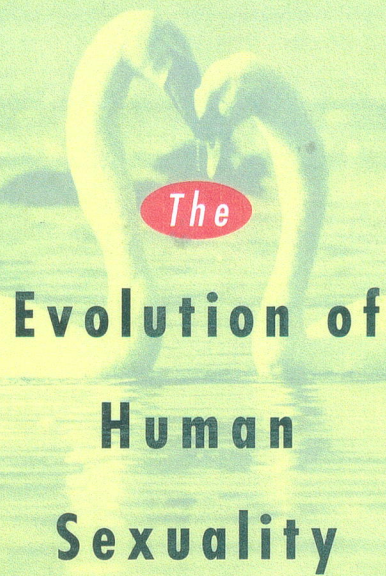
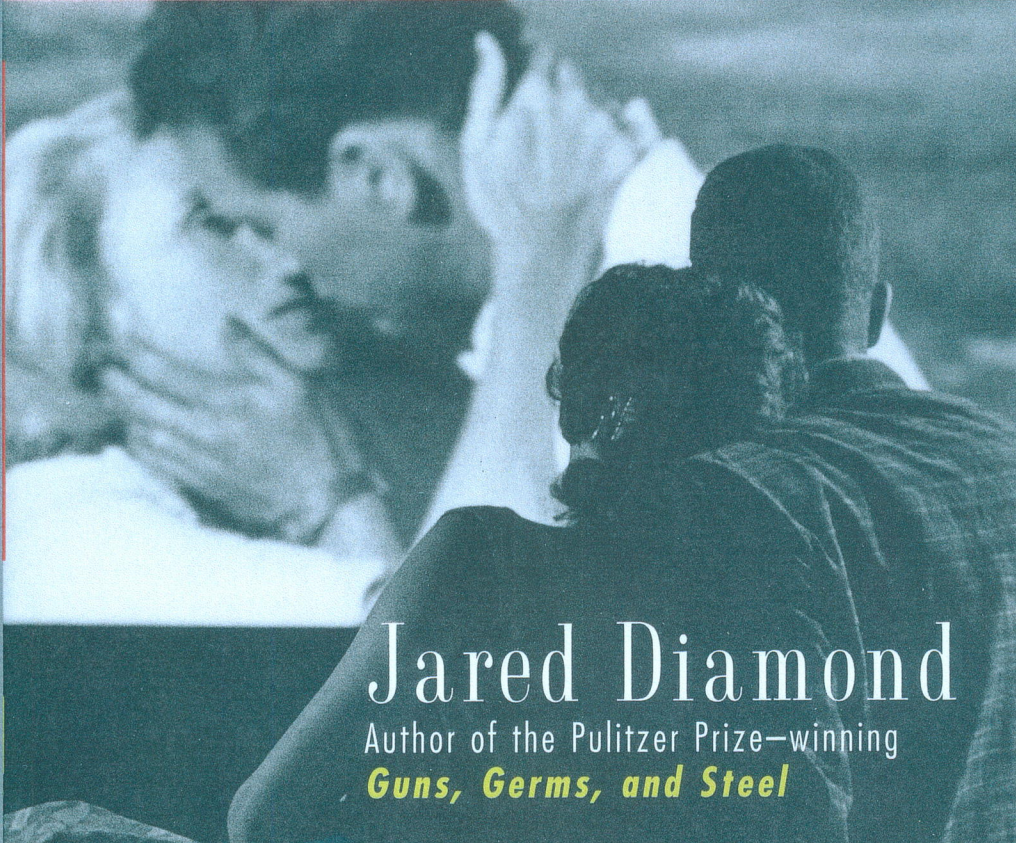


Why
Is
Sex
Fun?

A photograph of two swans on a body of water, their necks curved to form a heart shape. The image is tinted with a yellowish-green color.

The
Evolution of
Human
Sexuality



Jared Diamond

Author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning
Guns, Germs, and Steel

CONTENTS

Preface	ix
1 The Animal with the Weirdest Sex Life	1
2 The Battle of the Sexes	15
3 Why Don't Men Breast-feed Their Babies? The Non-Evolution of Male Lactation	41
4 Wrong Time for Love: The Evolution of Recreational Sex	63
5 What Are Men Good For? The Evolution of Men's Roles	89
6 Making More by Making Less: The Evolution of Female Menopause	103
7 Truth in Advertising: The Evolution of Body Signals	127
Further Reading	147
Index	151

PREFACE

The subject of sex preoccupies us. It's the source of our most intense pleasures. Often it's also the cause of misery, much of which arises from built-in conflicts between the evolved roles of women and men.

This book is a speculative account of how human sexuality came to be the way it now is. Most of us don't realize how unusual human sexual practices are, compared to those of all other living animals. Scientists infer that the sex life of even our recent apelike ancestors was very different from ours today. Some distinctive evolutionary forces must have operated on our ancestors to make us different. What were those forces, and what really is so bizarre about us?

Understanding how our sexuality evolved is fascinating not only in its own right but also in order to understand our other distinctively human features. Those features include our culture, speech, parent-child relations, and mastery of complex tools. While paleontologists usually attribute the evolution of these features to our attainment of large brains and upright posture, I argue that our bizarre sexuality was equally essential for their evolution.

Among the unusual aspects of human sexuality that I discuss are female menopause, the role of men in human societies, having sex in private, often having sex for fun

rather than for procreation, and the expansion of women's breasts even before use in lactation. To the layperson, these features all seem almost too natural to require explanation. On reflection, though, they prove surprisingly difficult to account for. I'll also discuss the function of men's penises and the reasons women but not men nurse their babies. The answers to these two questions seem utterly obvious. Within even these questions, though, lurk baffling unsolved problems.

Reading this book will not teach you new positions for enjoying intercourse, nor will it help you reduce the discomfort of menstrual cramps or menopause. It will not abolish the pain of discovering that your spouse is having an affair, neglecting your joint child, or neglecting you in favor of your child. But this book may help you understand why your body feels the way it does, and why your beloved is behaving the way he or she is. Perhaps, too, if you understand why you feel driven to some self-destructive sexual behavior, that understanding may help you to gain distance from your instincts and to deal more intelligently with them.

... appeared