

adopting other postures. Also, the frontal approach' provides the maximum possibility for stimulation of the female's clitoris during the pelvic thrusting of the male. It is true that it will be passively stimulated by the pulling effect of the male's thrusts, regardless of his body position in relation to the female, but in a face-to-face mating there will in addition be the direct rhythmic pressure of the male's pubic region on to the clitoral area, and this will considerably heighten the stimulation. Finally, there is the basic anatomy of the female vaginal passage, the angle of which has swung forward to a marked degree, when compared with other species of primates. It has moved forward more than would be expected simply as a passive result of the process of becoming a vertical species. Undoubtedly, if it had been important for the female of our species to present her genitals to the male for rear mounting, natural selection would soon have favoured that trend and the females would by now have a more posteriorly directed vaginal tract.

So it seems plausible to consider that face-to-face copulation is basic to our species. There are, of course, a number of variations that do not eliminate the frontal element: male above, female above, side by side, squatting, standing, and so on, but the most efficient and commonly used one is with both partners horizontal, the male above the female. American investigators have estimated that in their culture 70 per cent of the population employ only this position. Even those who vary their postures still use the basic one for much of the time. Fewer than ten per cent experiment with rear-entry positions. In a massive, crosscultural survey involving nearly two hundred different societies scattered all over the world, the conclusion was that copulation with the male entering the female from the rear does not occur as the usual practice in any of the communities studied.

If we can now accept this fact, we can return from this slight digression to the original question concerning sexual self-mimicry. If the female of our species was going to successfully shift the interest of the male round to the front, evolution would have to do something to make the frontal region more stimulating. 66