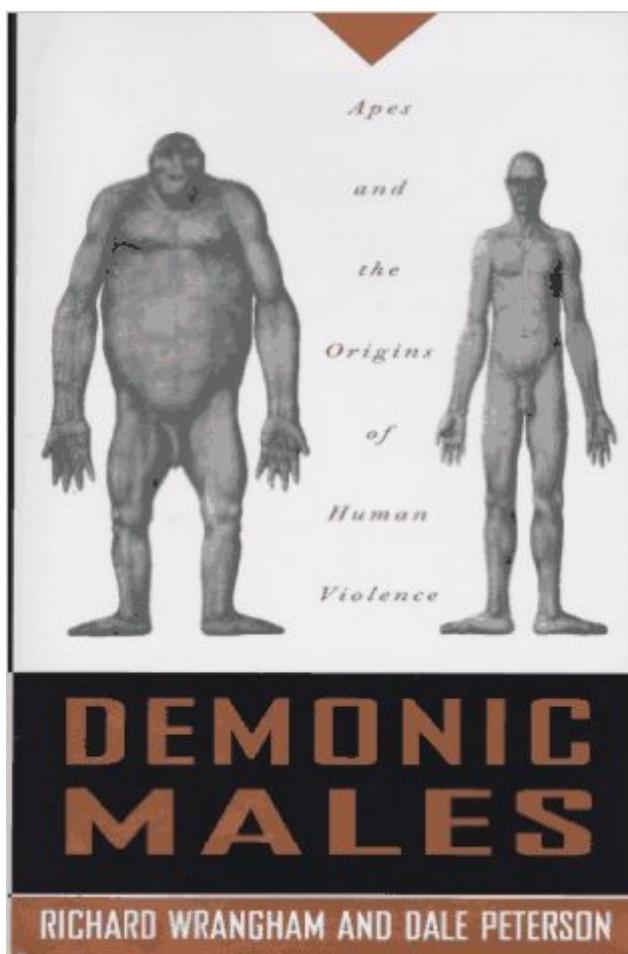


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Demonic Males: Apes And The Origins Of Human Violence



Synopsis

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.

Book Information

Hardcover: 350 pages

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin; First Edition edition (October 3, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0395690013

ISBN-13: 978-0395690017

Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 6 x 1.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ [See all reviewsÂ \(52 customer reviews\)](#)

Best Sellers Rank: #403,910 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #57 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Apes & Monkeys #1996 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Evolution #3398 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Biology

Customer Reviews

Fact: human males are extremely violent. Fact: our ape relatives are similarly extremely violent.

Highly plausible: humans, along with our ape cousins, have a strong evolutionary disposition towards violence. This prospect is troubling, a tough pill for many people to swallow. Yet the data on ape behavior that are beautifully presented in this book, a simple consideration of the savagely violent nature of human history (and prehistory), as well as the many psychological studies that reveal how quickly humans form hostile coalitions (in some studies due to a coin toss), combine to make the idea that humans are evolutionarily violent difficult to ignore. The primate data also strongly challenge the notion that humans are violent because their culture has made them violent. If violence is based on "culture," then why are all the other apes so violent? And why has essentially

every human culture ever documented exhibited patriarchy and male violence? The far more parsimonious explanation is that humans have a long evolutionary history of violence in which violent behavior led to reproductive benefits. The pacifists got killed or out-competed by their pugnacious peers. OK, but why did evolution choose violence? Why was violence necessary? Demonic males explains this question well. There is a broad trend among mammals for males to be the more violent of the two sexes. This is because males can have a gigantic number of offspring. All a male needs to do is have sex. Women, on the other hand, need to grow the child inside them, so their reproductive prospects are much more limited. This leads to ferocious competition between males in the rat-race to reproduce as much as possible.

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