

Ask A Genius 100 – Life and Death (Part 15)¹
Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner
February 25, 2017

[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Jacobsen: To the beginning of the conversation, the kind of the religious and modern secular taboos around sexual relations, and the way that bodily functions are all haphazard—boogers, eye crust, ear wax—as you were saying—poop and pee—all of these things (Ahl and Steinvorth, 2017; Barclay, 2014; Sonny, 2012). Everything functions sufficiently well-enough to get the genes passed on (Moran, 2006; Rifkin, 2013).

Rick Rosner: We're okay with our bodily functions. We're okay with everything that we do on a day-to-day, moment-to-moment, basis. We're okay with our functions.

S: Yeah.

R: Because we wouldn't be productive otherwise. You can become philosophical and cynical and be bummed that we're just dumb animals with limited capabilities, but most people don't go around feeling that way and it wouldn't be productive if we did. The everyday pleasures of life are such that—unless you're a depressive person—they make up for the grossness of life. But sex is where our drives get weirdly perverse.

It's largely because sex drives want us to do things that are against our best interests as individuals. So stuff that is sexy has to be really sexy. It's deeply, deeply wired in. Where it's crazy that people can be aroused by cartoons.

S: [Laughing] People can be aroused by pixels on a screen.

R: It's crazy that super hardwired, super-forceful reactions to rounded shapes—to boobs and butts—at different points in our history, what has been exciting—it's always been ridiculous but sometimes it's extra ridiculous—like 100 years ago or 120 years ago seeing a chick's ankle was sexy because you normally never see them, because everyone was wearing floor length skirts

¹ Four format points for the session article:

1. Bold text following and including “Scott Jacobsen:” or “S:” is Scott & non-bold text following and including “Rick Rosner:” or “R:” is Rick.
2. Session article conducted, transcribed, edited, formatted, and published by Scott.
3. Footnotes & in-text citations in the interview & references after the interview.
4. This session article has been edited for clarity and readability.

For further information on the formatting guidelines incorporated into this document, please see the following documents:

1. American Psychological Association. (2010). Citation Guide: APA. Retrieved from <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/system/files/28281/APA6CitationGuideSFUv3.pdf>.
2. Humble, A. (n.d.). Guide to Transcribing. Retrieved from <http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/Transcription%20Guide.pdf>.

and getting a glimpse up somebody's skirt to the point you can see their lower leg, somebody's lower leg, that was bonerific.

[Laughing]

R: When I was growing up, seeing panties in certain circumstances—sometimes you felt sorry for them that they didn't know their panties were on display—

[Laughing]

R: But generally, if you saw a cute woman's undapants, that was the most, that was the best, most exciting deal!

[Laughing]

R: There's an entire set of sexy calendar art from the 60s. They are these drawings of a cute woman who is bending over, where she is facing us. She's dropped her stuff, or a dog has wrapped its leash around her legs, and she's bent over trying to deal with what I going on. You can see that her underpants are around her ankle, just fallen down, and the wind is blowing, and her skirt is blowing up, but we can't see what is up her skirt.

But there's a guy behind her who is seeing the back side of her, and has a super excited look on his face. That's such a specialized and crazy for of bonerificness, that is shows how crazily hardwired we are to be sexually oriented. You look at fashion. One aspect of fashion is to, as it changes from trend to trend and decade to decade, find what new parts of the body can be exposed.

Starting in the late 70s and moving through the 90s, it was the leg holes on underwear—women's underwear—and leotards, and swimsuits, got higher and higher to exposing more and more of the upper thigh, toward the iliac crest, to the culminating in thong-type underwear and swimsuits, and all of that (Taylor, 2017). And then, in the 2000s, there was an opposite trend, instead of things moving up, waistlines moved down, and down, and down, until, on guys, the just above the pubis became an exposed erogenous zone or erotically exciting zone.

Where you've got the lower ab muscles right above the pubic hair, unless the guy's manscaped, and also where the abs connect, there's a triangle shape where the abs stop and the leg muscles come up underneath. In dorm posters of the 80s through now, I guess, under-boob is very exciting. Shirts that are too short that stop just below the nipple, but you can see the underside of the boobs.

Side boob became a thing. And then, in the past 8 years, butts have exploded. In the 70s, the skinny tone Jane Fonda body was popular and in the 70s and the 80s, the jacked Schwarzenegger muscly male body was considered the thing. Now, fat asses are the thing.

[Break in the recording]

R: Sex feels like you're getting away with something. It is an even more perverse example of the counterproductive aspect of sex. It is something that you shouldn't be doing and it's thrilling that you shouldn't be doing it. But it's confusing how that has to be the mechanism. There's a whole set of aspects of non-exalted human behavior. It is kind of necessary to fully portray humans—like the vision of the future in *Star Trek* I find troubling because it has no foolishness (IMDb, 2017a).

It is deeply serious with not a lot of foolishness. *Blade Runner* world is full of crap, crappy advertising, and a lot of shoddy stuff (IMDb, 2017b). That feels more real than the *Star Trek* future, where everyone is walking through futuristic plazas and everyone is clean. There's a whole bunch of foolishness in the human endeavour. I'm not saying human endeavour is doomed to fail and therefore foolish.

I'm saying no matter how technically adept and sophisticated we become there'll always be a bunch of ridiculousness going on.

S: Even our archetypes are like this, the ancient Greeks and the pre-Socratics, even the Romans, (Adkins & Pollard, 2010; Encyclopædia Britannica, 2016) their forms that they had set up for the gods were involved in all sorts of crazy stuff, but they were crystallized aspects anthropomorphized.

R: The gods were assholes. Every culture has the trickster character who is an asshole. So, yea.

S: Largely, our evolutionary—people like to use the word— ‘baggage’ is inevitably popping up in all sorts of ways—in culture, in religious forms – the Greek gods, the Abrahamic God in the Old Testament, even in the ways we conduct ourselves now in ‘civilized society’ you note the 8-year trend in fascination with rounded body parts, which is part and parcel of being human. It’s part and parcel of our baggage (Creach, 2016).²

² *Violence in the Old Testament* (2016) states:

“Violence in the Old Testament” may refer generally to the Old Testament’s descriptions of God or human beings killing, destroying, and doing physical harm. As part of the activity of God, violence may include the results of divine judgment, such as God’s destruction of “all flesh” in the flood story (Gen. 6:13) or God raining fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24–25). The expression may also include God’s prescription for and approval of wars such as the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 1–12). Some passages seem to suggest that God is harsh and vindictive and especially belligerent toward non-Israelites (see Exod. 12:29–32; Nahum and Obadiah), though the Old Testament also reports God lashing out against rebellious Israelites as well (Exod. 32:25–29, 35; Josh. 7).

Christians have wrestled with divine violence in the Old Testament at least since the 2nd century CE, when Marcion led a movement to reject the Old Testament and the Old Testament God. The movement was substantial enough that key church leaders such as Irenaeus and Tertullian worked to suppress it. In the modern era interpreters have taken up the problem with new vigor and have treated it from fresh perspectives. Some attribute the Old Testament’s accounts of God destroying and killing to the brutality of the society that produced it, but they believe modern people are able to see the matter more clearly. They find support for this view in the apparent acceptance of cruel practices of war by Old Testament authors (Num. 21:1–3; Judg. 1:4–7; 1 Sam. 15). Within this way of reading is also a feminist critique that sees in the Old Testament a general disregard for women, illustrated by some passages that present sexual abuse

R: We become less foolish as life becomes more precious. Where, say in the 1930s, I don't think car seats had seat belts at all. They had metal dashboards. People would get in horrifying car wrecks. People weren't overly concerned about that. "That's what happens," but the average lifespan in the 30s was in the 60s. Now, the average lifespan pushes into the 90s. Now, life is more precious and we have more technology to avoid risk.

So we can talk about if it is a trend for people to behave less foolishly into the future as existence becomes more valuable.

[End of recorded material]

as well as general subordination of women to men with no explicit judgment on such atrocities (Judg. 19; Ezek. 16, 23).

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