

But the reverse is actually the case. If the adults took the trouble to study the way in which adult wild animals really do behave, they would find that they are the wild animals. They are the ones who are trying to limit exploration and who are selling out to the cosiness of sub-human conservatism. Luckily for the

Fecies, there are always enough adults who retain juvenile inventiveness and curiosity and who
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able populations to progress and expand.

When we look at young chimpanzees at play we are immediately struck by the similarity between their behaviour and that of our own children. Both are fascinated by new 'toys'. They fall on them eagerly, lifting them, dropping them, twisting them, banging them and taking them to pieces. They both invent simple games. The intensity of their interest is as strong as ours, and during the first few years of life they do just as well-better, in fact, because their muscle system develops quicker. But after a while they begin to lose ground. Their brains are not complex enough to build on this good beginning. Their powers of concentration are weak and do not grow as their bodies grow. Above all, they lack the ability to communicate in detail with their parents about the inventive techniques they are discovering.

The best way to clarify this difference is to take a specific example. Picture-making, or graphic exploration, is an obvious choice. As a pattern of behaviour it has been vitally important to our species for thousands of years, and we have the prehistoric remnants at Altamira and Lascaux to prove it.

Given the opportunity and suitable materials, young chimpanzees are as excited as we are to explore the visual possibilities of making marks on a blank sheet of paper. The start of this interest has something to do with the investigation-reward principle of obtaining disproportionately a results from the expenditure of comparatively little energy. This can be seen operating in all kinds of play situations. A great deal of exaggerated effort may be put into the activities, but it is those actions that produce an unexpectedly increased feed-back that are the most satisfying. We can call this the play principle of 'magnified reward'. 115