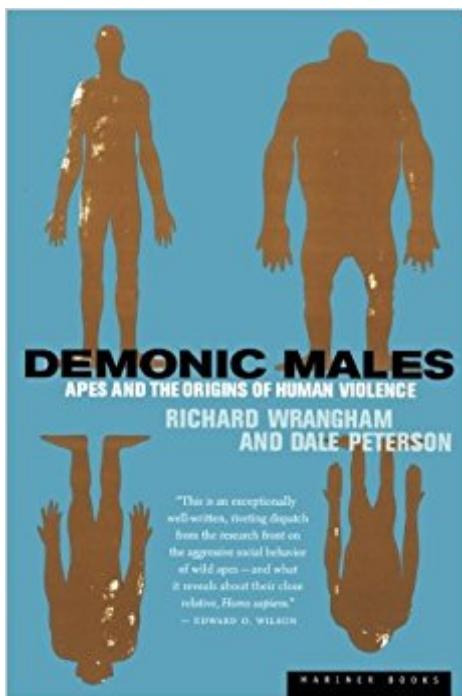


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# Demonic Males: Apes And The Origins Of Human Violence



## **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**

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## **Customer Reviews**

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. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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 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. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book describes behaviors that appear in most mammalian species- dominance hierarchies, sexual rivalry, threat displays, alliance building, and violence toward males, females and even children at times. It shows that "demonic" behaviors promote reproductive success in the animal world, which of course means they're naturally selected for. This is not meant to excuse bad behavior in humans. It's meant to help violence-prevention efforts by illuminating biological aspects of behavior. I always knew there was a dark side of human nature, but this book helped me see clearly why it evolved. There's no preachy message. The authors present the facts in an engaging way and respect our ability to put that knowledge to good ends. The book has no male-bashing rhetoric, though I thought it could benefit from acknowledging that females also behave badly in pursuit of reproductive success. Of course females are less violent, because each gender adopts the strategies that promote their DNA.Ã  I, Mammal: Why Your Brain Links Status and HappinessMost humans manage to avoid demonic behavior most of the time. This is an accomplishment that we should value instead of taking it for granted. We avoid conflict and respect others because our cortex can predict the consequences of actions the limbic system might motivate, and squelch actions that are not in its best interest. This is a complex skill. When you understand the limbic system we've inherited from our mammalian ancestors, you appreciate what an achievement it is that so many people are kind and decent to each other. We are born with the potential for good and for evil. Good doesn't come automatically. I like this book because it helps us understand how much skill is necessary for people to transcend their animal nature.

The book was amazing it had me hooked from the opening pages. It gave valuable insight to what we are as humans and how violence is part of our inherent nature. I think using this research further evaluation of PTSD of all types should be looked at again.

I originally purchased this book after reading Richard Wrangham's "Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human" and was so impressed with the overall experience that I had to explore "Demonic Males." As a person interested in human evolution and how things could be possibly led to where we are now, this book immediately sparked my interest in two ways, our human evolution and its possible explanation that makes us so prone to violence. I enjoyed the author's stories of bringing in the different kinds of great apes and also other species of animals and how their culture and lifestyles affect them. How violence is expressed and tolerated amongst these different great apes. At first, this book may seem to be all doom and gloom but the book has a buildup of a possible future where we can break through the chains of violence and live peacefully amongst ourselves and others like different species of animals do. Overall, this was a fantastic read and I would encourage forward thinkers to absorb some of this material. I am definitely looking forward to reading some more of Mr. Wrangham's work.

Came earlier than expected. Definitely recommend!

Although, the SELLER contacted me DIRECTLY to my PERSONAL EMAIL with this note: Hi E Laren, I am contacting you because I am curious why you decided to order the Demonic Males book. Is it assigned reading for a class? Leisure? I ask because I found Demonic Males to be best taken with a grain of salt. The author makes some compelling arguments about the origin of human violence by using comparative behavioral studies between humans and other apes in order to draw a biological connection. Please note that a complex behavior such as violence cannot be simply boiled down to biology or genetics, and that comparing human behavior and chimpanzee behavior is often times misleading. These comparisons do not tell us much about the "origins" of anything, for we did not evolve from chimps, we evolved WITH them. Also, the notion of "nature vs nurture" is false because they act together. The potential for aggression in any animal may have a root in biology, but it does not make that behavior inevitable. An individual's tendency for violence is influenced by many circumstances, not just biological ones. Environmental and cultural influences are important for stimulating aggression. Some forms of violence exist in every culture, varying in

frequency depending on the society. The book makes it sound like violence in human society is inevitable, but not all societies share the same fights over power. Sorry I went on this rant, I just wanted to make sure that this book does not get taken too seriously as factual science, but rather a comparative inter-species study with very debatable ways of interpreting the "evidence." Have a good day! Which I found to be extremely inappropriate and against 's own policies for sellers. However, I have been unable to notify of this egregious violation due to their extremely unhelpful "customer 'service' ." I wrote on their facebook page and am including the seller's email here unedited in hopes that no one will ever order from them again.

Critiquing this book from the vantage point of evolutionary psychology is like a present day aeronautical engineer critiquing the feasibility of DaVinci's helicopter specs. This is a popular book that makes a very important speculation about the possible origins of human violence. None of the negative reviewers mention the important and politically impartial hypothesis put forward by the authors that ape communities with abundant resources are less violent than those with limited resources. Also, there is nothing wrong with the feminist community rallying around this book. This book isn't about taking away male power, it is about mitigating all violence.

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