

most primates makes it a more difficult proposition. In most pair-forming species the family splits up and spreads out when the young grow up. Because of its co-operative social behaviour the naked ape cannot afford to scatter in this way. The problem is therefore kept much more on the doorstep, but it is solved in basically the same way. As with all pair-bonded animals, the parents are possessive of one another. The mother 'owns' the father sexually and vice-versa. As soon as the offspring begin to develop their sexual signals at puberty, they become sexual rivals, the sons of the father and the daughters of the mother. There will be a tendency to drive them both out. The offspring will also begin to develop a need for a home-based 'territory' of their own. The urge to do this must obviously have been present in the parents for them to have set up a breeding home in the first place, and the pattern will simply be repeated. The parental homebase, dominated and 'owned' by the mother and father, will not have the right properties. Both the place itself and the individuals living in it will be heavily loaded with both primary and associative parental signals. The adolescent will automatically reject this and set off to establish a new breeding base. This is typical of young territorial carnivores, but not of young primates, and this is one more basic behavioural change that is going to be demanded of the naked ape.

It is perhaps unfortunate that this phenomenon of exogamy is so often referred to as indicating an 'incest taboo'. This immediately implies that it is a comparatively recent, culturally controlled restriction, but it must have developed biologically at a much earlier stage, or the typical breeding system of the species could never have emerged from its primate background.

Another related feature, and one that appears to be unique to our species, is the retention of the hymen or maidenhead in the female. In lower mammals it occurs as an embryonic stage in the development of the urogenital system, but as part of the naked ape's neoteny it is retained. Its persistence means that the first copulation in the life of the female will meet with some difficulty. When evolution has gone to such 72