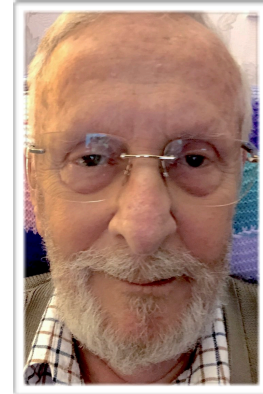


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Thursday, December 16, 2021



Instant Human Evolution...?

Or, *Devolution*...Or, Disintegration, perhaps?

Conventional Wisdom has it that...

...human evolution happens so slowly that we can barely notice it over our lifespans. Right? But, right now, the original homo sapiens can be difficult to recognize. Is social evolution creating societies no longer suitable for “normal humans”?

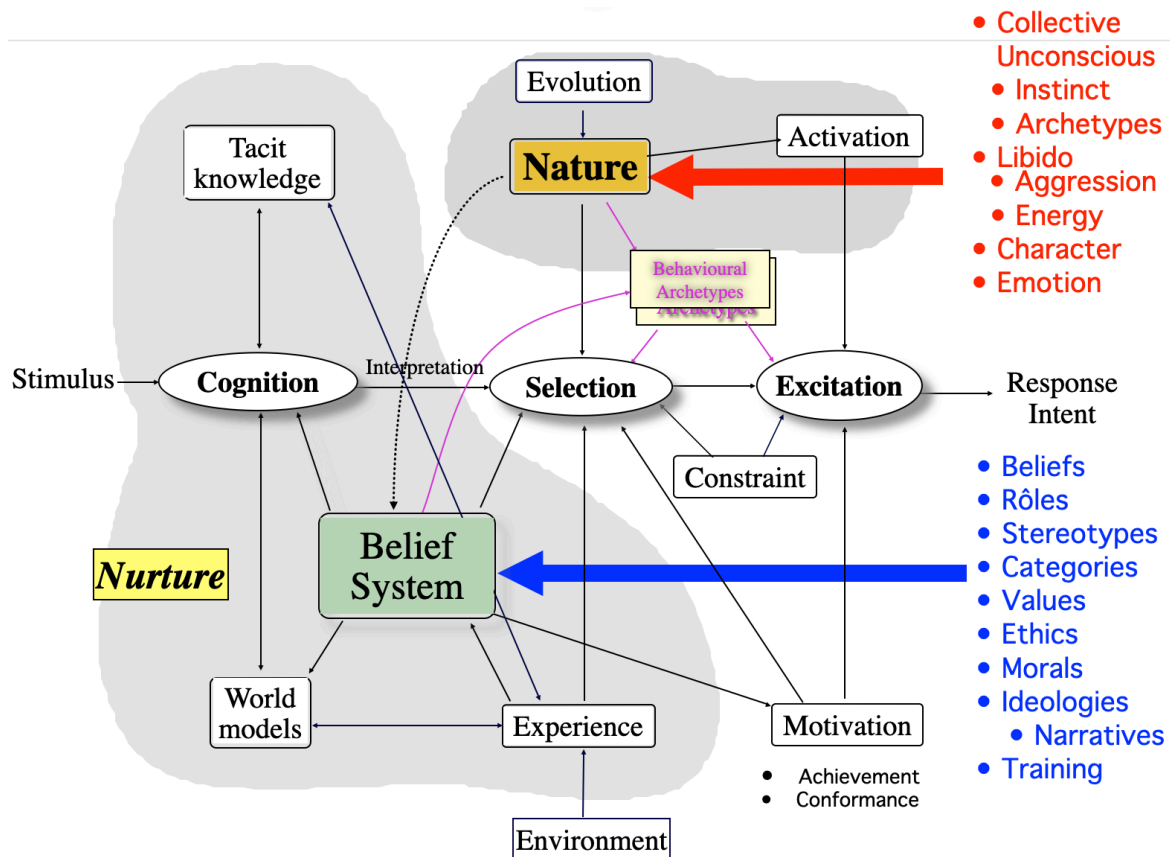
I say, steady on, old chap, there’s no such thing as “normal.” we’re all different, you know—you can’t say things like that...

“Nuts” to not allowed. There is such a thing as “normal” for humans.

Of course, there are different ideas of “normal.” Some people think normality—or otherwise—is evident in our behavior—or, rather, *misbehavior*...

The figure suggests the way some psychologists may look at “normal behavior.” Some see it as a tradeoff between Nature, how we evolved, on the one hand, and Nurture, how we were “brung up,” on the other. Others suggest that you can see normality—or otherwise—in the way we respond to stimulus—be it (our interpretation of) signal, situation, problem, query, or whatever...

Hitchins' VSM: Behavior Management



From Stimulus at left, through to behavioral Response at right, moderated by the innate interchange between Nature at top, and Nurture, below and left.

As the figure shows, the Belief System is an amalgam of many different aspects that we accumulate over time. How the various aspects relate to each other is not well understood, but it seems that trained (programed?) individuals and groups may respond and behave in predictable ways, and may—for a time—suppress their instincts—overtly, at least.

Similarly, in the figure above, Human Nature is shown as having evolved many different aspects, in this instance largely due to Karl Jung:¹

Collective Unconscious: that part of the unconscious mind which is derived from ancestral memory and experience, and is common to all humankind—as distinct from the individual's unconscious.

¹ Whose views were famously at odds with those of Sigmund Freud...

Jung's archetypes: universal, primal symbols and images derived from the collective unconscious. The psychic counterpart of instinct.

Instinct: innate, unspecific knowledge, driven from the sum of human history, which prefigures and directs human behavior.

Alongside these, the figure shows Libido, Emotion, Character, as fundamental to Human Nature, with Aggression and Energy as aspects of Libido.

All of which suggests that “normal” is a pretty complex concept. But, that we humans all possess the same, innate archetypal behaviors, the same instincts, the same tendencies to emotion and aggression. Well, according to Jung, at least...

Not, of course, that these are all on full display. Our behavior is managed, most of the time, through our Nurture/Belief System, which advises how we should behave, how we *believe* we are expected to behave...

The young soldier recently promoted to platoon commander may unexpectedly change his behavior to fit his mental image of how commanders are supposed to behave. The new technical director of a company may, unconsciously perhaps, adopt the *magus archetype*, seeing himself—and so *becoming*—the company’s “Mr. Fixit,” their universal problem-solver...

The hard-nosed, uncompromising boss at work may be the soft, gentle, loving parent at home: they may—in effect—switch behavioral archetypes as they enter through the front door of their home. Unconsciously. And that would be perfectly normal. We each have a tendency to adopt a behavioral archetype according to situation and environment. And that is the usual situation: normal people are unaware of their behavioral normality...which is as it should be.

However, at fundamental, instinctive level, humans—as a species—present with:

- *attraction to the opposite sex;*
- *pair-bonding between male and female;*
- *detection of cheating;*
- *avoidance of incest;*
- *monogamy;*
- *respect for elders;*
- *caring for the young and helpless;*
- *protecting and teaching children;*
- *strong family bonds;*
- *male/female dispersion;*
- *work-sharing between complementary male and female;*
- *cooperation in the face of threat;*
- *vigorous defense of family;*
- *fear of strangers who look different from “us;”*
- *adherence to “our” culture/suspicion of other cultures; etc., etc.*

All of these human instincts, and many more, can be seen to be in keeping with the universal *prime directive of procreation*, so that we may live and survive to pass our genes to successive generations...they are fundamental to *homo sapiens*’ natural behavior. Else, we wouldn’t be here...

When we look at our contemporary western society, however, we find some distinct anomalies *vis-à-vis* those fundamental human instincts:

- The value and importance of “family” downgraded and diminished
- “Marriage” between people of the same sex
- Against their very natural instincts, new mothers go to work, instead of

- suckling, nurturing and raising their child
- Many of our old folks in care homes
- Old folks mocked and denigrated: “past it,” “racist,” “incompetent”
- Increasing domestic violence, particularly during lockdown
- Increasing juvenile violence, including murder...
- Women increasingly seek equality with men, as opposed to innate complementarity
- Women, rather than “work share” with men, increasingly want to do the *same* as men, be it fighting in the armed forces, playing football and rugby, boxing, etc.
- Many young people feeling that they are “of the wrong sex” (Sexual dysphoria)
- LGBTQ+** communities, of people who are:
 - not attracted, exclusively or at all, to the opposite sex;
 - may not recognize themselves as either male or female;
 - may be changing from male to female, or *vice versa*; and,
 - may consider this transient state an end in itself.

** I am unfamiliar with the variants, and have no wish to offend, however accidentally. So, I looked up some definitions, e.g.:

*A **trans woman** is a woman who was assigned male at birth. Trans women may experience gender dysphoria and may transition; this process commonly includes hormone replacement therapy and sometimes sex reassignment surgery, which can bring relief and resolve feelings of gender dysphoria. Trans women may be heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual, asexual, or identify with other terms (such as queer). Wikipedia.*

Comparing these anomalies with the previous bulleted list of fundamental instincts, these emergent behaviors *appear* to be at odds with human procreative instincts. Yet, curiously, same sex couples may still want to have children, i.e. present with perhaps the most fundamental human instinct of all...

Moreover, LGBTQ+ folks regard themselves as a community. Usually, members of a community share something in common. In this instance, however, the term is being used to bring together those whose principal commonality is that they are different *from each other*, as well as from the rest of humanity.

As the numbers of people identifying under the LGBTQ+ banner is increasing, i.e. as the number of people presenting with instincts other than those ascribed to human procreation, there is surely a suggestion that humanity is somehow changing—and that the change is accelerating...

Non-Binary is the latest (or is it?) in the expressed beliefs to emerge regarding, well, sexuality—I think—or could it be the mythical² gender question? Who knows? This one appears to have emerged from the woke/weird/New Age/Californian counter culture, which our young people seem to swallow through the charms of social media without question, like the latest fashion. But, what is non-binary? My dictionary has it as:

“denoting or relating to a gender or sexual identity that is not defined in terms of traditional binary oppositions such as male and female or homosexual and heterosexual.”

Which appears, on the surface, to be a self-denial both of sex and gender. So, not human? Not anthropoid? Not mammalian? Not...even animal? Not of this world? [Of course, Non-Binaries’ beliefs obscure their natural instincts—which is perfectly normal...see the figure above.]

However, advocates of non-binary-ism(?) demand respect for their beliefs, and under the terms of our “Inclusivity Edicts,” demand to be catered for within society. As well might Creationists, Flat-Worlders, Witches, Vampires. (What’s holding *them* back, I wonder?) Beliefs may bear no relation to ‘ground truth,’ however, and are not open to evidence or proof, i.e. may be nonsensical. Which renders the contemporary requirement for blind “inclusivity” rather suspect...viz...

² Gender was, for many centuries, associated with languages, such as French, German and Latin, as a classification of nouns and pronouns. It had nothing to do with human sex, or sexual dysphoria, except facetiously. “Sex change” may now be referred to as “gender reassignment.” Which obscures rather than reveals. The contemporary abuse of the term ‘gender’ causes unnecessary confusion and dismay...and holds out false promise to those unfortunates experiencing e.g. sexual dysphoria.

...viz...Bizarrely, several councils across England have ripped out school toilets for boys and for girls, replacing them with so-called “gender neutral” toilets. Unsurprisingly, (remembering the sorts of things that used to go on in boys toilets) the parents of children in these schools have objected strongly. One can only wonder at their sanity...not the parents—the *Councils who committed such blunders*. What ever can be going on in their tiny minds? Don’t they know the difference between inclusivity and lunacy?

But Councils are not alone, in the Non-Binary context. Airline pilots are no longer to address passengers as “Ladies and Gentlemen,” for fear, presumably, of offending—or failing to include—Non-Binaries. Never mind offending their normal human passengers...for heaven’s sake stop this ridiculous behavior. (Not the Non-Binaries—the Airlines, who one might reasonably expect to know better...)

So, what is going on? Are these arbitrary anomalies simply human social evolution losing touch with *homo sapiens*, the human ape, the tailless monkey that it supposed to serve?

And, it has to be said, that Western Civilization is considerable *less civilized* than it used to be...you only have to look back at life in the Thirties, Forties and Fifties to see that society was more sophisticated, elegant, erudite, cultured—even, surprisingly perhaps, before and during WWII... Don’t think so?

I watched Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers the other evening, in the 1935 film “Top Hat,” set in London and Venice. Not just for the delicious Irving Berlin music, but also for the sophistication, glamor, elegance, humor, decor, and, yes, to see the social behavior, the couples dancing, their manners, the living-, bedroom- and lounge-furniture, how the kitchens were equipped, etc., etc. I had to concede that—although impoverished at the time by the Great Depression of 1929—as portrayed, that aspirational society was way ahead of what we have today... No smart-phones, of course. No internet. No cyberspace. No need. Just direct human-human interaction. And it is so refreshing to see...

Yet again, there is zero public humor today—outlawed under the censorial yoke of PC with its attendant Thought Police. There is music, of a sort, today, but preferentially presented in a muddy field with inadequate sanitation, where the *ad hoc* booted, soaked, mesmerized worshippers stand with their arms held aloft in silent salute to their symbolic rave. No Irving Berlin., no Cole Porter, Gershwin, or Richard Rogers. And no equivalents.

No romance. No couples dancing. Nothing like: “Woman needs Man, and Man must have his Mate, That no-one can deny³...” Time really does seem to have “gone by.” Perhaps, today that might read: “That no-one should *allow*.” But, of course, all of this change could be just social devolution, nothing to do with human biological evolution...Then again...

Puberty is considered to start when the part of the brain known as the hypothalamus starts releasing a hormone that activates the body's pituitary and gonadal glands. Reportedly, this used to happen around the age of 14 but has dropped, supposedly with improved health and nutrition, to around the age of 10.

As a consequence, in the UK the average age for menarche (a girl's first menstruation) has dropped by four years in the past 150 years. Half of all females now experience menarche by 12 or 13 years of age.⁴

Adolescence now lasts from the ages of 10 to 24, although it used to be thought to end at 19. There are biological arguments for why the definition of adolescence should be extended, including that the body continues to develop. For example, the brain continues to mature beyond the age of 20, working faster and more efficiently. And many people's wisdom teeth don't come through until the age of 25—which does indeed appear to be an evolutionary trend...

³ Lyrics: “As Time Goes By” by Herman Hupfeld

⁴ But, remember, Shakespeare's Juliet, was just 14 years old...

Young people are also getting married and having children later. The average age for a man to enter their first marriage in 2013 was 32.5 years and 30.6 years for women across England and Wales. This represented an increase of almost eight years since 1973.

[Left-wing politicians continue their clamor to reduce the voting age to 16... meanwhile, logic and biology suggest instead that the age of majority—and voting—should revert upwards, to 25...so that adults vote, not adolescents!]

The thing of it is, is... these changes *could* be human biological evolution—they are certainly beginning to look like it...but they could also be environmentally induced. We humans have taken to living in hives and mounds, like honeybees and termites. We call our versions towns and cities but, just like those insects, they are self-constructed monocultures with other species largely excluded.

And just like those eusocial creatures, we live, travel, work and communicate in crowded conditions. Very crowded. Psychologically as well as physically. So that some anthropologists and biologists suggest that our behavior in such concentrated conditions is atypical of humans in their natural environment. Might crowding be responsible, then, for the surge in mental health issues, the increases in domestic violence, and in juvenile violence, and the progressive de-civilization to be observed around us? Crowding is known to have a deleterious effect on animal behavior...and, although we may be reluctant to admit it, we humans are animals, too.

Honeybees in hives behave quite differently from bumble bees. Termites in mounds behave quite differently from cockroaches. Wild animals in zoos behave quite differently from those same animals in the wild. So, the suggestion is that we humans have created a crowded, monocultural environment that is altering/has altered our behavior. Fundamentally.

Which then raises the question:

If we took the people from their crowded cities and spaced them out in natural countryside, in fields and forests, by seas, lakes and rivers, would their behavior revert to that of earlier, uncrowded humans? Or, have they been irrevocably changed?

City folks would have little idea how to fend for themselves: to organize themselves to build their own houses; to hunt and gather; to fish and farm; to create their own power supplies, fresh water supplies, transports, road and rail links, communications networks, etc., etc. And, let's face it—most city folks would be totally helpless without their technology...

It would be like expecting a honeybee to survive on its own outside of the hive, like a bumble bee; or, a termite to survive outside of the mound like a cockroach. In both instances, a new species, adapted to living in crowds, somehow emerged from the old, replete with castes described by their discrete, complementary roles: a caste of food gatherers; caste of defenders against intrusion; a caste of undertakers, to dispose of dead bodies; a caste devoted to rearing the next generation; and so on. And the castes, with their discrete jobs, added up to all things needed to maintain hive/mound viability.

Humans living in towns and cities have done much the same over many generations. We have 'castes' (professions) of house builders; road menders; food providers; energy providers; plumbing, water & sanitation providers, undertakers, transport providers; etc. And we have castes devoted to raising the next generation: nursery, pre-school, school, boarding school, college, university... And none of us is able to do all the jobs necessary to raise the next generation and to maintain the viability of our town or city. Instead, it takes all of our various complementary 'castes' to do the job.

Looked at in that light, could it be that we have not so much evolved/devolved, as actually become a variant species, one adapted to living in crowded towns and cities? Instead of *homo sapiens sapiens*, are we transmogrifying into *homo sapiens gregaria*, perhaps? A *gregarious variant of homo sapiens* adapted to living in crowded groups. If so, perhaps (as I have banged on about in these columns before) we are in course of becoming *eusocialized*?

[Eusocial: denoting highly efficient social organisms (e.g. the honeybee) in which a single female or caste produces the offspring and non-productive individuals cooperate in caring for the young.]

If that is the case, then it would explain quite a few of the observable anomalies listed above. Could some of the LGBTQ+ communities, for example, be advance members of the variant *homo sapiens gregaria*, which will consist largely of non-reproductive workers? Could those women who seek equality with men, rather than the complementarity of male and female *homo sapiens*, be moving unconsciously, under the influence of crowding—physical and psychological—towards being part of the future workforce of *homo sapiens gregaria*?

And what of a reproductive caste within this putative new variant? It seems unlikely that a town or city would depend on one woman as “Queen,” producing all offspring, like a sole honeybee Queen. A caste of many Queens would seem more likely. And I am reminded that a Malian woman, Halima Cissé from Morocco, recently gave birth to 9 babies. (Reports of 10 babies in one birth from South Africa and Russia have been discounted.) It would not take so very many Halimas in a caste of offspring producers to sustain a population. And, such multiple births are quite beyond the mother to manage.

So, a ‘caste’ of workers to look after the babies is essential, in line with the definition of Eusocial above.

So, what might we expect in a future, fully eusocialized society:

- biological sex is irrelevant—the majority are castes of sterile workers
- sexual dimorphism is diminished; all workers appear similar
 - marriage is outmoded.
 - there are no families.
 - Members of the ‘Queen’ caste pair with subordinated fertile ‘Kings.’
 - Queens suckle their multiple newborns only briefly, to pass colostrum, before recovering and preparing to become pregnant again when needed
 - nurseries and schools raise the newborns, children and adolescents
 - workers of every caste work until no longer able
 - old workers past work are disposed of...there is no ‘retirement,’ *per se*
 - children are educated and trained to populate a caste, as needed
 - ‘sports’ teams—if such a thing exists—comprise sterile worker-players of both sexes
 - each town or city is replete with its own full set of castes
 - the whole is self-supporting and highly efficient

And, when you stand back and look at the situation from a distance, it seem that we may be moving in that direction. Much of it seems not too far away...Some of it is here already, in places...

But, not all of us will succumb to the variant condition and become *homo sapiens gregaria*. Those of us who decline the psychological crowding of social media, who avoid being mesmerized by ‘pop’ and avoid raves like the plague, who minimize/avoid use of social technology, who avoid crowds, live in the country, by the sea, and avoid the city, who maintain a ribald sense of humor, dare to think for themselves, marry a member of the opposite sex for life—and

mean it, those who enjoy reading, writing and risk taking, etc. Those folks may remain as *homo sapiens sapiens*.

Unfortunately, if you have just read this on Linked In, a form of social media, you are regrettably not one of “those folk...” But good luck anyway. Looks like we’re all going to need it.