

Paraphilia Magazine

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SUPERVERT: POST-DEPRAVITY

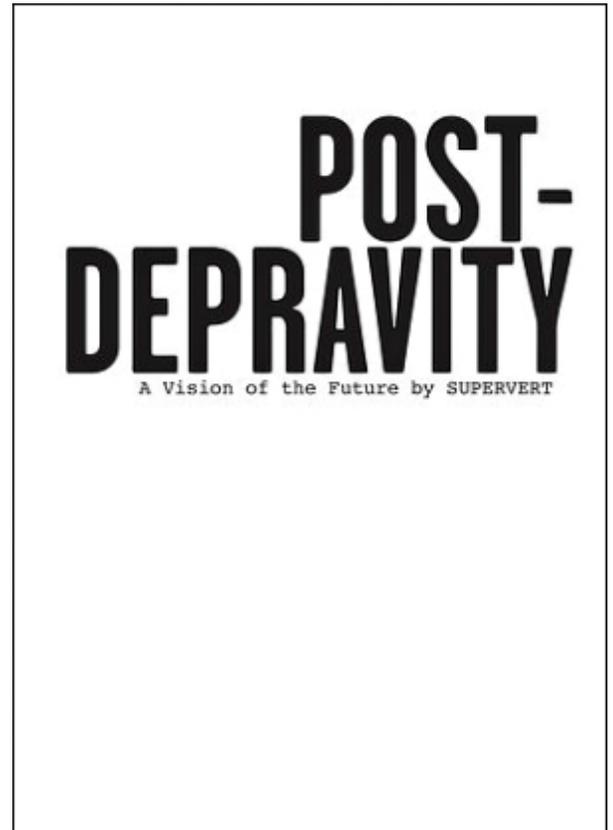
By Edward S. Robinson

We live in a post-everything world these days. In fact, we're so post- many things, we're probably post-post and are returning full-circle. Post-war... we're slowly moving toward a different kind of war, not so much defined by the war on terror as the war on everything, a global war that pitches everyone against everything. 2015, and Britain post-Thatcher is powering its ay further to the right than it's been in 30 years. Postmodernism is so last year: if postmodernism is characterised by an ironic depthlessness, then we've now gone beyond that as the depthlessness of celebrity culture has initiated the death of irony and the arrival of the post-postmodern age.

Since the turn of the millennium, Superververt has explored the sexualities of the 21st century from a range of perspectives, via a series of book-length works that began with 2001's *Extraterrestrial Sex Fetish* and transitioned through *Necrophilia Variations* (2005) and *Perversity Think-Tank* (2010).

These are no mere exercises in shock: Supervert's measured prose is crisp, the focus of the texts philosophical, intellectual, literary, sociological, psychological. It's intelligent, articulate writing that explores the human condition in the context of the post (and post-post) modern cultural landscape; *Post-Depravity* is quintessentially representative of Supervert's wry and audacious dissection of the sexual psyche.

It's pitched as depicting 'a near future in which people are little more than vectors for strange desires,' and explains that "post-depravity" is an impending state in which perversity and normality become identical.' It could reasonably be argued that in the age of the Internet, perversions have been replaced by predilections, and that ultimately, anything goes. Meanwhile, with multinational drug companies as motivated by profit as the extinction of disease (because pharmaceutical companies clearly have a vested interest in illness, after all, and eradicating illness and attaining the ultimate goal of human immortality would be self-defeating in real terms), the exploration of recreational pursuits and sexual impulses beyond mere reproduction, from a biological and psychological perspective, seems rather less far-fetched than it may first appear.



There's a strongly Ballardian feel to *Post-Depravity*, with the depthless characters providing the most mechanically functional vehicles for the exposition of Supervert's vision. The style and the form is highly reminiscent of *The Atrocity Exhibition*, and the premise of clinical trials being conducted in an S&M R&D lab facilitates scenes of Sadean imagination, against a backdrop of cross-dressing surgeons and lectures being delivered on-line while the speaker stands out of shot. Elsewhere, there are hints of Burroughsian themes and imagery as hanging and sexual release are discussed in the most clinical of terms.

Supervert's prose is brilliantly passive, the tone corresponding with the medical setting, aping the detached tone of a medical report. As such, the graphic images are strangely sterile, and this in itself renders them all the more disturbing: 'He advances to a slide showing a hymenography. Magnified on the screen, the pudendal cleft takes on a monumental character. This juxtaposition of the clinical and the perverse, delivered such a deadpan narrative style also yields some hilarious lines. Take, for example, 'He is not attractive. His skin is thin like wax paper. His bald head is the shape of an enlarged prostate gland.'

The most powerful dystopias resonate because they're credible and mirror the present in some shape or form, and in this respect, *Post-Depravity* is a highly effective dystopian work, because even at its most outlandish, it all seems strangely plausible.

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