

## Sexual Selection

I'm cocky and single and I got your genes tingling  
 Girl, with my costly signaling  
 Rockin' the rhythm and all you keep thinkin' about  
 Is the offspring we'll bring into the world  
 And you're awfully tempting, so you got my genes tingling  
 Too, with your costly signaling  
 You're cute, but you gotta be considerate  
 And have a sense of humour, or you will not be interesting

Charles Darwin saw natural selection as the most serious cause  
 Of evolution, but what was going on with bird songs  
 And peacocks? They follow mysterious laws  
 And then Darwin had a curious thought  
 It probably occurred to him while explaining his theory  
 To a young Victorian blond, whose face displayed  
 A mixture of desire and feverish awe  
 The immediate cause of which Darwin clearly saw  
 So he said: "My dear, descent with modification comes from  
 The struggle for survival *and* reproduction  
 Hence, the reason for some structures must be *seduction*"  
 In fact, Darwin's brain was probably one such structure  
 Just as peacocks' tails show off the genes of the top males  
 And likewise the songs of nightingales, the fighting skills  
 Of elephant seals, and minnows with colourful scales  
 These are all traits that sexual selection has shaped  
 Through the female preference to get with the fittest mates  
 But in human beings that selection goes both ways  
 Pretty much anything that's just for display  
 And isn't meant dissuade or chase predators away  
 Was probably selected for in a sexual way...  
 But wait, isn't *this* just such a display?  
 I mean, I really *thought* I had something to say  
 But, is it just a demonstration of my DNA?  
 And, so what if it is? Great, what's to explain?  
 Okay, maybe a couple of things  
 First, to say that something ornate  
 Like complex language, first evolved as a seductive display  
 Doesn't mean that people only use it just to get laid  
 Darwin leaves Freud in the dustbin, okay?  
 For instance, I could use a urine stream to put out a fire  
 But that doesn't mean the penis evolved as bush fire fighter  
 This is a theory of language *function*  
 A theory of where it *comes* from; what it's used for now  
 Is a separate discussion; so which was it?

Was language originally a mechanism for survival or reproduction?  
Can you talk a predator *out* of attacking?  
Can you talk a parasite *out* of infecting?  
Can you talk a potential mate *in* to consenting?  
Potentially, right? Hence, presenting  
The grand unified theory of rhyme  
The mating mind uses lyrical signs, combined with wit  
And wordplay, conversation, humour and different narrative styles  
To appraise the fitness of mates, both for the purpose of marriage ties  
And for mates of the more temporary kind  
These are the humble roots of the literary sublime  
We're all just Shakespearean primates verbalizing our cherry behinds  
But how could we test this theory of mine?  
Ideally, we could use experimental holding zoos  
Filled with human subjects, and with an overhead view  
We could observe which breeding pairs reproduce  
And how often they use their verbal ornaments to seduce  
We could even separate them into control groups  
To see whether male or female vocals  
Are more prone to be used to stimulate hormones  
Although, it's true that this sort of method isn't normally approved  
If only there existed in a state of nature  
Some cultural group preoccupied with makin' paper  
And parading naked women shakin' their money makers  
In front of competitive males displaying mating behaviour  
While trading their creativity for sexual favours  
If such a group existed, I predict it would be a major  
Player in the entertainment industry, and would be in major  
Danger of being overwhelmed by angry player haters  
But I may have to save some of my research for later  
And how do I answer the charge that I'm participating  
In this mating dance *myself* with these dazzling bars?  
That isn't hard – I plead guilty  
I worked hard to achieve this ability  
And if it also gives my genes visibility then so be it  
But, I confess, it also reveals my unique disability  
See, my tendency to tell these monkey fables  
And funny medieval tales, generally fails  
To attract any nubile young females  
It does attract women a lot though  
All highly-educated and post-menopausal!  
I know, isn't it awful?  
I get mobbed after my Chaucer shows  
By grandmas thanking me for making it possible  
For them to appreciate a hip-hop flow  
And, you might ask, where are their granddaughters?

My guess is, they're at gangster rap concerts  
But that's how sexual selection works  
Any mutation gets tested first  
And if it doesn't get spread, then it gets purged  
So this experimental hip-hop mix  
Where it gets crossed with literature and lectures  
Will probably get the burial that it deserves  
That is, unless *you* spread it like whispers

I'm cocky and single and I got your genes tingling  
Girl, with my costly signaling  
Rockin' the rhythm and all you keep thinkin' about  
Is the offspring we'll bring into the world  
And you're awfully tempting, so you got my genes tingling  
Too, with your costly signaling  
You're cute, but you gotta be considerate  
And have a sense of humour, or you will not be interesting