

CHEATING

**THE ORIGIN, NATURE, IMPORTANCE
AND IMPROVEMENT
OF BUSINESS AND OTHER ETHICS**

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most intelligent thinkers and try to get up on their shoulders because seeing and insight from high up facilitates understanding more of the surrounding territory of life.

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3. THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF ETHICS

Do ethics come from the nature of animals, evolution of animal behavior, genes, religion, philosophy, laws of human nature, natural physical or chemical functioning of the brain, scientific study, beliefs drawn from the study of political theory relating to ethical norms existing or created in societies, other fields of knowledge or causes or a combination of one or more of these?

Do Animals and Insects have Ethics?

To discover the origin of ethics and human behavior in order to understand this subject better, it is logical to go back in time before man existed and study the older forms of life (animals, insects, etc.) as well as the evolution of early man and the study of anthropology. Sharks, ants, apes and monkeys existed before man walked on earth.

The study of ants and the invention of the science of sociobiology by E. O. Wilson provide important progress in our understanding of the social behavior of ants which opens up new ways of thinking about animal behavior including humans. Later in this book we study important contributions by E. O. Wilson, Christopher Boehm and Dario Maestripieri.

Most scientists agree that we have a common ancestor with the chimpanzee about eight million years ago. Scientists who have researched primate behavior can contribute their knowledge to help us understand human behavior. Small primates existed between 55 and 85 million years ago and survived the disappearance of dinosaurs. Some believe that the human branching from monkeys and apes occurred because of a genetic accident that allowed

more brain capacity including learning languages (*Sciences et Avenir*, July 2012, p. 24,). Others like E.O. Wilson think it more likely that there was a combination of one or more genetic accidents, cultural innovation and a gradual process and development.

Cooperative Meerkats

Scientists, after a ten-year study of the African meerkat, a wild animal of the mongoose family, reported that it exhibits more cooperation and altruism, than is the case with many other animals –and most human beings¹⁶. These foot-high animals with almost human eyes can stand upright supported by their tails. They take care of other families' children, take turns guarding their group and warn others engaged in food-digging of a predator's arrival. If a jackal attacks, they stand together to fight as a group and are much more effective in defeating considerably larger enemies. Sympathy runs so high that non-breeding females produce milk for another family's pups. This cooperative, if not altruistic, behavior extends to groups as large as 50 members. Larger groups are the most successful because each member can contribute less time protecting the group's interests and devote more time to foraging (beginnings of specialization). These animals survive because they cooperate with each other.

Female Lemurs Lead

Another primate, the lemur, has a common ancestor with humans 65 to 70 million years ago. “Among lemurs, females lead. They go into fruit trees first and the males must stay out until the females decide they can come in. Interestingly the female leaders don’t strut around a lot. They work out relationships in the group peaceably.”¹⁷

¹⁶ Clutton-Brock, Tim, Sept. 2002, *Meerkats Stand Tall*. National Geographic.

¹⁷ Claudia Dreyfus, A Rescue Mission in Madagascar, NY Times, August 19, 2014, p. 5.

Female Bonobo Apes Control Demonic Males

Another interesting example from the animal kingdom that illustrates more cooperation than usual and better ethical conduct is the case of the bonobo apes where the capacity for cooperation of females among themselves to control the males has made the sexes co-dominant, resulting in greatly reducing male violence in their communities. There is no evidence among groups of bonobos of the unprovoked aggressive warfare one observes among different groups of chimpanzees with whom humans have a common ancestor more than about eight million years ago. Bonobo males do not commit rape, batter adult females, torture and brutally kill infants and adults like chimpanzees do. Unfortunately humans have the same kind of male dominated society where wars and violence are more common than elsewhere in the animal kingdom¹⁸.

The study of animals (ethology) and their behavior advanced rapidly in the twentieth century and sheds new light on human behavior.

¹⁸ Wrangham, Richard and Peterson, Dale. 1996. *Demonic Males, Apes and the Origin of Human Violence*. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, New York. Chapter "The Gentle Ape", pages 200-220.