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Supervert interview

Supervert has been writing and creating digital products for decades now, but his first book was published in 2001. Extraterrestrial Sex Fetish centered on Mercury de Sade, "a computer programmer obsessed with the erotic potential of alien life." He also ran the website pervscan.com, which chronicled all the sexual perversions in the news. While the site led to the book Perversity Think Tank, there is actually little material from the site in the book, since a lot of sex crimes in the news seemed to be more the result of insanity or people of low intelligence doing horrible things instead of well-thought-out perversion. He does make a case in the book for perversion actually requiring intelligent thought. (A hillbilly fucking his daughter is probably the result of a lack of available women, so it's not perversion. He's not fucking her because she's his daughter. On the other hand, a libertine "embuggering" his married daughter with a host is perversion, since it's a conscious effort to commit incest, adultery, sodomy, and sacrilege all at once.)

While his voice is certainly unique, it also feels like he's carrying on in the spirit of writers like William Burroughs or JG Ballard. Personally, his works have impressed me in the same way as Burroughs' cutups or Ballard's short stories like "Why I Want to Fuck Ronald Reagan." If you haven't read his stuff, I'd advise checking it out. He now has three books out, and Perversity Think Tank can be read at his website for free, or you can order a physical copy. You can also get PDF/Kindle versions of the other two at amazon or supervert.com, as well as physical copies.



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Amy: Greetings Supervert and thanks for doing the interview! How do you think people usually find your works? (Personally, I belonged to a “xenophilia” group on livejournal 10 years ago or so, largely because they posted interesting artwork/porn; not due to actual sexual attraction to ETs, and somehow stumbled upon ETSF.)

SUPERVERT: Supervert is a spider lurking in a web of agitprop and subliminal commands. Hapless readers like yourself have no choice but to be drawn irresistibly into its empire of depravity. One minute you’re telling yourself “I only belong to a xenophilia group for the articles.” The next minute you find yourself unusually stimulated by the sight of little gray men...

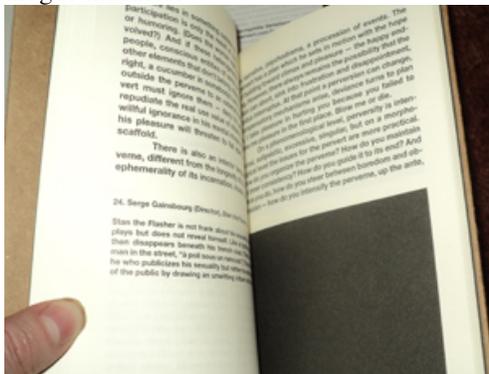
How do you feel about more and more books going digital? Do you think many people are still reading? Last week I bought an actual, physical book and it shocked me to think how long it had been since I’ve done that, and then I ended up getting physical copies of your [Extraterrestrial Sex Fetish](#) and *Perversity Think Tank* also, which I’d only read on the computer before.

SUPERVERT: I love it. But it is difficult to answer this without writing you a... ah... book. I’ll confine myself to one small observation. Rather than distinguish between books and ebooks, analog and digital, I might distinguish between babble and literature. Babble is the unrestrained flow of low-impact information we now consume: emails, tweets, RSS feeds, and so forth. Literature is something else. It is disciplined, concentrated, resonant. It contains silence the way a body was once thought to contain a soul.

Consequently, a real problem that digital technology poses to writers is not to confuse babble with literature. It used to be that writers thought with fear and trepidation of the blank sheet of white paper. How do you have the courage to make the first mark? But now the problem is different. Writing happens not on a blank page but on a screen already filled with babble. How do you find the space to make any mark at all? Your options have changed. You have to write in the margins, or take in the babble and spit it out in a new form, or perform an act of destruction, a sort of holocaust that wipes out all the bullshit and leaves you writing atop a mass grave.

You’ve said your work does not exist to shock, but people have a very visceral reaction to certain topics. I can understand a fear of death to an extent, but why do people persist with their fear of sexuality (and the sexuality of others)? Why do you think we have this current trend of becoming more “politically correct” and we are supposed to be constantly worried if our words will offend?

SUPERVERT: On one hand, it seems ridiculous that people should fear sexuality. It’s just a biological process. To have sex with someone should be no more complicated than arranging a lunch date. On the other hand, erotic urges can transport people into strange, extreme, or frankly dangerous situations in which they risk rejection, humiliation, disease, prison, physical mutilation, even death. From that perspective, it may well be rational to fear sexuality. Eros is the gateway drug to madness.



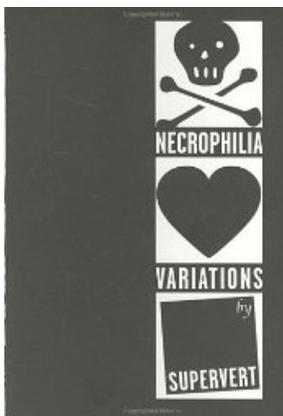
As for political correctness, my impression is that it’s trending downward. It was less than fifty years ago, for example, that William Burroughs’ *Naked Lunch* was tried for obscenity in a Boston court. Nowadays you can produce or consume all kinds of strange kicks on the internet. That’s progress.

Do you think humanity just has a will to believe in the supernatural (&etc.)? Do you think that, if religion was wiped out, everyone would just switch over to aliens and nothing would change? I've read that people are supposedly becoming more atheistic, but when I turn on the TV, it's all pseudoscience and ghost stories, and I don't think that's much different.

SUPERVERT: People are credulous. It's not news.

I have to admit that I'm of two minds about it. On one hand, I believe it is preferable to be rational and skeptical — to practice the epoché of the philosopher, the ability to bracket one's own beliefs in order to examine them more carefully. On the other hand, I feel a strong fascination for delusions, aberrations, fixations. Perhaps the regrettable thing is not that people mislead themselves but that they fail to mislead themselves enough. They only experience the most superficial of delusions — inanities propagated by tv shows, fallacies inspired by YouTube memes, “urban legends.” If only people would push themselves to further extremes of individual derangement, they might well find subterranean entrances to the same truths that philosophers discover by turning on the lights. (I consider Artaud an example of this type — a great philosopher whose work is built not on syllogisms but on madness.)

Do you think the way we treat the dead is due mainly to religious practices? If they decide to make a “donate to necrophiliacs” box you can check on your driver's license, I'd have no problems doing so (whether or not anyone would want me is another issue), but many people are very concerned with what happens to their bodies. If it's a matter of consent, don't you have to be mentally present in the body (or planning to return at some point, if you're in a coma or sleeping or something) to care if sex is consensual?



SUPERVERT: Death rituals arise from an unholy union of religion, science, and commerce. And yes, it is strange that people should care so much about what happens to their bodies after death — particularly since these same people are just as likely to mistreat their bodies while alive... Perhaps there's a relationship. If people knew that necrophiles would be competing for their cadavers, would they take better care of themselves before dying?

How has your reaction to things changed after PervScan?

SUPERVERT: I learned a great deal from the experience of maintaining a blog about sexual perversion for six years. As *Perversity Think Tank* describes, I also found it hardening me toward perversions that came to seem increasingly run-of-the-mill. At some point I realized that the effort required to write 500 words a day outweighed the imagination that my subjects were putting into their sex crimes. Consequently, since I've retired the blog and turned my attentions toward a new book, I'm trying to put all that energy into the invention of some new psychopathologies.

Thanks, and do you have anything to add?

SUPERVERT: I'm not in the advice business. However, people have been sending increasing amounts of books / videos / manuscripts / poems / photographs / artworks / long raving emails describing plans for certain masterpieces. Mostly this is a pleasure, but I would like to take the opportunity to offer one piece of advice to young artists and writers.

Be disciplined. Be hard on yourself. Remember that you are competing with some of the greatest

minds in history. If you are a painter, for example, you are entering into a race where Michelangelo and Picasso already have leads. Ask yourself if you have done everything you can, everything in your power, to compete with those guys. It's not a matter of painting like them or of conceiving of

art like them. You can do your own thing. It's a matter of pushing yourself, the way they pushed themselves, to do in art what no one else could do. Why accept anything less of yourself?

Wittgenstein: "What you have achieved cannot mean more to others than it does to you. Whatever it has cost you, that's what they'll pay."

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