

Such are the theories of the recent "hard-headed" and "realistic" school of sociobiology and anthropology.

Richard Leakey, a 32-year-old Kenyan anthropologist, picks up the gauntlet thrown down by the "realists" and throws it right back in their faces, showing that they are not realists at all, but self-serving hired thugs of the conservative forces of the world (although Mr. Leakey is too polite to put it quite like that). *Origins* attacks head on the theories of man's inherent aggressiveness. Using the most recent anthropological findings obtained by himself, his celebrated parents, Mary and the late Louis Leakey, and others, Richard Leakey demonstrates that men (*homo sapiens sapiens*) and their immediate ancestors ("hominids") have been on the earth much longer than was thought until very recently—about five million years. Hominids, who walked upright and ate meat, evolved from the apes in the process of leaving the vegetarian life of the jungle and taking to the savannahs and plains of what is now East Africa. Eating meat meant hunting game bigger or faster—often both—than the hominids. Hunting thus made cooperation between the members of a group necessary in order to trap the game. Eating meat, as well as other dangers and opportunities of life outside the trees, led to the growth of the brain through the process of natural selection; this in turn led to the ability to make tools and communicate through language.

Leakey shows the complex interaction of different processes — changes in the environment, the effects of the transition from jungle life to life on the plains, from a vegetarian to a meat diet, the relation of man's intellectual to his physical development, etc. — in human evolution. He shows that while monkeys and apes in the jungle are primarily fruit eaters who obtain their food individually (one chimpanzee will pick one piece of fruit and eat it), man's more recent ancestors developed close cooperation in hunting, and gradually developed a highly cooperative division of labor within their groups corresponding to the division between the sexes. For reasons having to do with the biology of childbearing, men became the hunters, women the gatherers of fruits, vegetables, etc. (A firm believer in the equality of women, Leakey is careful to say that this historical division of labor is no excuse for the still-existing and disgraceful second-class citizenship of women in many societies based on "her place being in the home." At the same time, he fails to acknowledge the historical existence of "mother right," the equality of women in primitive society based on the female lineage of early gentile society. More on this later.) Cooperation in the business of survival, rather than aggressive competition, characterizes human evolution. To support this assertion from another angle Leakey points out, among other things, that anthropological evidence shows that for at least one million years our direct ancestors (*homo habilis*, or "handyman") coexisted in the same territory with two offspring of their com-

mon ape forebear, *ramapithecus*. These two "cousins" of *homo habilis*, called *Australopithecus boisei* and *Australopithecus africanus*, were less developed intellectually than *homo habilis* and could easily have been exterminated by him. But there is no evidence of this, nor of any other aggression by hominid against hominid having taken place.

While Leakey is honest about the necessary gaps in our knowledge about our distant past, he shows that the theory of man's historical cooperativeness is far better based than the theory of aggressiveness. For example,

One idea of a tool industry which has now been scientifically discounted, but which lingers on in the popular image of "ape-men," was borne out of the discoveries of Makapansgat. Like most of the South African fossil sites, Makapansgat is a cave collection and was almost certainly a place where dead animals, including hominids, finished up, rather than being a real occupation site or home base. Raymond Dart [one of Robert Ardrey's "aggression" mentors] was intrigued by the curious assortment of animal bones that were found together with the remains that these bones were part of what he called the osteodontokeratic culture (literally, bone, tooth and hair culture). He suggested that *Australopithecus*'s tool kit included teeth-filled jaws which could be deployed as serrated saws, limb bones used as clubs, and other more fanciful notions. This tool kit was purported to be part of our ancestors' alleged carnivorous and cannibalistic way of life.

But recently, in a brilliant piece of scientific detective work, Bob Brain has effectively demolished the notion of an osteodontokeratic culture. In a series of carefully-planned experiments Brain monitored the effect of both weathering and scavengers on collections of animal bones. Over a period of years Brain observed that a combination of scavenging habits of the local carnivores, and the differential resistance to weathering of various types of bone, produces a bone collection virtually identical to the one Dart found in the cave: the osteodontokeratic culture is apparently no more than the left over from many leopard meals! (p. 96)

Similarly, Leakey does not agree that evidence of early cannibalism supports the theory of man's inherent, genocidal aggressiveness. Fifteen skeletons were discovered in a cave near Peking, China between 1926 and 1941.

... The skeletons were not intact, and indeed many of the limb bones were shattered. So too were some of the skulls. But in a number of them the opening through which the spinal cord runs had clearly been enlarged — a difficult task, calling for particular care. The scene has been interpreted by some as the remains of a ghastly cannibalistic feast, and thus as sure evidence of man's aggressiveness. That someone went to a great deal of trouble to extract and thus presumably to eat the brains of their deceased fellow beings seems indisputable. But to associate such an act of cannibalism inevitably with aggression is grossly to oversimplify — as we shall argue presently in more detail. (p. 132)

Leakey continues further on,

Conventionally, cannibalism is seen as one of the most barbaric practices of "primitive" tribes, and as a motive behind their "savage aggressiveness." So,