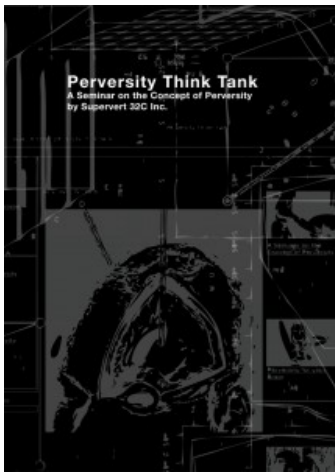


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[Ladies and Gentlemen, Welcome to Perversity](#)

– January 8, 2011 Posted in: [Interviews & Features](#)



Perhaps there is no one better qualified to publish a “seminar on the concept of perversity” than the faceless guerilla aesthete known as [Supervert](#). Not only do Supervert’s previous works include titles like [Extraterrestrial Sex Fetish](#) and [Necrophilia Variations](#), but the man (or myth, or machine – whatever you want to call it) also spent over six years cataloging real life acts of perversion on the now inactive website [Pervscan.com](#).

A highly literate, thoughtful, and creative study of the subject of perversity, Supervert’s newest work borders on the transcendent. Two simultaneous narratives weaving in and out of the page combined with interludes of empty space created by blacked out images make for a unique reading experience that I can only compare to listening to the Velvet Underground’s [the Murder Mystery](#), with multiple layers interacting differently each time you approach it.

If it all sounds a tiny bit pretentious to you (it did to me when I first discovered it), you may be right. But nevertheless, I encourage you to check it out if you’re at all curious. First of all, the entire text of [the book](#) is available for free in pdf format on Supervert’s website (though, as shown in the youtube video below, the carefully bound, limited edition hard copies, while tiny, are worth their \$15 and make a nice addition to your bookshelf if you do decide to pick one up). Second, the whole thing is just so carefully crafted, so well thought out and intensively researched, that it stands out from just about anything else I can think of that’s available from bookstores these days. Granted, some parts bugged me out, others infuriated or annoyed me, but I had plenty of food for thought and was never bored.

(Though I do feel compelled to add that if you are a survivor of sexual abuse, this book is a big, red, flashing trigger. Hopefully the title would clue you in to that, but just in case it doesn’t and you exercise a method of self care that involves avoiding such things, heed my warning and stay far, far away).

But enough of my rambling. Supervert was kind enough to agree to answer some questions for Crawling Chaos back in November, and here’s what I thought to ask him (or her, or it). I hope this

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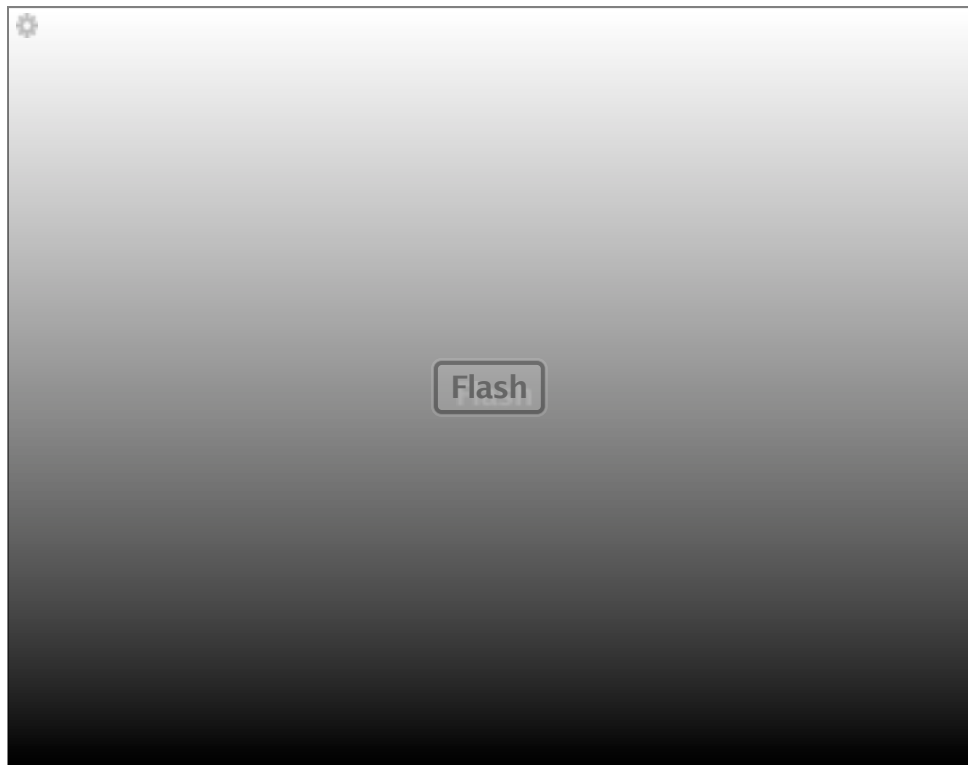
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is just the beginning of our dialogue and I hope Crawling Chaos readers will join in the discussion.

Cheers,

Stella



Ok, let's start with the basics. What drove you to study perversity in such depth, and what effect did it have on your personal life/sanity?

I find it very difficult to speak not just of my own motives but of motives in general. The search for a motive always seems to lead to an overly simplistic solution. "He did it for the money" — how much do you really understand when you've reduced a complex event to a single word?

The true nature of a motive may be better revealed by the stranger who, in Albert Camus' novel, kills an Arab because the sun causes an unbearable glare. Or by the teenage killer Brenda Ann Spencer who, when asked why she went on a shooting spree whose target was an elementary school, replied "I don't like Mondays." Why do I write about perversion? I don't know. Maybe it's because I have blue eyes or because I envy the title *Psychopathia Sexualis* for its slithering s sounds (reminiscent of "psycho killer, qu'est-ce que c'est").

I know it takes a whole book to say, but can you briefly explain to those who haven't had a chance to read the book what you mean when you talk about true perversity (as opposed to, say, a simple paraphilia or kink — if you agree there is such a distinction), and also what a perveme is?

I don't agree to the distinction the way you phrase it. Also I admit that the pursuit of "true" perversity is bound not to arrive at its destination. However, it became clear to me while maintaining PervScan.com that there are false perversities — or to put it another way, that there are different claims on the term "perversity." A few years ago I did an informal study in which I tabulated every story using the word "pervert" on 55 pages of Google News search results. This showed that, so far as journalists are concerned, "pervert" is practically synonymous with "pedophile."

I just now searched the word "pervert" at Google News. The top results concern: (1) a "pervert... touching women inappropriately"; (2) a "'Titanic' pervert" who claimed that his pictures of teenagers were nothing more than an attempt to reenact a scene from the Hollywood film; (3) a "camera pervert" who filmed women on the toilet; (4) a "pervert" who filmed boys at a pool; (5) a "pervert taxi driver" who assaulted women in his cab; (6) another "pervert" who filmed women in a changing room. Four of these six results involve cameras. In the future, will the definition of perversity be inextricable from the operation of recording, capturing, information storage and retrieval?

Perversity Think Tank looks at questions such as these and tries to arrive at some criteria that can be used to understand why certain acts are or aren't perverse. For example, I believe that perversity requires lucidity. If a person with severe brain damage molests an animal, it is an act of ignorance — mental disability failing to put the brakes on physical desperation. But if a philosopher does the same deed, it's a different matter. That's why the libertines in Sade are so articulate about their lusts. They need to differentiate themselves from the sods whom they sometimes employ for brute physical qualities.

As for the perveme, the idea is quite simple: it is a meme that circulates in the network of deviant behavior.

Some implications of the idea are discussed in *Perversity Think Tank*. Another that occurs to me is that the perveme can serve as a way of conceptualizing behaviors without shunting individuals into restrictive categories. Since the 19th century, perversions have been made into syndromes (e.g. homosexuality, voyeurism, necrophilia), the syndromes have been made into labels (homosexual, voyeur, necrophile), and the labels have been made into insults (faggot, peeping Tom, corpse fucker). To put these labels on people denies them their individuality and turns a blind eye to the mobility of their sexuality. After all, one can be a homosexual, a voyeur, and a necrophile all at once, or one after the other, or alternately, or as opportunities arise.

To think in terms of the perveme has the virtue of resisting easy labels and of opening up more fluid conceptions of sexuality. A pervert is not the incarnation of a syndrome but rather a person who cobbles together various pervemes — perhaps some in which he likes other men, some in which his pleasure lies in watching, others in which it is death that excites him.

My first impression after reading the first few pages of the book was that there is a sort of fluidity of imagery in your writing that reminds me of Eliphaz Levi or Aleister Crowley. You talk later about accessing other mental states when you write. Out of curiosity, have you ever dabbled in mysticism or the occult, or are these techniques you've picked up on your own?

Aside from an admittedly irrational attachment to the number 3, I have no particular interest in mysticism or the occult. Those are defined by their attempt to defy causal order. The mystic is someone who tries to shortcut the cause en route to the effect. He has "special powers" — telepathy, visions, contact with the dead. To my mind, nothing could be further from perversion, which is solidly grounded in the powers of the body. The pervert may push the body by means of his imagination, and he may access unique mental states as a result of physical exertions, but he never exempts himself from the causal order.

That said, I do believe that writing can lead to mental states that are not without parallel to madness. Writing enables you to think your way to places that no one has ever been before — "6000 feet beyond man and time," as Nietzsche scrawled on the paper where he first noted the idea of Eternal Return. There is, however, nothing mystical about this. There is a wide variety of mental states and demonstrably realistic means of accessing them — sex, drugs, music, sport, and so on.

In *Nexus*, Henry Miller writes a terrific riff about getting drunk on water. It is a comical reminder that the means to derangement need not be occult or even exotic.

One thing that challenged me as a reader was the depiction of woman in the book. For my own satisfaction, I kept waiting to see a woman take on the role of the depraved yet intellectually enlightened libertine, but instead, with the single exception of the lady with the fishing spear, I was shown woman as rape victim, woman as child bearer, woman as object of sexual desire, woman as reluctant participant, woman as liar (the ex-girlfriend performance artist), woman as naive and childlike (the girl on the phone at the end). Was this depiction of woman throughout as Justine rather than Juliette a conscious decision, and if so, why?

Perversity Think Tank is not a novel or a work of fiction. I wasn't trying to depict men or women in any particular way. The desultory truth is that statistically perverts tend to be male. Look at those Google News results: six of six "perverts" were men, and five of six "victims" were women.

I do expect, however, that a greater sophistication about uniquely female perversions will emerge in the near future. It has only been in the last few decades that researchers have openly explored female sexuality. As that is better understood, researchers will move on to the more rarefied forms of sexuality that constitute perversions. Perhaps they will learn that perversion plays a very different role in the sexuality of a woman than in that of a man, or perhaps they will identify perversions so female that men can't even take part in them. It might even be necessary to invent a new word, abandon "pervert" to male sexuality and find a novel term describing the degeneracy proper to women. Feminists made "history" into "herstory" — what will they make of "perversion?"

I liked the recurring theme of recursion (heh) that kept popping up. I found myself constantly asking: "Is thought (or consciousness, or philosophy, or language — insert recursive mental process here) itself a perversion of nature?" What do you think?

That's a difficult question, not least because it is reasonable to argue that nothing lies outside nature. Recursive processes are common in nature, and thought is a natural function of the brain. But perhaps there is something of Frankenstein in thought: it can turn against its creator. To whatever extent an act can be deemed "unnatural," no doubt a deviant thought lies behind it.

And finally.... What's your kink?

I have a meta-kink — a kink for kinks.

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