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Monkeys have always fascinated humans. They are 'our nearest relatives', whose social life may help our understanding both of current human behaviour and of the factors that led to the emergence of Man.

They are also fascinating in their own right, and Dr Rowell's book is rich in observation and comment drawn from her work with both wild and captive baboons in Africa. She makes clear the diversity of social organization in monkeys, compares field and captive environments, and describes communication within groups. A chapter on mating includes Dr Rowell's specialist work on the concept of oestrus, and is followed by an important survey of child rearing and the long-term effects of the infant's interaction with relations, friends and the mother.

Dr Rowell moves finally to adult interaction and looks critically at the most frequently used concepts of hierarchy, territory and roles.

