

hair. We still do it in moments of great shock ('M hair stood on end'), but as a signal it is of little use. In other respects we can do much better. Our very nakedness, which prevents us from bristling effectively, gives us the chance to send powerful flushing and paling signals. We can go 'white with rage', 'red with anger', or 'pale with fear'. It is the white colour we have to watch for here: this spells activity. If it is combined with other actions that signal attack, then it is a vital danger signal. If it is combined with other actions that signal fear, then it is a panic signal. It is caused, you will recall, by the activation of the sympathetic nervous system, the 'go' system, and it is not to be treated lightly. The reddening, on the other hand, is less worrying: it is caused by the frantic counter-balancing attempts of the parasympathetic system, and indicates that the 'go' system is already being undermined. The angry, red-faced opponent who faces you is far less likely to attack than the whitefaced, tight-lipped one. Red-face's conflict is such that he is all bottled up and inhibited, but white-face is still ready for action. Neither can be trifled with, but white-face is much more likely to spring in to the attack unless he is immediately appeased or counterthreatened even more strongly.

In a similar vein, rapid deep breathing is a danger signal, but it has already become less of a threat when it develops into irregular snorts and gurgles. The same relationship exists between the dry mouth of incipient attack and the slobbering mouth of the more intensely inhibited assault. Urination, defecation and fainting usually arrive a little later on the scene, following in the wake of the massive shock-wave that accompanies moments of immense tension.

When the urge to attack and escape are both strongly activated simultaneously, we exhibit a number of characteristic intention movements and ambivalent posturings. The most familiar of these is the raising of a clenched fist—a gesture that has become ritualised in two ways. It is performed at some distance from the opponent, at a point where it is too far away to be carried through into a blow. Thus its function is no longer mechanical; instead it has become a visual 140