

KILROY CAFÉ

Philosophy for the Modern Age

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Issue #7

June 7, 2008

41.1324°N, 73.3193°W

Preening and Nesting Behavior of the Human Female: A Study

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My many years of research into the behavior of the human female have yielded more questions than answers. The chief difficulty with studying this species in the wild is that the observer tends to change that which is observed.

The researcher can't set up his cameras and recording equipment and expect the female to act naturally. As soon as observation begins, the female instantly becomes aware of the researcher's presence and withdraws to the bathroom, where she remains for hours.

When she finally emerges, there is artificial pigmentation all over her face, while an overpowering floral scent permeates the air within a 20-meter radius. The clothing is frilly and impractical, and the subject has gained 4 to 12 centimeters in height through the attachment of bizarre pointed extensions to the feet. Fingernails may be similarly extended and decorated, and useless baubles and charms are attached to various parts of the body. The hair on the head has been colored and coifed, while extraneous hair on other parts of the body has been plucked or shaved.

Only when the female opens her mouth and speaks is it clear that this is the same individual who went into the bathroom.

Evidently, the female has difficulty "being herself." There always has to be a layer of decoration between her and the outside world. This can be a veneer of makeup or a whole houseful of vanity objects. The risk to the female is that adornment takes over her life and nothing is accomplished all day except primping and interior decoration.

Males just want to get a job done, while females (and some gay males)

have a dangerous aesthetic sense which says things have to be done in a certain ceremonial way. Females are often called more "sensitive" than males, but an alternate term is "superficial," as they can easily become obsessed with outward image rather than delving below the surface for substance.

Given the resources to do so, a female will build a nest. This appears to be a deeply ingrained behavior that may have evolved to meet the needs of offspring when the world was more dangerous and resources were scarce. A nest is a comfortable, protected place in a harsh environment. Nest building, however, can get out of hand in the modern world. If excess resources are available, the typical female will invest them all in her creation, regardless of true need, until the nest becomes an obscene and overwrought display of self-indulgence and waste.

In the female universe, one cannot simply sleep on a mattress on the floor of an adequately heated cubicle, no matter how comfortable it may be. One has to sleep on a raised bed with an oak frame, a feather comforter and color-coordinated sheets, surrounded by furniture and art objects that radiate good taste. The room should have a light scent of potpourri, and the windows should look out upon some idyllic scene of nature. The female fails to recognize that when she is sleeping, she isn't going to notice any of this, but the symbolism and psychosocial imagery of the nest seem to be more important than actual function.

Feminine nest-building is directed toward an unfulfillable ideal epitomized by the pornographic imagery of Martha Stewart. In magazines and TV shows, the Stewart communications empire shows us idealized, softly-lit images of

what the gentle life should look like—not unlike the dreamy images of centerfolds in *Playboy*. Females usually fall for this nonsense just as surely as males drool over Miss November.

According to the Stewart ideal, objects brought into the home should not be hard and functional but soft and rustic. They should seem to come from a theoretical "Middle Earth" era when most things were made by hand and life supposedly had more substance and quality. The nest is lined with cotton and lace, never nylon or polyester. The idealized pornographic home is always pristine but never quite finished, as there are always new projects to start as soon the current one is done.

By genetic predisposition enhanced by commercial marketing, a female's nest tends to absorb whatever time and money are available to her. If she has a million dollars, she'll soon have a million dollar nest. Necessity and function are usually the least considered issues in nest implementation and the female will respect them only when poverty, divorce or other outside factors force her to.

The tragic part of feminine nesting is that the nest, once built, has to be defended. After years of accumulated vanity, the home contains so many complex and fragile investments that the female can hardly move. The "nest" becomes more like a "web" with a ill-tempered spider in the center. "Don't touch that!" the female snaps if you try to change anything. Once the web has been spun and attached to the surrounding terrain, it becomes nearly immovable. The female can thus become trapped in her own elaborate creation, which can inhibit all forms of personal growth.

The female, like the male, has only a limited time on Earth. If precious years are wasted in creating the perfect home, there will be little time left for actual living.

—G.C.

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