

[PDF] Our Inner Ape

Frans De Waal - pdf download free book

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Author: Frans De Waal
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Description:

Power, sex, violence and kindness: these four broad-spectrum categories encompass much of human behavior, so it's only fitting that they're also the primary subject material for Frans de Waal's (*The Ape and The Sushi Master*) book *Our Inner Ape*. The few (but deeply detailed) chapters are a mesmerizing read that spans biology, child psychology, postmodern theorists and fundamental morality, using tales of stern chimps, and sexy bonobos to examine humans' place between them. In the process, he examines why we need to know our place in the world, how our body language communicates feelings, and where the roots of empathy lie in mammalian life.

De Waal's respect for both his readers and his research subjects come shining through in the simple clarity he uses when describing both the endless sex of bonobo apes and the heartrending violence occasionally present in chimp hierarchal structure. By illustrating his points with a mixture of straight-from-research experiences and jokes at the expense of modern politicians, he keeps his ideas compelling for anyone with a basic understanding of evolutionary science without drifting

towards the academic drone that could be expected of by a researcher of his experience.

You won't find specific conclusions concerning human nature, but instead a gentle, almost rambling look at two primate species with vastly different social networks and how, perhaps, humanity can learn from each to our benefit. A few of de Waal's lovely duotone photos (*My Family Album: 30 Years of Primate Photography*) grace the end of the book, featuring close-up shots of the folks he's been writing about--chimps like Yeroen, Nikkie and Mama, and bonobo Kuif and adopted daughter Roosje are downright thrilling to see after reading such interesting stories about their lives. *Jill Lightner*

From Publishers Weekly Starred Review. Noted primatologist de Waal (*Chimpanzee Politics*) thinks human behavior cannot be fully explained by selfish genes and Darwinian competition. Drawing on his own primate research on chimpanzees and bonobos—our closest animal relatives—he shows how much we can learn from them about ourselves: our qualities of "fellow feeling and empathy" as well as our power-obsessed, violent side. We are "bipolar apes," de Waal says, as much like bonobos as like chimps. The latter are known for their viciousness and "red in tooth and claw" social politics, but bonobos offer a radically different social model, one of peace and hedonistic orgies; de Waal offers vivid, often delightful stories of politics, sex, violence and kindness in the ape communities he has studied to illustrate such questions as why we are irreverent toward the powerful and whether men or women are better at conflict resolution. Readers might be surprised at how much these apes and their stories resonate with their own lives, and may well be left with an urge to spend a few hours watching primates themselves at the local zoo.

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