sexuality *less* present: imagining the steps that would lead to it. What might such a world look like? Only the imagination knows. All possible worlds are imaginable.

Selected further reading:

Antonio Damasio: *Self Comes to Mind - Constructing the conscious brain* (homeostasis, primal drives and the mind, conceptualisation).

Charles Darwin: *The Origin of the Species*, *The Descent of Man* (natural selection, evolution, primal drives).

Michel Foucault: *The History of Sexuality - The Will to Knowledge* (worship versus fetish, visible nakedness versus prudishness).

Friedrich Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, *The Dawn* (interpretations, distortions,

other possible histories, primal drives and mind).