

archy organisation, the prolonged dependency of the young, forcing us to adopt pair-bonded family units, demanded yet another form of self-assertion. Each male, as the head of a family, became involved in defending his own individual home base inside the general colony base. So for us there are three fundamental forms of aggression, instead of the usual one or two. As we know to our cost, they are all still very much in evidence today, despite the complexities of our societies.

How does the aggression work? What are the patterns of behaviour involved? How do we intimidate one another? We must look again at the other animals. When a mammal becomes aggressively aroused a number of basic physiological changes occur within its body. The whole machine has to gear itself up for action, by means of the autonomic nervous system. This system consists of two opposing and counterbalancing sub-systems-the sympathetic and the parasympathetic. The former is the one that is concerned with preparing the body for violent activity: The latter has the task of preserving and restoring bodily reserves. The former says, 'You are stripped for action, get moving;' the latter says, 'Take it easy, relax and conserve your strength.' Under normal circumstances the body listens to both these voices and maintains a happy balance between them, but when strong aggression is aroused it listens only to the sympathetic system. When this is activated, adrenalin pours into the blood and the whole circulatory system is profoundly affected. The heart beats faster and blood is transferred from the skin and viscera to the muscles and brain. There is an increase in blood pressure. The rate of production of red blood corpuscles is rapidly stepped up. There is a reduction of the time taken for blood to coagulate. In addition there is a cessation in the processes of digesting and storing food. Salivation is restrained. Movements of the stomach, the secretion of gastric juices, and the peristaltic movements of the intestines are all inhibited. Also, the rectum and bladder do not empty as easily as under normal conditions. Stored carbohydrate is rushed out of the liver and floods the blood with sugar. There is a massive increase 130