

Male and female hunting apes had to fall in love and remain faithful to one another. This is a common tendency in many other groups of animals, but is rare amongst primates. It solved three problems in one stroke. It meant that the females remained bonded to their individual males and faithful to them while they were away on the hunt. It meant that serious sexual rivalries between the males were reduced. This aided their developing co-operativeness. If they were to hunt together successfully, the weaker males as well as the stronger ones had to play their part. They had to play a central role and could not be thrust to the periphery of society, as happens in so many primate species. What is more, with his newly developed and deadly artificial weapons, the hunting ape male was under strong pressure to reduce any source of disharmony within the tribe. Thirdly, the development of a one-male-one-female breeding unit meant that the offspring also benefited. The heavy task of rearing and training the slowly developing young demanded a cohesive family unit. In other groups of animals, whether they are fishes, birds or mammals, when there is too big a burden for one parent to bear alone, we see the development of a powerful pair-bond, tying the male and female parents together throughout the breeding season. This, too, is what occurred in the case of the hunting ape.

In this way, the females were sure of their males' support and were able to devote themselves to their maternal duties. The males were sure of their females' loyalty, were prepared to leave them for hunting, and avoided fighting over them. And the offspring were provided with the maximum of care and attention. This certainly sounds like an ideal solution, but it involved a major change in primate socio-sexual behaviour and, as we shall see later, the process was never really perfected. It is clear from the behaviour of our species today that the trend was only partially completed and that our earlier primate urges keep on re-appearing in minor forms.

This is the manner, then, in which the hunting ape took on the role of a lethal carnivore and changed his primate ways accordingly. I have suggested that they 35