

significance of the hair. In its present form the arrangement of the head hair differs strikingly between the two sexes and therefore provides a secondary sexual characteristic. Its sexual associations have inevitably led to its involvement in sexual behaviour patterns, so that stroking or manipulating the hair is now an action too heavily loaded with erotic significance to be permissible as a simple social friendship gesture. If, as a result of this, it is banned from communal gatherings of social acquaintances, it is necessary to find some other outlet for it. Grooming a cat or a sofa may provide an outlet for the urge to groom, but the need to be groomed requires a special context. The hairdressing salon is the perfect answer. Here the customer can indulge in the groomee role to his or 'her heart's content, without any fear of a sexual element creeping in to the proceedings. By making the professional groomers into a separate category, completely dissociated from the 'tribal' acquaintanceship group, the dangers are eliminated. The use of male groomers for Males and female groomers for females reduces the dangers still further. Where this is not done, the sexuality of the groomer is reduced in some way. If a female is attended by a male hairdresser, he usually behaves in an effeminate manner, regardless of his true sexual personality. Males are nearly always groomed by male barbers, but if a female masseuse is employed, she is typically rather masculine.

As a pattern of behaviour, hairdressing has three functions. It not only cleans the hair and provides an outlet for social grooming, but it also decorates the groomee. Decoration of the body for sexual, aggressive, or other social purposes is a widespread phenomenon in the case of the naked ape, and it has been discussed under other headings in other chapters. It has no real place in a chapter on comfort behaviour, except that it so often appears to grow out of some kind of grooming activity. Tattooing, shaving and plucking of hair, manicuring, ear piercing and the more primitive forms of scarification all seem to have their origin in simple grooming actions. But, whereas grooming talk has been borrowed from elsewhere and utilised as a grooming substitute, here the reverse process has taken place 181