

Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence

By Dale Peterson, Richard Wrangham

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Whatever their virtues, men are more violent than women. Why do men kill, rape, and wage war, and what can we do about it? *Demonic Males* offers startling new answers to these questions. Drawing on the latest discoveries about human evolution and about our closest living relatives, the great apes, the book unfolds a compelling argument that the secrets of a peaceful society may well be, first, a sharing of power between males and females, and second, a high level and variety of sexual activity, both homosexual and heterosexual. Dramatic, vivid, and sometimes shocking, but firmly grounded in meticulous scientific research, *Demonic Males* will stir controversy and debate. It will be required reading for anyone concerned about the spiral of violence undermining human society.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
If you harbor a sneaking suspicion that men are a herd of ignoble savages, then this book is for you. Authors Wrangham and Peterson will confirm your instincts. It turns out that hyperviolent social behavior is deeply rooted in male human genes and common among our closest male primate relatives. Rapes, beatings and killings are as much a part of life among the great apes as they are among us. The authors try to conclude on some upbeat notes that ring hollow, but their science reveals much about the dark side of human nature.

From Publishers Weekly
Contradicting the common belief that chimpanzees in the wild are gentle creatures, Harvard anthropologist Wrangham and science writer Peterson have witnessed, since 1971, male African chimpanzees carry out rape, border raids, brutal beatings and warfare among rival territorial gangs. In a startling, beautifully written, riveting, provocative inquiry, they suggest that chimpanzee-like violence preceded and paved the way for human warfare?which would make modern humans the dazed survivors of a continuous, five-million-year habit of lethal aggression. They buttress their thesis with an examination of the ubiquitous rape among orangutans, gorilla infanticide and male-initiated violence and hyenas' territorial feuds, drawing parallels to the lethal raiding among the Yanomamo people of Brazil's Amazon forests and other so-called primitive tribes, as well as to modern "civilized" mass slaughter. In their analysis, patriotism ("stripped to its essence... male defense of the community") breeds aggression, yet, from an evolutionary standpoint, they reject the presumed inevitability of male violence and male dominance over women.
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From Library Journal
Rape, murder, war?these savage acts of extreme violence are a part of "human nature" and separate us from the rest of the animal kingdom. Or are they? Wrangham, a Harvard anthropologist, and Peterson (Chimpanzee Travels, LJ 12/94), an experienced chimpanzee observer, relate the evidence of similar acts of aggression?raiding parties, beatings, killing another member of one's own species?in human's closest relative, the common chimpanzee. The authors consider ways to tame the demon, showing by contrast the altruism exhibited by the bonobo, or pygmy chimpanzee. This examination of the dark side of human and nonhuman primate social behavior is an interesting and well-presented counterbalance to Frans de Waal's Good Natured: The Origins of Right and Wrong in Humans and Other Animals (LJ 2/15/96). For all science collections.?Raymond Hamel, Wisconsin Regional Primate Research Ctr. Lib., Madison
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Users Review

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Is it a person who having spare time subsequently spend it whole day by means of watching television programs or just lying on the bed? Do you need something new? This Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence can be the response, oh how comes? A book you know. You are thus out of date, spending your free time by reading in this brand-new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these publications have than the others?

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