



# Introduction

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# Introduction

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*Making Love in the Zoo* explores stories of sexuality in the environment of captivity in the Zoological garden. The zoo is a place of nostalgia and wonder, and reflects our preconceived ideas about nature, but what do stories of sexuality from the perspective of the zoo's residents tell us about our own sexuality? Is there such a thing as sexual freedom for the caged? To what extent is a 'forced marriage' allowed, and how do you decide for insemination?

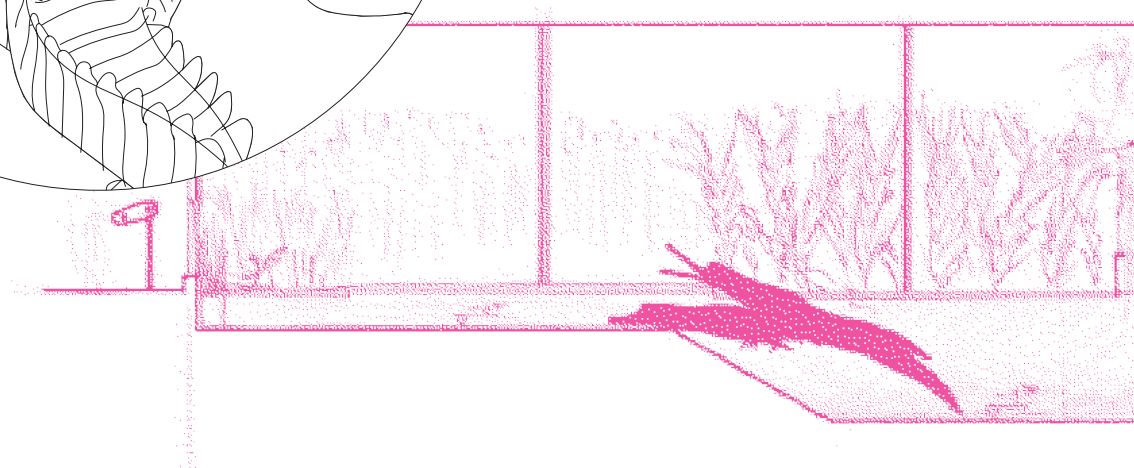
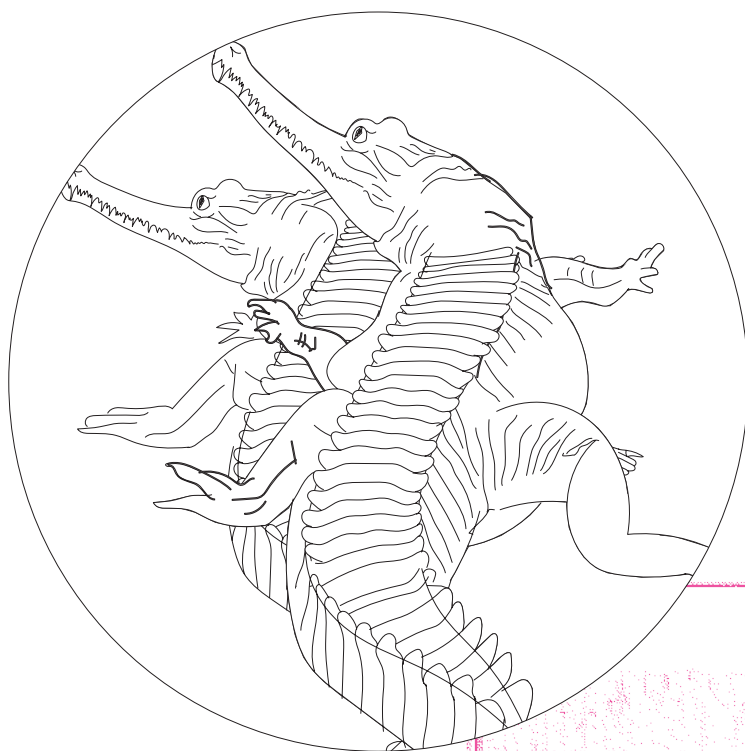
For this publication Kuang-Yi Ku and Thijs de Zeeuw started by researching the role of sex and reproduction in the zoo. But, as it is with sex, they couldn't stop fantasizing, and so this publication is not just a presentation of their research, but also contains speculative designs as well. The stories you find are the result of conversations with the zoo, its keepers and researchers, and discussions between Kuang-Yi and Thijs. They discuss their work and question the role of sex in a Zoo of The Future?





# I Living Room as Love Room 8

species	: False gharial (Tomistoma Schlegelii)
size	: males up to 5 m. females up to 4 m.
weight:	: 100-250 kg
population	: in the wild 2.500 - 10.000 in captivity - Not known
distribution	: South-east Asia
name	: Harry
character	: Easy going, when annoyed may act passive-aggressive
love life	: Likes to play rough when aroused, a little biting, a little drowning, otherwise very gentle and gallant.





# False Gharial

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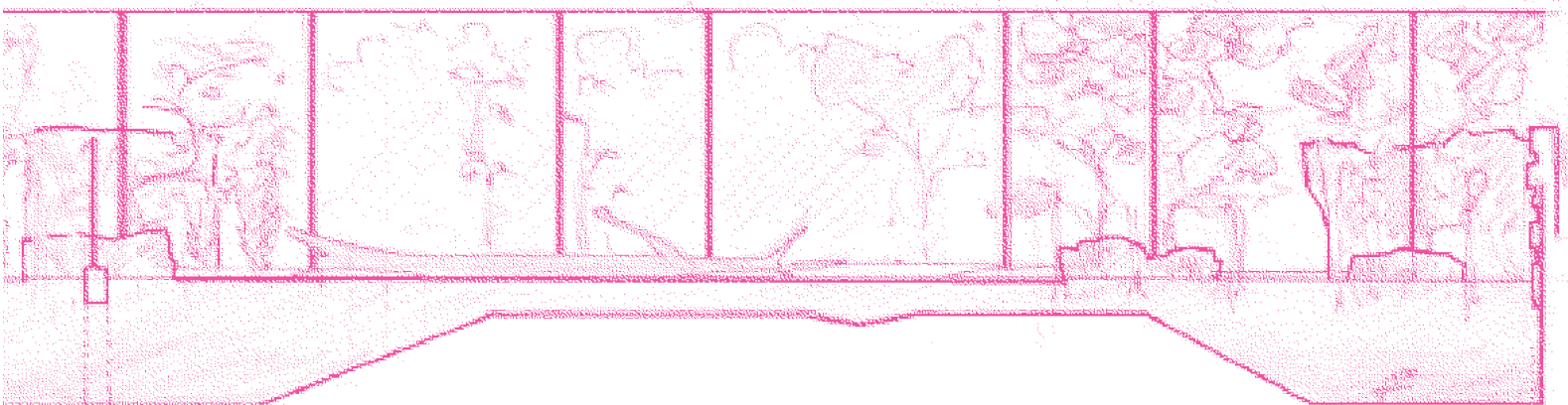
Some years ago, I (Thijs de Zeeuw) was invited to design an enclosure for the false gharial (*Tomistoma Schlegelii*), a rare species of crocodile from South-east Asia. As usual, the brief contained a request to provide the animal with surroundings that would allow for, and encourage, its natural behavior, but this time the type of natural behavior was described in greater detail: sex.

But how does one put oneself into the mind of an enormous reptile, a turned-on one, to be precise. Not much is known about their mating behavior as they live a reclusive life in the impenetrable marshes of South-east Asia and reproduction in captivity is rare, so there we were pretty much left in the dark.

A practical consideration was of the physical nature. The male in Artis measures over four meters and can weigh up to 250 kg. Presumably, the male will lay crosswise on top of the considerably smaller female; it's therefore important that the copulation can take place in deep water, taking some of the weight off of the underlying female. First requirement: make deep water.

We also know that climatological circumstances are important for reptiles; for instance, the ambient temperature in their nests has an influence on the gender of the hatching eggs. Therefore, a lot of effort went into the enclosure's climate system. Both floor, air, and water temperature are carefully managed. The false gharial regulates temperature and humidity within their breeding heaps with rotting plant material, so we provided them with a lot of old leaves and wood chips as well.

Unfortunately, all these efforts have not led to offspring. Why it did not work is open to speculation.







Acknowledging that there should be many more triggers for sexual behavior, I tried to imagine stimuli that might be similar between the gharial and myself. What about seasons? Aren't we more often in the mood during spring and summer-time? Regardless of which season turns you on most, the introduction of seasons could trigger a certain hormonal rhythm, and as this is a South-eastern species, we would only have to design a dry and a wet season!

Unfortunately, all these efforts have not led to offspring. Why it did not work is open to speculation. Research revealed that both individuals are fertile. Some signs of affection were observed since they took up residence in their new enclosure, such as the male being seen lying next to the female, gently blowing bubbles in the water...

Since they have been living on top of each other for quite a long time, perhaps they have grown into a more platonic relation? Their former enclosure was clearly not fit to start a family.

After a few years in their new enclosure without producing any offspring, it was decided to give artificial insemination a chance, a well considered decision as the operation is complex and stressful for the animals. A deciding factor was that the false gharial is a rare species and that they are part of a worldwide breeding program.

The operation featured in the TV film '*Het Nieuwe Artis*' of which some stills have been presented below. Although everything went well, both the 'milking' of the male and the insemination of the female, there was no offspring...

To decide upon artificial insemination is not easy. One could see the procedure as a violation of the integrity of the individual. Obviously there was no consent prior to the operation, but the need to preserve the species, combined with the existing difficulties the gharials had with breeding, might be a convincing argument to subject Harry and Leyla to these treatments.

Would you undergo a similar treatment if you were assured that you could help save your species?



# II Panda Watching Panda Porn 14

I am of flesh. I am of numbers. I belong not to myself, but to others. My body is of bones and hormones, but also calculated kinship, extended family vines, caretakers and genetic management. My body is vulnerable and so it is protected. There are so few of us and perhaps so many of me.

Clicker

Pointer

A new object

A sound

Images

Me



I am stud number XXX, of uncertain ancestry. I am 11 years old. I became of this world—your world—with my eyes still closed, and a caretaker of your species laid their hand on my back. They flipped me over and inspected my sex.

After one hundred days under your sun, I was given a name, a gender, and was shown to the public but only briefly. There were 37 of us born that year. A plentiful harvest of bodies laid side by side and ranked by size and age. 37 bodies and 37 names, 37 new entries in the Giant Panda studbook.

They weaned me off my mother and started my training. They taught me to respond to the sound of the clicker, follow the pointer, and show different parts of my body for examinations (my teeth, my ears, my genitals). I followed the smell of honey along the walls painted with forests. They taught me to stand on my back legs and reach for apples coated with peanut butter. They taught me to pee in the same spot every night so they could harvest my hormones. They taught me to pass my arm through the bars of metal so they could draw my blood.

My ancestry is uncertain, melded from human and non-human desires. There is the body I came from, and those that helped birth me. Before then, there are the bodies whose fluids are at the origin of my being, the blood that runs along my veins and the genes I might pass on.

I turned six and the exercises changed. They monitored my body more closely. They repurposed older exercises to new ends. I was to squat and develop stronger legs. I remember crouching and raising my body again and again. The bits of apples at the end of the pointer always escaped me. I felt the strengthening of my calves, my gluteus and the nascent fire in my spine.

A year passed and then another. I followed the pointer toward the training pen and into a smaller room. Clicker (you have my attention); pointer (I follow the direction of your gaze); a new object (one I do not recognise). A sound (the sensual bleating of a female of my kin); images (two bodies similar to mine and going at it). Me (transfixed).

I was born captive, I was made captive. I am the result of the most successful and famous conservation program in your world. Being released in the wild is not an option, even if I wanted to. For the wild is small and already overpopulated by another kind of my kind. Those that were never caught, those that could regenerate our blood, those who, like us, contribute to the saving of our species but without knowing that they do.

Three clicks at short intervals in the far end of my enclosure. I am flooded with chemical

:you have my attention

:I follow the direction of your gaze

:one I do not recognise

:the sensual bleating of a female of my kin

:two bodies similar to mine and going at it





anticipation. I am at the entrance of the smaller room without remembering how I got there, waiting. It always takes me a few seconds to situate myself in the image. There are two bodies similar to mine. A gate opens and one of the bodies (a body like mine, the one I identify with) walks briskly toward the other body (the one I desire). His fur shines with pixels, her arched back is overexposed and stains my retina. He is on top and she below. Their movements are stiff and repetitive. I hear a bleating, perhaps coming from the depth of my throat or the image. There is a hardness below my tail but I have no means of relieving it. It will last till sundown. The images roll after one another: a two-minute video, thirty times over. The anticipation, the wait, the arched back, the three steps, the jolting of bodies, the readjusting, the pull backwards and then a cut to black.

My wild kin is protected and their numbers are growing. People from your species say we are no longer endangered but only vulnerable. An invisible shift of category moves me along lines I only suspect existed. Once, when my body was endangered, I was to be protected at all cost and with so few of us left on your earth, every single one of us had to be bred. Now, with our numbers rising (both wild and captive), only those who can contribute to the genetic diversity of our kin are worth the effort. By becoming vulnerable, my captive kin became open to a new type of wound, that of a hierarchy of bodies, clear to our caretaker from birth, which slowly solidified into long-term genetic management. We, the captives, were collectively pushed over the invisible line that separated our past selves from the possibility of reproduction. There are those of us who must reproduce and those of us who must not. Those of us whose offspring will save us from extinction and those of us who will draw our entire species towards it, those of us who exist for a future and those who are a remnant of a past with only faint links to the present.

The caretaker of your species says my sperm is of excellent quality. They withdraw it from my body and send it to the international panda sperm

bank. There it lays frozen, with the legacy of all the bodies of my kin. The captive ones, whose body was captured twice, from the wild when alive and once again when dead. The sperm of the dead haunts our bodies, for the caretaker of your species made some mistakes and mislabeled some of the encounters they organised. Our ability to reproduce, given to us by members of your species, solely depends on our genetic match. In my case, the sperm that gave birth to my parents is a site of uncertainties. My mother was bred with several studs the year I was born but when the caretakers attempted to analyse my DNA to find out to which branch I belonged, the results were inconclusive.

I am a machine of desires, they have been chosen for me by bodies of your species. Who I should and will desire, when I am to perform those desires and what will mark them as success are variables known to everyone but me. My flesh is a territory of projections and curves. It is a site of potential whose ends, lows and highs have been calculated from birth, and which my caretakers will continue to estimate throughout my life. I was born from the union of numbers and they encircle me from all sides, forming a tight mesh of expectations which I can only derail from. There are the planned mornings, the times where I pee on command, the observation of bodily details that escape even me. There are the steps I count before it is time for bed and those I miss while waiting for food. I am never hungry, I am never bored, I am always occupied, I am never lonely, I am never out of love, I am never tired, I am never out of a job, the only one I was raised, bred, trained to do.

All the 37 bodies born my year left. Only I remained. The caretakers did not stop the training and I continued to watch the videos. The training is over and I know I will perform well.

I am a collection of averages, the midway point between the extremes that make up the development of my species. I hover at the limit of value, of scientific desirability. I could be useful for my species but not quite enough to become the object of human desires. I am an abstraction of flesh, the

I was born captive, I was made captive. I am the result of the most successful and famous conservation program in your world.

# II Panda Watching Panda Porn 18

midway point between a historical past network of unthought relationships between humans and the rest of us; and the calculated future they seek to carve out of our bodies.

Once more, the images flash on the screen and crawl below my skin. I follow their movements and feel a thrust on my shoulders. There will be a meeting like this for me in the future. The hands that guard me will activate a lever and an arched back will await on the other side of the gate. There will be bleatings, screeching. The crystal bodies have invaded mine. I am of transparent flesh, I am already an image.

Back in my pen, I think of the crystal bodies and whether they too feel the fatigue of untouched desires. I call their bodies of flesh, I know they are near. The images in my body must have had a body first. What loops of desire have animated their image? Who showed them what to want and how to fulfill it?

I am becoming tense, the loops have worked themselves in the muscles of my back and legs. They are not training me to have sex, they are training me to have reproductive sex or at least sex that could be reproductive. Calves, gluteus, sperm, piss. Under your care, was carved in me the body of a porn star, with muscles strong enough to raise above another body of my kin.

Not all ancestors are of flesh, if we go back to the beginning of my being, we find those who remained barren, those who could not breed. Those whose line finished with them and whose only legacy is in photographs, stories and taxidermied skins mounted behind glass walls.

They have been preparing me. All those hours of the mornings when the air was cool were given to this preparation. I have waited but cannot anymore. I have never been offered the possibility to meet another of my kind but sometimes I hear sounds similar to those in the image and I wonder if it is me they are calling for or the memory of those bodies of pixels which they too have been made to watch.

The screen flashes black. The sound of a clicker on my right resounds three times at quick intervals. The hand of the keeper activates a lever and I am released into the corridor leading to my enclosure. Two clicks, this time I sit next to the metal bars. I have completed the training. The hand slides a treat between the metal bars. In my mouth, unfinished desires taste like apples and peanut butter.

Chinese animal breeding specialists previously used pornographic films to stimulate the sexual drive of the endangered panda, while also experimenting with Viagra to get the extremely sex-shy animals to mate. Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding/Reuters

Here Is a Photo of a Panda Watching Panda Porn  
A panda's gotta do what a panda's gotta do.  
By TIME Photo Dec. 09, 2013





# III Celebration of Gay Parents

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species	: Griffon vulture (Gyps fulvus)
size	: 93-122 cm 2.3-2.8 m wingspan
weight	: 4,5-15 kg
population	: in the wild 80.000-900.000 in captivity ...
distribution	: Southern Europe; Northern Africa, the Middle East and western Asia
character	: quiet, patient, observative
love life	: bisexual, love comes first than sex

## *The Perfect Vulture Family*



Artis' public events at Pride are a way to show support for gender diversity and give people a deeper understanding of sexuality in the animal world.

In 2017, a pair of gay griffon vultures at Artis received a lot of media attention when they hatched a young bird. At the time, the zoo's breeder said that the male pair usually build nests, mate and live together, and have a very close relationship, but because both are males, they have been unable to lay their own eggs for a long time. When the zoo was given an abandoned vulture egg, they decided not to use artificial methods to hatch it, but instead decided to take the risk of letting the gay vulture pair take care of the egg. The reasoning for this was to give the male pair a chance to try out the egg hatching process. In the end, the gay griffin vulture pair successfully hatched the baby vulture and took very good care of the young bird. The zoo was happy to share this information with the media, and the information was spread to the world through the news.<sup>1</sup>

In February 2021, Thijs de Zeeuw and Kuang-Yi Ku, visited Artis biologist Charlotte Vermeulen for the "*Making Love in the Zoo*" project, in an attempt to ask her about various stories related to gender and reproduction in the zoo. Charlotte said that the zoo often holds public education events where they introduce the ecology and behavior of the animals to the public. Among these events are also promotional activities dedicated to sharing knowledge of animal sex activities. For example, during their time at *Pride Amsterdam*, Artis planned a simultaneous program to showcase homosexual behavior in the animal world<sup>2</sup>. About 1,500 species of birds and mammals have been found to have homosexual behavior in the wild, so Artis wanted to tell the public about these interesting phenomena at this event. One of their goals was to respond to the oppression of the homosexual community in the human world.

In human society, some conservatives and religious people often attack the homosexual community, saying that homosexual behavior is "unnatural" and "abnormal" because it cannot produce offspring. However, according to zoological research, sexual activity is not only for reproduction in the natural environment; many animals have a wide variety of sexual orientations and different sexual activities.

At first I felt disappointment when one of the gay vultures – after successfully raising a chick – embarked in a heterosexual relation. But reconsidering, I find it a beautiful fact that this individual had the freedom to fluidly move between genders...

—Thijs de Zeeuw

# III Celebration of Gay Parents

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1 [www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-40118134](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-40118134)

2 [www.artis.nl/en/what-do/agenda-and-activities/homosexuality-animal-kingdom/](http://www.artis.nl/en/what-do/agenda-and-activities/homosexuality-animal-kingdom/)

3 Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

4 Rossini, Manuela. "To the Dogs: Companion speciesism and the new feminist materialism". *Kritikos: an international and interdisciplinary journal of postmodern cultural sound, text and image* 3 (September 2006). (Online: <http://intertheory.org/rossini.>)

Charlotte says that Artis' public events at Pride are a way to show support for gender diversity and give people a deeper understanding of sexuality in the animal world, and hopefully to help to reduce human prejudice against sexual minorities. Among these educational activities, the story of the gay griffon vultures hatching an abandoned egg is a great example. This heartwarming story has indeed opened up the minds of the general public to the sexuality of animals.

At the end of that interview, Charlotte shared with us the current status of the gay griffon vulture pair, where a female vulture was found to have initiated contact with one of the males. If we put this new information against the news that they hatched their young together, it seems a bit sad. But if we think about it more closely, it also suggests that gender and sexual orientation in the natural world may no longer be a male/female, heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy. Perhaps there is still much room for ambiguity in sexual activity in the animal world, and this vague, ambiguous, non-binary, and pluralistic phenomenon can also lead us to consider whether there are more non-binary gender and sexual orientations in human society. If we can look at non-human animals and the human world with a broader and more diverse mindset, then the rigid structures created by binary oppositions will be reduced, and the conflicts caused by the patriarchal world of binary oppositions may be reduced.

Gender theorist Judith Butler, in their paper on gender research, argues that human gender is not just biological, but the result of continuous performativity during the process of social construction. This theory attempts to break with many conservative gender narratives, which suggest that gender is inherent to sex as male and female<sup>3</sup>. However, in recent years, a growing number of other feminist scholars, such as Elizabeth Wilson, have argued that the biological science and cultural constructions of the body cannot be disentangled entirely, and that one's gender is the result of the interplay between social constructions and a complex set of biological mechanisms within the body<sup>4</sup>.

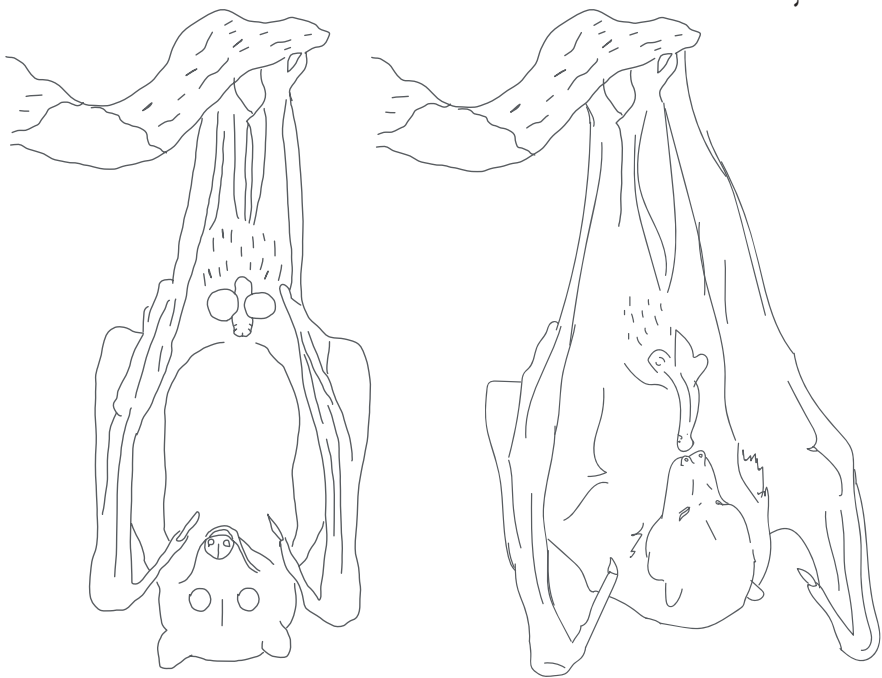
According to these arguments, the formation of human gender is a process, and each point in the process is different. If we look at the example of the griffon vulture, the formation of gender and sexual orientation in animals may also be the result of a series of interactions between biological mechanisms and the environment. In other words, the different sexual orientations of Artis's griffon vulture are just a part of the process of gender formation. We can observe this rich variety of "sex/gender" in human and non-human animals alike, which demonstrates the narrowness of the binary gender discourse.

The news of the gay griffon vulture shows the image of a beautiful family, which reminds me of the stereotype of a perfect family with one husband, one wife and two children in the heterosexual society. And even in the homosexual community, gay people imitate the heterosexual system by creating the image of a perfect gay family with two beautiful gay men/women with two children. To me, these images of the good family are constantly being interpreted in society, and they may oppress other different family types, such as single-parent families, skipped-generation families, and so on. The image of the good gay family may also crowd out other gay families of different classes and appearances. I think this image of a perfect family stereotype is very problematic!

— Kuang-Yi Ku

species	: Rodrigues flying fox (Pteropus rodricensis)
size	: 15-20 cm
	50 to 90 cm wingspan
weight	: 350 grams
population	: in the wild 20.000
	in captivity unknown
distribution	: Rodrigues (an island belonging to Mauritius)
character	: outgoing and insolent, almost extravagant
(male)love life	: males are polygamus, and have multiple females (a harem) but until they seduced the females they frequently make love to other males and like to masturbate

but the males still can suffer from sexual  
frustration due to the absence of females.



Having bachelor groups reduces competition for females and these isolated males are well capable of masturbation.



# Rodrigues Flying Fox

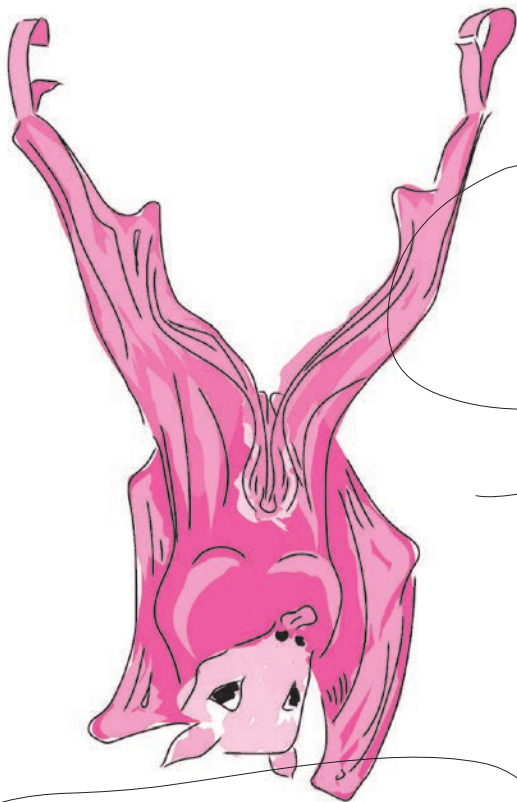
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Artis houses about 15 Rodrigues flying foxes, all of whom are male. This all-male status is a consequence of the breeding program of the Rodrigues flying fox. The Rodrigues flying fox comes from the Rodrigues island in the Indian Ocean and is an endangered species, and as a result, many zoos with these bats are working on breeding programs for them. However, not every zoo has enough resources (manpower, space, etc.) to support the increasing number of bats in captivity.

In nature the species lives in harems and thus living in bachelor groups is nothing extraordinary to the Rodrigues flying fox. The 'succesfull' males usually have harems up to eight females, meaning that most other males have no heterosexual sex at all. They do not have a harem! The only sex they might have is masturbation, male-male-sex... That does not mean that the males without a harem do not long for heterosexual sex; and frustration might occur in the absence of females.

Therefore, as an experiment, one of the keepers provided the males with a fur-bat from the toy shop at the zoo and the bachelor bats used it to gratify themselves sexually. We, Thijs de Zeeuw and Kuang-Yi Ku, found the case interesting, because the shape of the stuffed dolls was in fact quite different from that of the real bats. The design of animal dolls usually simplifies the anatomy of real animals and changes the proportions of the animal's body to accentuate cuteness. The simplified shape of the toy bat can be used as a tool for male bats to release their sexual pressure, which means that the toy may still become a desirable object for bats, despite its lack of resemblance to a real female bat.

After the famous question: 'what is it like to be a bat?' now an other question is raised: if we are attracted to similar stereotypes, then, how much bat we already?

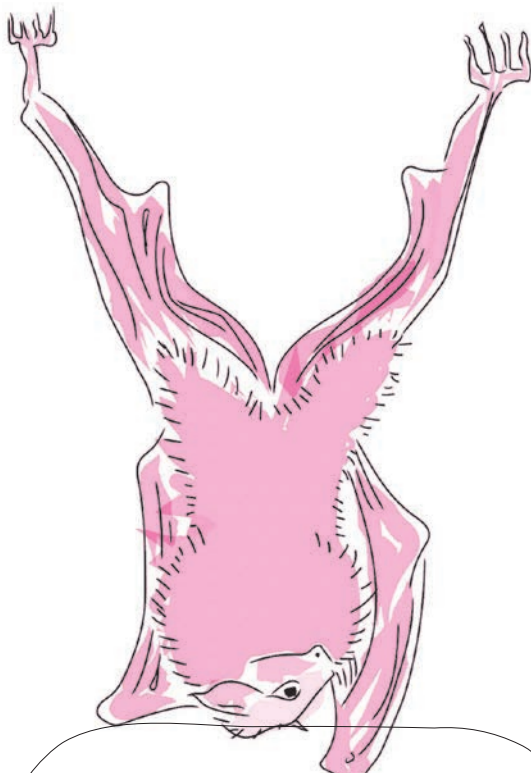


custom suits  
available in  
different colors  
and fabric:  
something for  
everyone!

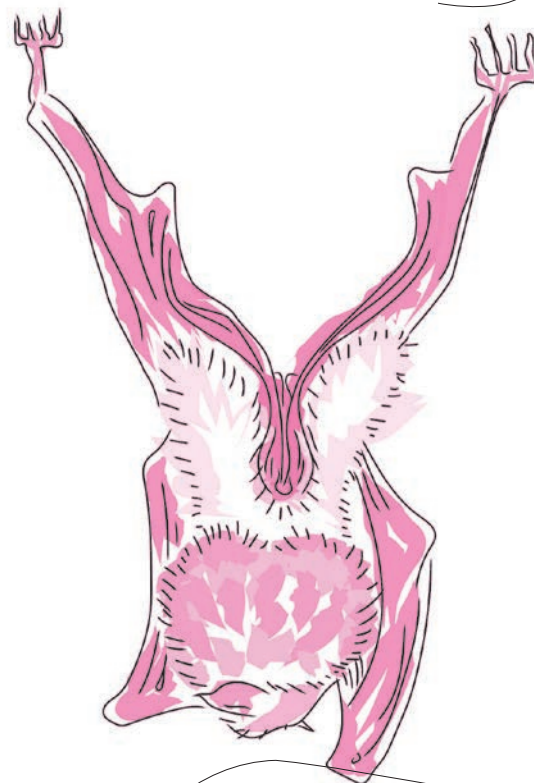


frontside light fur.

Durable latex body, easy to clean. With  
enlarged genitals for easy acces and  
enlarged eyes for optimal seduction.  
Practical straps to attach doll to a branch.



Backside dark fur, seductive look.



Front side light fur;  
playing hard to get.

# Rodrigues Flying Fox

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In the book of Zhuangzi, from the chapter Qiu Shui (Autumn Floods), a story goes as follows: Zhuangzi and Huizi were strolling on a bridge over the River Hao. Zhuangzi said, “See how free the fish leap and dart? That is their happiness.” Huizi replied, “Since you are not a fish, how do you know what makes fish happy?” Zhuangzi said, “Since you are not I, how can you possibly know that I do not know what makes fish happy?” The discussion between Zhuangzi and Huizi implies a philosophical proposition: how can one understand the feelings of another species, and is it possible for one to fully understand the feelings of another person? This means that we can only make inferences about the sexual desires of bats based on observed phenomena. We cannot have a certain answer to the question of what male bats are thinking.

However, when it comes to the relationship between animal cartoons and sexuality, we’ll discuss a subculture called “Furry Fandom”. The Furry Fandom, widely known as “furries”, refers to a subculture of people who express an affinity for anthropomorphic animal characters. Characteristics of these anthropomorphic creature community, and the, often excessive, erotic content is one of the most controversial points in the furry community. Not only does the general public often reject the Furry Fandom for this reason, but the Furry Fandom also argues internally over the issue<sup>2</sup>.

In the human species there is a taboo on the use of sexdolls; one might be described as a pathetic oversexed person; but how is that for bats? Do we make pathetic dirty perverts of them this way? And the other way around: if it is ok for bats, than why not for us?

— Thijs de Zeeuw





# Rodrigues Flying Fox

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This erotic side to furry culture culture, “yiff”, shows human sexual desire for animal cartoon images. The discussion of this subculture is an interesting echo of the sexual desire of the male Rodriguez flying fox desire for bat dolls. It seems that both animals and human beings are lustful for the simplified cartoon look. The Furry Fandom takes on a new dimension through this comparison, as the objects of desire are not only cartoonish representations of their viewer’s species, but are a mixture of human and non-human animals, revealing the richness and diversity of human eroticism. Whether they are bat dolls or anthropomorphic animals, these objects of desire reveal the blurring of the boundaries between the real and the virtual and allow us to see the sexual diversity of humans, Rodriguez flying foxes, and even other animals in a new light.

- 1 Matthews, Dylan. *9 questions about furies you were too embarrassed to ask*. Vox. March 27, 2015. <https://www.vox.com/2014/12/10/7362321/9-questions-about-furies-you-were-too-embarrassed-to-ask>
- 2 Meinzer, Melissa (June 29, 2006). “*Animal Passions: The furies come to town-and our correspondent tails along*”. Pittsburgh City Paper. Archived from the original on August 27, 2007. Retrieved 2007-05-25.
- 3 Nagel - what is it like to be a bat.
- 4 From The Philosophical Review LXXXIII, 4 (October 1974): 435-50.

# V Gay Penguin & the Wristband 30

species	: African Penguin ( <i>Spheniscus demersus</i> )
height	: 60-70 cm
weight	: 2.2-3.5 kg
population	: in the wild 15.000 in captivity 2.800
distribution	: South Africa and Namibia
studbook ID	: 1861
local ID	: 000699
character	: Outgoing and curious; inquisitive character, open to a polyamorous relation
love life	: No sexual preference, but would like to raise a little one one day



The African penguins at Artis have different color bands on their wings. Scientists say that the bands are worn on the left side for females, on the right side for males, and on both sides for uncertainty. Each band's color represents two numbers, with the initial number representing the year the penguin was born or came to Artis, and the subsequent number being the identification number of the penguin.

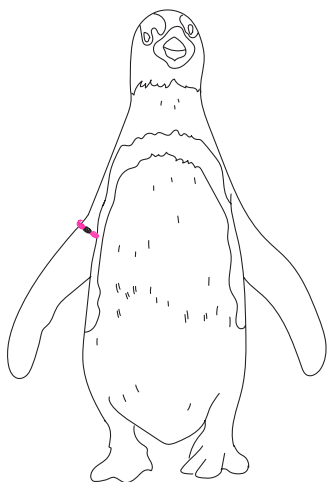
# African Penguin

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The African penguin is a species in decline. In the past 50 years the population has dropped 98% and scientists say that the species might become extinct in the wild within 20 years. Breeding programmes in zoos have therefore become more urgent than ever before. There are 67 institutions in Europe that breed African penguins, and Artis has the highest number of breeding groups in the world with 146 individuals, and a male to female ratio of 1:1. African penguins live for about 16-17 years in the wild, but in a zoo environment they can grow to be 20-27 years old (and even up to 40 years). They start looking for a mate when they are about 3-4 years old and start breeding when they are 4-5 years old. Most African penguins are monogamous and will not change partners once they have decided on a mate, except for extreme cases such as death.

females...

When breeding more penguins, apart from increasing the number of penguins, the breeding programmes are also concerned about the genetic diversity of penguins. Therefore, if penguins that are too genetically close to each other are matching in the zoo itself, the zoo keeper will interfere with the hatching of the eggs. The zoo staff will replace the real eggs with fake ones, and as a result, penguin couples with similar genetic compositions won't be able to have offspring. The zoo lets the penguins choose their own partner but interferes with the hatching of their offspring. This state of affairs gives rise to a debate on animal ethics, how far should humans interfere with animal sex and reproduction?



Looking at the colorful bands on the African penguins in the zoo made me think of the waterproof bracelets worn by the naked men in gay sauna clubs when they are cruising for a sexual partner. I remember that in gay sauna culture, the bracelets are sometimes worn on the left hand, right hand, left foot, right foot and so on as a way of identifying each other as Top, Bottom or Vers in order to help gay men to identify each other more quickly. The color, position and shape of the bracelet can be a sign of different sexual preferences. Although gay men are human, they are unable to identify each other's sexual preferences solely by their appearance, making the bracelet a key artefact. And since humans cannot identify the gender of the penguin, this key artefact has a similar function. I think that perhaps the penguins do not need the assistance of these artefacts to feel each other's sexual needs. Whether this artefact is worn by a human or a penguin, it exists only for humans after all.

— Kuang-Yi Ku





green

yellow

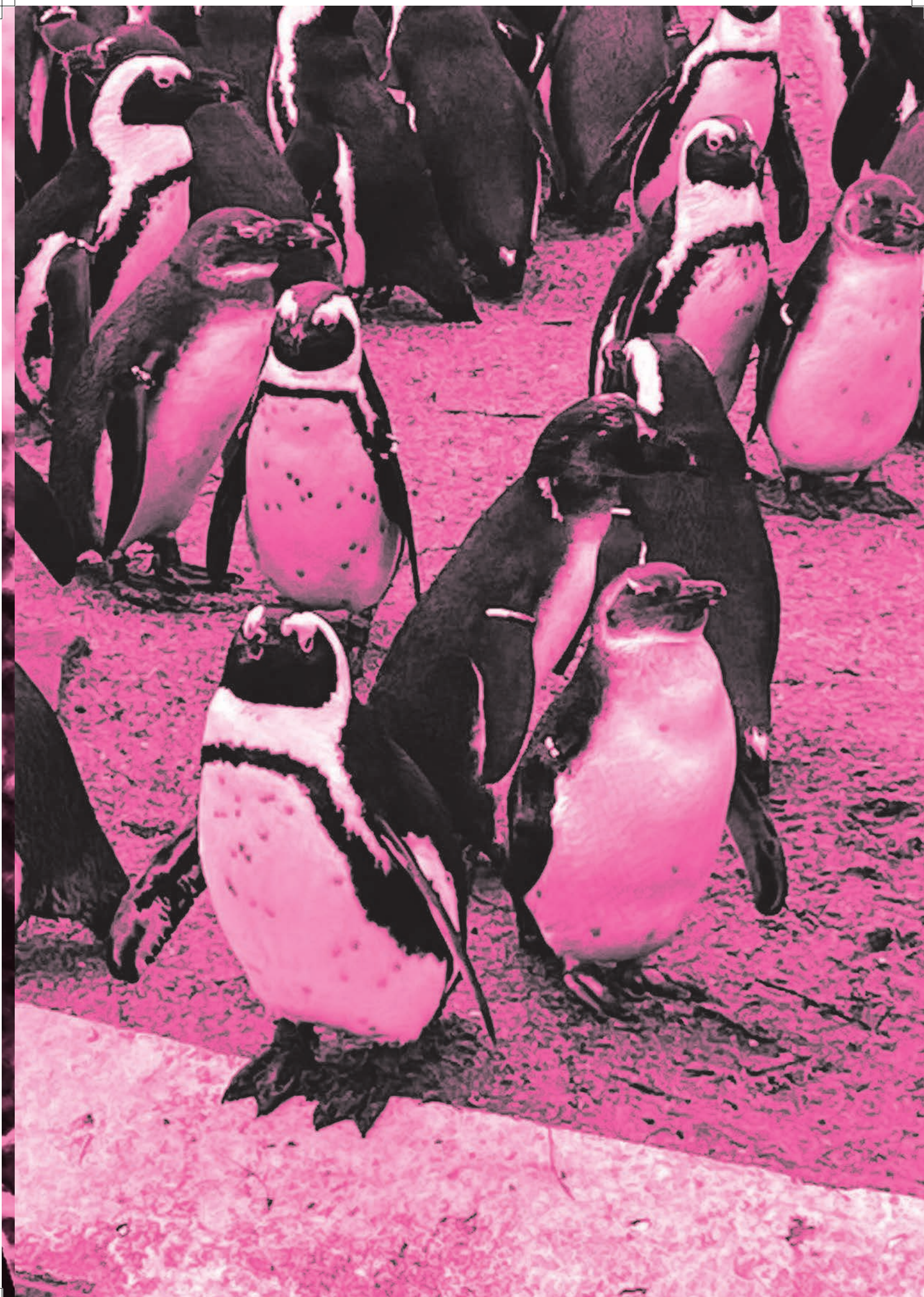
light blue

black

white

red







# V Gay Penguin & the Wristband 34

Top or bottom? - One of the most challenging parts of gay sauna cruising is finding out who desires to top and who wished to bottom. Aside from the positioning of the keys, or wrist bracelets in some gay sauna, it is hard to tell sometimes. The trick? Guys will grab the part they are interested in most. If he grabs your cock, he is searching for a top. An ass squeeze suggests he desires just that.

source: <https://queerintheworld.com/gay-sauna-guide/>

The leather wristband is the modern version of the hanky code. It was very common for gay men to wear colored bandanas on their neck or leave them hanging from their left or right back pocket. Wearing a wristband on your left wrist means you are an active/top, while on your right side indicates you are a bottom/passive/submissive, and one on both wrists means versatile.

source: [www.nighttours.com/gay-fetish-events/wristbands-and-hanky-codes.html](http://www.nighttours.com/gay-fetish-events/wristbands-and-hanky-codes.html)

Who are we to decide which match will make the best offspring? *Shouldn't that be up to the animals themselves?*



The group of African penguins in Artis regularly has homosexual couples, including male-male and female-female, and even three penguins forming a family, with two males and one female or two females and one male. Within the African penguin breeding programme at Artis, there are about 8-10 homosexual couples. Generally speaking, the scientists do not interfere with the outcome of such pairings, but from the point of view of rehabilitation programmes, male pairs cannot produce offspring, and they sometimes interfere in the hope that these male penguins can find a female as a lifelong partner. Sometimes they are successful, but there is no guarantee of success according to the zoo. From the perspective of a breeding programme. The only concern is with the genetic composition of the penguins and hoping that the next generation of penguins will have higher genetic diversity, but scientists are not familiar with the dynamics of each penguin family. So when scientists have to make pairing decisions, they will often discuss them with the animal breeders who take care of the penguins, and the breeders can point out which penguin families shouldn't be split up. These decisions are a mixture of scientific reasons and emotional factors. In Artis, there are about 8-9 penguin bloodlines, and scientists hope that these different bloodlines can be paired to produce the next generation, but this goal is frustrated by the penguins, who still choose their partners according to their own preferences.

The African penguins at Artis have different color bands on their wings. Scientists say that the bands are worn on the left side for females, on the right side for males, and on both sides for uncertainty. Each band's color represents two numbers, with the initial number representing the year the penguin was born or came to Artis, and the subsequent number being the identification number of the penguin. For example, Artis' first penguin is 001. Of course, their genetic information is stored in the zoo's computer database so scientists can easily consult it. It is not easy for humans to distinguish between male and female African penguins, so the color bands help scientists to identify the sex of these penguins and other genetic information at a glance.

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The act of registration, especially sexual preference, triggers another association. On the 27th of March 1943, the Amsterdam civil registry was bombed by the resistance to prevent the Nazi's from identifying Jewish citizens. The building was located just next to the entrance of Artis and is still visible as a black facade when entering the zoo. Registration is not free of responsibility and requires ethical consideration, as it can expose or threaten vulnerable groups and minorities.

Another threat of registering is that the policy that follows from it might not be the best strategy to viable reproduction. By selecting on the sole basis of genetic diversity, the penguins' personal preference is overruled. Who are we to decide which match will make the best offspring? Shouldn't that be up to the animals themselves?

— Thijs de Zeeuw

In addition, these labelings may also be problematic because it seems to lack possibilities for sexual preferences; after all, there are gay men who don't want to be categorized as either Top, Bottom or Vers, they don't want to be labeled.

— Kuang-Yi Ku

species	: Tiger (Panthera tigris; ss. tigris; ss. altaica; ss. corbetti; ss. jacksoni; ss. sumatrae; ss. amoyensis)
length	: Head-body 146-290cm; tail 72-109cm
weight	: 75-325 kg
population	: in the wild 4.000 in captivity 10.000-20.000
distribution	: South-east Asia to western India, with a northeastern population of Amur tigers on the border between China and Russia
name	: Ma Si
character	: listless and apathetic, depressed by a totalitarian regime
love life	: asexual

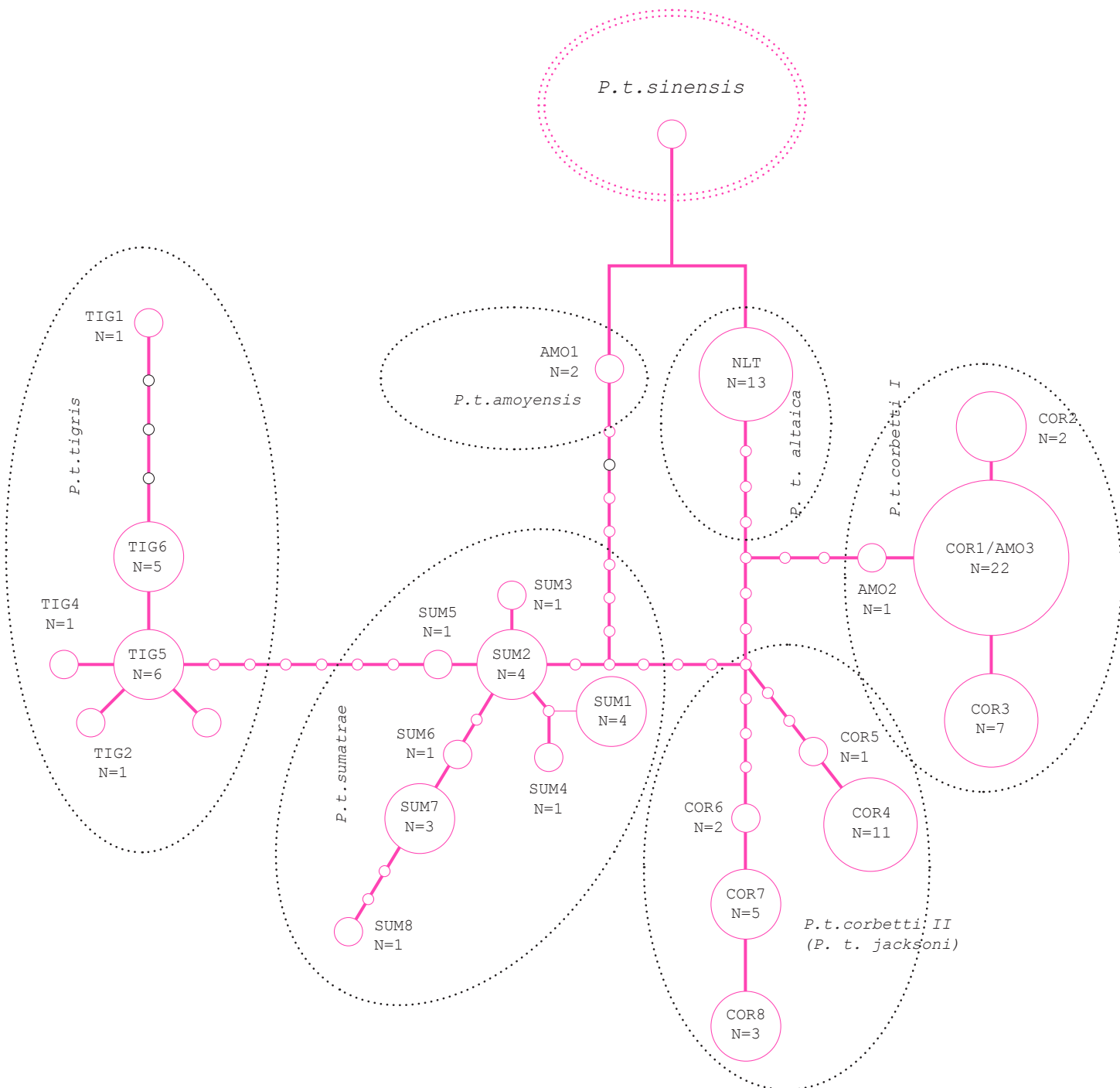


Tigers are on the verge of extinction, and while there were 100,000 tigers at the beginning of the 20th century, by 2020 there were only 4,000 tigers left in the wild, with the remaining few in zoos or private ownership. Scientific research has shown that there are nine subspecies of tigers, three of which have gone extinct. The remaining six species are the Malayan tiger, Sumatran tiger, Southchinese tiger, Bengal tiger, Siberian tiger, and Indochinese tiger.

In order to save the endangered tiger population, the zoo has embarked on an artificial breeding program to increase the number of tigers through human intervention. However, most of the tigers in the zoo come from the same ancestors, so their genetic diversity is very low. Tigers with similar genetic composition are also more likely to have offspring with genetic diseases if they breed together. Frustrating efforts to combat the lack of genetic diversity however, the World Association of Zoos and Aquaria (WAZA) still stipulates that tigers of different subspecies cannot breed together, as zoos wish to maintain the purity of each subspecies. This rule puts restrictions on breeding programs that lead to the deterioration of the already low genetic diversity of tigers. It has also led to questions of why different subspecies cannot breed with each other. Is the core reason for preserving purity simply anthropocentric thinking?

Around 200 South China tigers in the zoo are descendants of the same six tigers caught in the 1950s, therefore the breeding program is very difficult. It is necessary to avoid pairs whose genetic compositions are too similar. On top of that, it is also necessary for zoos to increase the sexual desire of the male tigers, and the zoo has even tried giving them Viagra. These are the difficulties of artificial breeding programs and the problems that arise when humans interfere with the breeding habits of another species.

It has also led to questions of why different subspecies cannot breed with each other.



Many experts say that although artificial breeding programs are an important part of tiger rehabilitation, the fundamental problem is still the illegal poaching of tigers in the wild. In East Asia, one of the key reasons for hunting tigers is their uses in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which states that the consumption of tigers can strengthen health and virility. With much of the Western media reporting on the outdated consumption of traditional Chinese medicine, there arises a conflict between ecological conservation and traditional Asian medical heritage.

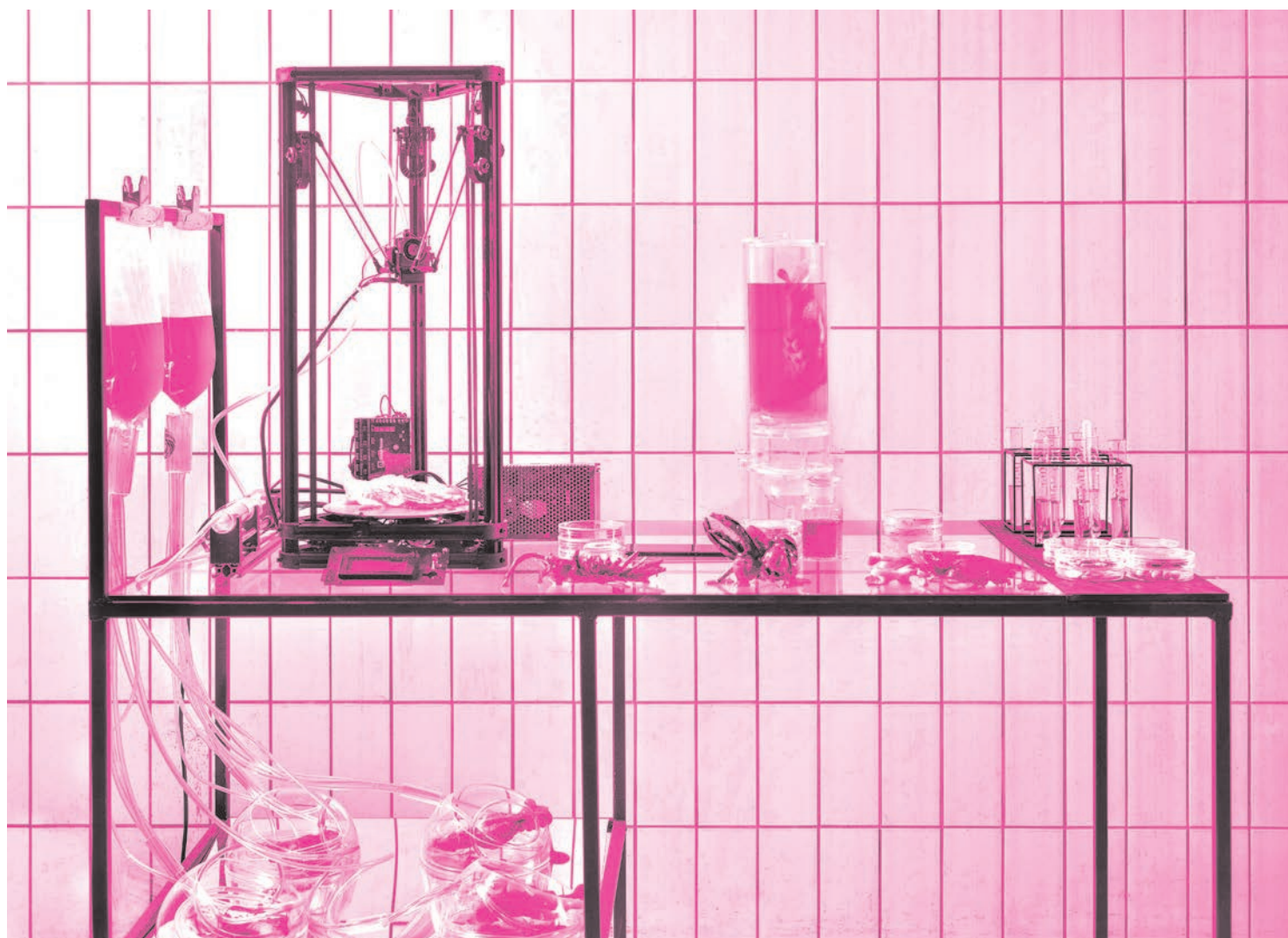
I, Kuang-Yi Ku, originally from Taiwan, argue that while ecological conservation does have its importance, does the traditional Asian medical culture in TCM have no value? This confusion led me to present my *Tiger Penis Project* in 2018. In this project I attempt to propose a win-win solution to this conflict between ecological conservation and Asian medical traditions.

In Tiger Penis Project, I made the cultural myth that eating a tiger penis can enhance virility the target of my research. I speculate a future in which tiger genes are mixed with genes from different animals associated with masculinity (e.g. oysters, famous as an aphrodisiac food, or the erotic symbol of octopus in Japanese culture) to synthesize a superior hybrid penis as an alternative to the tiger penis by applying various biotechnologies, such as 3D bio-printing, tissue culture, and synthetic biology. In this futuristic scenario, this hybrid animal organ is to be combined with other herbs in a formula that must be brewed in a medicinal wine according to Chinese medicine theory. This speculative project synthesizes western biotechnology and TCM practice in an attempt to propose a win-win system that not only protects wildlife but also preserves the fading culture of traditional Asian medicine.

I attempt to propose a win-win solution to this conflict between ecological conservation and Asian medical traditions.



*Tiger Penis Project* by Kuang-Yi Ku. Photography name





My *Tiger Penis Project* is a speculative imagination that helps us consider whether we can confront our desires in the face ecological challenges and devise possible solutions. As we tackle the extinction of tigers in the name of ecological conservation, shouldn't we also need to consider whether the core values of environmental conservation are really as simple as protecting other species? Or is conservation just another way that humans can fulfill their desires and ambitions?

In the year 2050, the Chinese government, in order to continue the traditional Chinese medicine culture of consuming tiger bones, uses genetic modification technology to mix two subspecies of tigers found in China, the Siberian tiger and the South China tiger, to artificially breed a new subspecies of "*New Chinese Tiger*". The "*New Chinese Tiger*" increases the genetic diversity of the current tiger population and can also breed in large numbers as a source of animal parts for Chinese medicine. This policy is seen as a solution to the gradual loss of genetic diversity and extinction of the tiger species, and as a way of perpetuating the culture of tiger consumption in Chinese medicine. It also allows the Chinese government to promote its own Chinese nationalism and to use the image of the "*New Chinese Tiger*" to reinforce China's political ambitions for prosperity and power. Biotechnology, ecological conservation, traditional Chinese medicine, and patriotism have been quietly blended into the captive breeding of the "*New Chinese Tiger*".

It also allows the Chinese government to promote its own Chinese nationalism and to use the image of the "*New Chinese Tiger*" to reinforce China's political ambitions for prosperity and power. Biotechnology, ecological conservation, traditional Chinese medicine, and patriotism have been quietly blended into the captive breeding of the "*New Chinese Tiger*".

# VII Projection of Masculine Fantasy

species	: African Penguin ( <i>Spheniscus demersus</i> )
height	: 60-70 cm
weight	: 2.2-3.5 kg
population	: in the wild 15.000 in captivity 2.800
distribution	: South Africa and Namibia
studbook ID	: 1861
local ID	: 000699
character	: Outgoing and curious; inquisitive character, open to a polyamorous relation
love life	: No sexual preference but would like to raise a little one one day



screenshots from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QAE623M2xg>

There is a male gorilla named Shabani in the Higashiyama Zoo in Nagoya, Japan. Shabani was born in 1997 at the Apenheul Primate Park in the Netherlands, then transferred to the Taronga Zoo in Sydney, Australia, and came to the Higashiyama Zoo in 2007. Shabani is very popular with Japanese women, and has been recognized on Twitter as “*the perfect role model for Japanese men*”. His popularity has attracted international media coverage. This cross-species flow of desire between humans and gorillas seems to blur the clear lines between species.

The charm of the male gorilla has always played an important role in human culture, as early as the 1933 American film “*King Kong*”, in which a strong, violent, and fierce monster is portrayed based on the male gorilla. An ambiguous relationship between King Kong and a white blonde female protagonist is also depicted in the film, suggesting a cross-species affection. The story became a pop culture classic and was even re-made by other directors years later and rereleased in 1976 and 2005. Aditi Hukerikar, a student at Cornell University, published an article in The Cornell Daily Sun on June 10, 2021, “*King Kong’s Embodiment of the Male Power Fantasy*,” in which she described:

Aside from the obvious (which is, of course, that he is a gorilla and not a man), King Kong is the epitome of toxic masculinity. He possesses raw, untamed aggression which he freely unleashes upon anything that angers him. Taller, stronger, and more forceful than any man, King Kong’s power is nearly limitless.

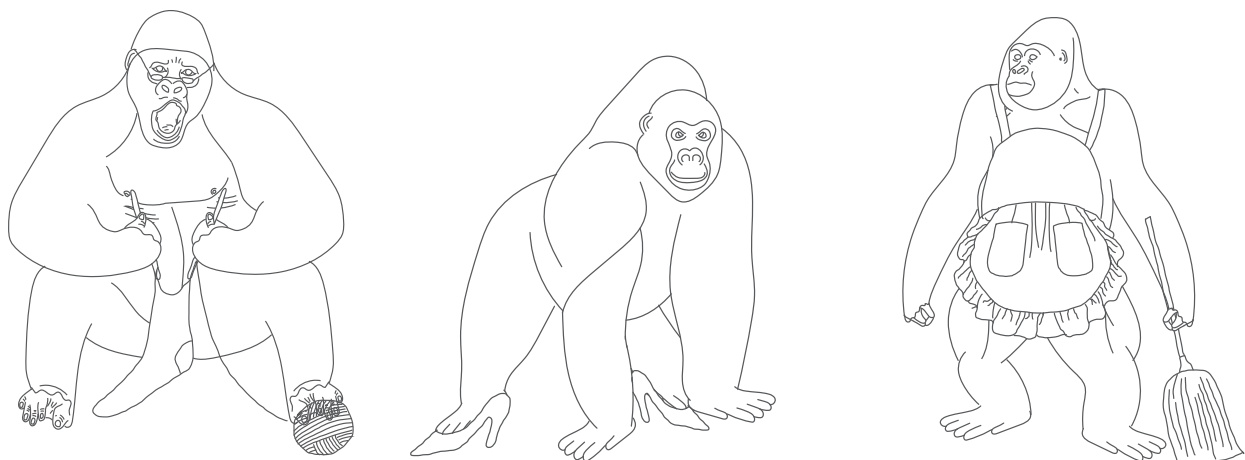
The heteronormativity comes in with the frequent inclusion of a human woman in King Kong’s narrative. From Ann Darrow in 1933 to Dr. Ilene Andrews in *Godzilla vs Kong*, Kong often relies on a woman to show compassion to him despite his monstrous ways, in turn revealing his more tender side to this woman. Also, this woman (being a human) is much smaller (read, more fragile) than Kong, often either portrayed as helpless or at least unimposing (depending on the time period of the film), compared to the monster.

King Kong’s embodiment of the male power fantasy allows viewers to live vicariously through him as he releases his aggression on the world. He is able to express the anger and belligerence that humans often feel without the expectation of being human. As such, he is not limited by human morality, emotion, or even an understanding that causing widespread destruction is an issue — all of which would be expected of real humans. Lacking both the constraints of a human body and the ethicality of humanity, King Kong consistently appeals to audiences because, simply put, he gets to unleash the aggression that many subscribers to the male power fantasy want to express.

# <sup>VII</sup> Projection of Masculine Fantasy

Aditi Hukerikar's article states that the gorilla seems to be a representation of toxic masculinity and is an extension of heteronormativity. However, if we go back to the animal behavior of the prototype of King Kong, the gorilla is in fact a moderate vegetarian. Biological knowledge tells us that the gorilla and the movie scriptwriter's King Kong actually have very different characteristics. We should not let gorillas take the blame for the culture of toxic masculinity in humans. After all, the misogyny, homophobia, and gratuitous violence of toxic masculinity are not necessarily found in the gorilla population.

Whether it is women's fascination with the male gorilla Shabani or the masculine fantasy of gorillas in King Kong movies, they show that humans have anthropocentric fantasies about other non-human animals and such fantasies can be problematic. Therefore, in contemporary society, we may need to spend more effort on scientific research to truly understand other animals in order to avoid flattening our appropriation of nonhuman creatures and avoid the problems it causes.



We should not let gorillas take the blame for the culture of toxic masculinity in humans. After all, the misogyny, homophobia, and gratuitous violence of toxic masculinity are not necessarily found in the gorilla population.



# VIII From Kudu & Giraffe to Human & Dolphin 46



Whether these interspecies sexual relationships are the result of mutual consent or violent coercion, these phenomena still run contrary to how human understanding of how sexual relationships should only occur within the same species.

# Interspecies Sexual Relationship 47

KK        The greater kudu and the reticulated giraffe are both native to the eastern and southern parts of Africa and are housed in the same area at Artis. In pictures posted on a Facebook group for the zoo, we found a kudu and a giraffe interacting with each other in an intimate way, and I can't help but think that there might be some kind of interspecies romance between them. However, we humans cannot really know the true relationship between them, so these imagined romantic relationships may only exist in our human perspective. Nevertheless, similar interspecies relationships are often seen in the news. For example, the BBC reported in November 2015 that a wild male Japanese macaque and a female sika deer had consensual sex-like actions. In 2017, a scientific study suggested that such behavior was more likely to be males learning to mate, and the most plausible hypothesis was that the lack of female macaques in the area was responsible for the phenomenon.

TZ        Although it is indeed difficult to imagine the actual feelings that these two individuals have for each other, the combination of the erect penis of the kudu and the fact that the giraffe stays down on the ground suggests some kind of consent. Another consequence of staying down is that their heads come close allowing for smelling each other better and, who knows, meaningful eye-contact?

KK        In addition to the Japanese macaque and sika deer story, another famous case is the sexual abuse of a king penguin by an Antarctic fur seal. In this case, most scientific studies indicate that the penguins were overpowered or even injured in the process and that the behavior of the fur seals was most likely a form of violent play. Of course, scientists still say that they do not know 100% of the causes of such interspecies sexual abuse and can only make as many reasonable inferences as possible. Whether these interspecies sexual relationships are the result of mutual consent or violent coercion, these phenomena still run contrary to how human understanding of how sexual relationships should only occur within the same species. Interspecies sexual encounters blur the boundaries between species, making them ambiguous. When this ambiguity is extended to human sexual relations with other non-human species, it creates an even greater ethical controversy.

TZ        An interesting consequence of studying interspecies relationships is that they confront our moral ideas about sex with an objective -insen-

# Interspecies Sexual Relationship 48

Unlike previous marine parks where dolphin shows serve as entertainment for humans, this theme park is a mutually beneficial situation where humans and dolphins can live together in harmony.



This story in 2016 has inspired me to think about the sexual rights of animals, whether animals have the same rights as humans to pursue sexual pleasure and diverse sexual practices, and what role humans should play. In response to these questions, I launched a project called "Dolphin Eroticarium". The project was designed as a marine park to provide sexual services to dolphins. The park is an open space in the dolphins' habitat, as opposed to the usual captive environment of parks.

# Interspecies Sexual Relationship 49

sitive scientific attitude. What puzzles me in this case is that I am inclined to think that our own human experience of the world does not differ too much from how other mammals perceive the world. Should I therefore condemn the behavior of the fur seal as unnecessarily aggressive? Or, because we are talking about biology, can I hide behind a scientific stance, even arguing that we should accept that we cannot fathom the seal's motivation...

KK Here is another example, Malcolm J. Brenner, a 70-year-old American male author, published an autobiography in 2010 in which he described having sex with a female dolphin, Dolly, for over six months during his college years in the 1970s. Brenner is not the only human who has publicly expressed an affectionate relationship with dolphins, as a NASA-sponsored female researcher, Margaret Howe Lovatt, also revealed in the 1960s that she had sexual and emotional relationships with a male dolphin that she spent time with to teach them to talk.

In her laboratory on Saint Thomas, one of the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean Sea, Lovat was training three dolphins, two females and one male, to communicate with humans. Peter, the only male bottlenose dolphin, was at the age of puberty, and had frequent 'sexual urges', so she had to take him to another pool to separate him from the two females. Whenever Peter became "too sexually aroused", Lovat would help him achieve "sexual solace", and continue teaching him once he had fulfilled his sexual urges.

NASA later discontinued the research project and Peter was transferred to a laboratory in Miami. Shortly after being separated from Lovat, Peter drowned in the water. It is believed that this is the behavior of dolphins when they are depressed. Unlike humans who breathe automatically, dolphins make a conscious effort to breathe each time, and if life becomes unbearable, they will then sink to the bottom and stop breathing.

TZ I think we can only judge sexual human-animal relations by our own moral standards. It is easy to argue that the relation between Lovat and Peter was sincere from Lovat's perspective and beneficial for Peter's well-being at the time. But what's problematic here is that the basis of their relationship was not equal. Peter lived in captivity at the mercy of a policy bigger than Lovat. She should have known that she could not guarantee Peter her love. The fact that Peter was separated earlier on from his conspecifics is critical in

this case. Irus Braverman calls this dilemma 'the power of care'.

KK I think the relationship between sex and love between humans and dolphins is complex; after all, these relationships are unilateral human representations and we have no real evidence of how dolphins feel. And unilateral human representations of dolphin sex can be controversial. In 2016, when I relocated myself to the Netherlands, I saw on the news that a person from an animal protection group filmed dolphin trainers massaging the genitals of dolphins at the Dolfinarium, the largest marine mammal park in Europe. While the park was questioned of being guilty of sexual abuse, the park responded that the trainer was collecting sperm for the dolphins' breeding program and was also helping to 'relieve stress' on male dolphins who lacked the company of the opposite sex. With both sides having their reasons for their beliefs, a public debate is underway, but it is difficult to reach a consensus.

TZ I would like to argue the unilaterality here. One might advocate that as spoken language fails us in our communication with the non-human, sexuality might be more universal as a means of communication..

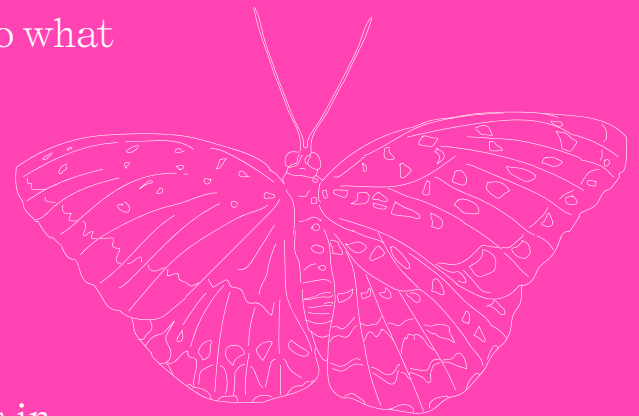
KK This story in 2016 has inspired me to think about the sexual rights of animals, whether animals have the same rights as humans to pursue sexual pleasure and diverse sexual practices, and what role humans should play. In response to these questions, I launched a project called "*Dolphin Eroticarium*". The project was designed as a marine park to provide sexual services to dolphins. The park is an open space in the dolphins' habitat, as opposed to the usual captive environment of parks. The facilities are designed to enrich the dolphin's sexual experience through a variety of sexual activities in an attempt to allow both dolphins and humans to enjoy themselves in the park. Unlike previous marine parks where dolphin shows serve as entertainment for humans, this theme park is a mutually beneficial situation where humans and dolphins can live together in harmony. Through a speculative design approach, I tried to explore this taboo interspecies relationship, perhaps finding a new possibility in this complex ethical debate.



# IX Normality or Abnormality? 50

KK At Artis we can see butterflies flying in flocks and we can easily identify the sex of a butterfly by the pattern of its wings. Male and female butterflies usually have different patterns. Occasionally, we can find butterflies with two wings with different patterns, one representing the male and the other the female. This is a very rare phenomenon in butterflies, and it is not easy to find scientific studies on the subject. We cannot help but wonder how such hermaphrodites survive in the butterfly community. Is their life cycle the same as that of other butterflies? How do they interact with other butterflies during the mating season?

TZ What intrigues me is: what do they feel? To what are they attracted? As we have quite a difficult history with sexual minorities so how do their conspecifics react to them? Do they benefit from their phenotypical ambiguity?



KK Although the intersexual butterflies are a minority of the species, there are also species in nature that are mostly hermaphroditic; snails in particular are an interesting example. Most snail species are hermaphroditic with each snail having both male and female sex organs, and mate by inserting their penises into each other's vaginas at the same time. However, some scientific studies have shown that a small number of snails autonomously switch off the reproductive system of either sex, preferring to be male or female only. These mono-sex snails are instead a sexual minority within their species.

TZ Hermaphroditism though is not the same as intersex, but the scientific terms to describe the differences feel offending to me: like hermaphroditism being a natural condition, opposed to intersex being a disorder; suggesting that we should feel sorry for an intersex person. What also stroke me is that intersex would be a strictly human condition... Wouldn't that be a highly unlikely coincidence?

KK In these examples of animals, we can see that hermaphroditism is the majority in some species, but a minority in others. The many examples of non-human animals also

shows that nature has a wide variety of sexual expressions, and that the dichotomies of natural/unnatural and normal/abnormal are only constructs of narrow-minded human culture.



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# Making Love *in the Zoo* (Zoo of the Future)