

areas in other animals where there are small naked patches, but have become more extensive in our own species. Blushing occurs with particularly high frequency during the earlier courtship stages of sexual behaviour and, at the later phases of more intense arousal, there is the characteristic mottling of the sex flush. (Again, this is a form of signalling that the darker-skinned races have had to sacrifice to climatic demands. We know that they still undergo these changes, however, because, although they are invisible as colour transformations, close examination reveals significant changes in skin texture.)

Before leaving this array of visual sexual signals we must consider a rather unusual aspect of their evolution. To do so, we must take a sidelong glance at some rather strange things that have been happening to the bodies of a number of our lowlier primate cousins, the monkeys. Recent German research has revealed that certain species have started to mimic themselves. The most dramatic examples of this are the mandrill and the gelada baboon. The male mandrill has a bright red penis with blue scrotal patches on either side of it. This colour arrangement is repeated on its face, its nose being bright red and its swollen, naked cheeks an intense blue. It is as if the animal's face is mimicking its genital region by giving the same set of visual signals. When the male mandrill approaches another animal, its genital display tends to be concealed by its body posture, but it can still apparently transmit the vital messages by using its phallic face. The female gelada indulges in a similar self-copying device. Around her genitals there is a bright red skin patch, bordered with white papillae. The lips of the vulva in the centre of this area are a deeper, richer red. This visual pattern is repeated on her chest region, where again there is a patch of naked red skin surrounded by the same kind of white papillae. In the centre of this chest patch the deep red nipples have come to lie so close together that they are strongly reminiscent of the lips of the vulva. (They are indeed so close to one another that the infant sucks from both teats at the same time.) Like the true genital patch, the chest patch varies in intensity of colour during 63