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SMASH

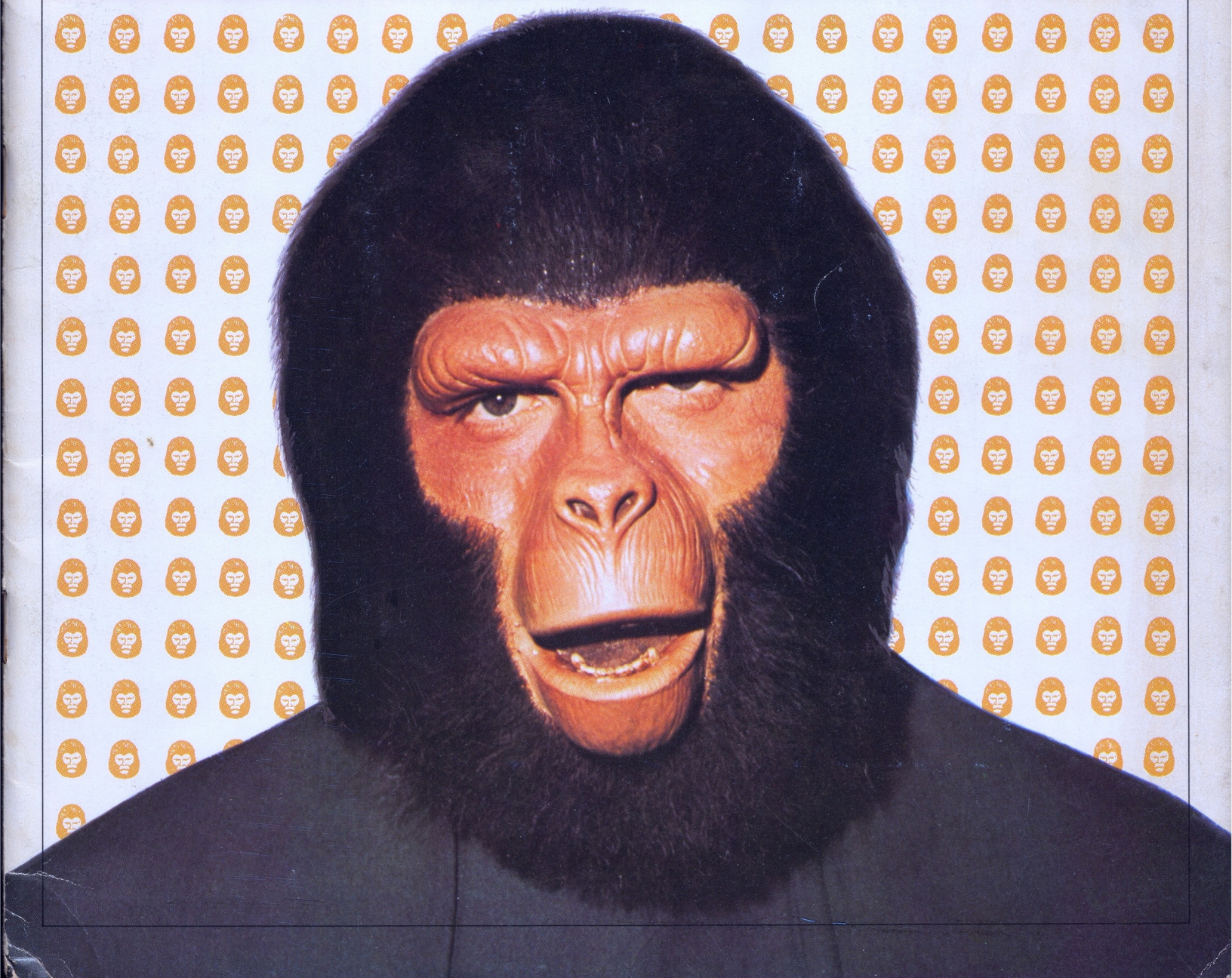
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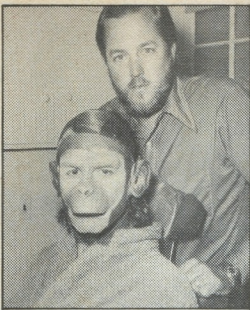
INSIDE PLANET OF THE APES

Smash Visits the Stars of the New Gorilla Thriller

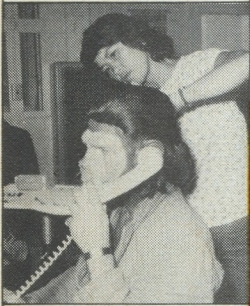


THE INSIDE STORY: NO ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES

First the Book then the Movie then the TV Show then
the Ape Dolls then the Bubble-gum then...



Roddy has the same make-up man, Fred Blau, each day. But it still takes nearly three hours to dress him in full ape face.



Applying the make-up is as tedious for Roddy as it is for the make-up staff. To relax, Roddy listens to music or talks on the phone.



The ape "appliance" (or mask) looks heavy, but it's not. It's made of latex which is both light and flexible.



It takes an actor a good six weeks to learn how to move his appliance so he can express a full range of emotions. After four *Apes* movies, Roddy is the master of simian sentiment.



Astronauts Pete Burke (Jim Naughton) and Alan Virdon (Ron Harper) pose a major threat to the apes. If they reveal that men once ruled the Earth, *Planet*'s lowly humans might realize they're not a naturally inferior species. The next step would be People Power and revolution.

Photos courtesy of Twentieth-Century Fox

A spaceship bearing three men from Earth hurtled through time and space toward an unknown planet light years away. As their craft circled this foreign globe, all three travellers gasped in amazement. As incredible as it seemed, below them they could make out cities and highways just like those they'd left behind.

The men brought their spaceship down on this strange land and tested the atmosphere. Oxygen! They tested the water. It was drinkable. Impossible! — and yet, it appeared the planet they were on was the identical twin of Earth.

Identical, yes, in every way but one. It was inhabited by people, but they were more like savage animals than the human beings on Earth. Somewhere, a strange, eerie twist had taken place. The superior minds on this land were not human. No, the thinkers and rulers of this planet were apes.

This was the story that French writer Pierre Boulle told eleven years ago in his book, *Planet of the Apes*. Some four years later, Twentieth Century Fox made a movie from the book — then another, then another — until finally there were five *Apes* movies and manic *Planet* fans in every pocket of the United States.

It was only a matter of time before the apes invaded TV. And last fall, even as CBS was putting a weekly *Planet* series on the air, Marvel was publishing apes comic books, Topps was selling apes chewing gum, and dozens of other companies were flooding the market with everything from apes cookware to puzzles to beachballs. Twentieth Century Fox, which is cheerfully controlling this monstrous merchandise campaign, estimates that Americans will spend over a 100 million dollars in the grips of monkey madness.

Why have so many people gone so ape? They are fascinated, for one thing, by the stunning life-like quality of the ape "masks" the actors wear. The make-up feat of *Planet of the Apes* has been talked about as much as the movies themselves. It takes Roddy McDowell (simian star of four *Apes* movies and now Galen in the TV series) three hours to be transformed from human to ape.

Once the make-up is on, an actor or actress can eat only by drinking liquids through a straw. Roddy, a chain smoker, was forced to puff cigarettes through an extra-long holder as he spoke to SMASH.

How does he feel under all that make-up?

"Well, you get very hot," Roddy observed. "And not only that, but as the day wears on, you don't get enough oxygen to your skin. It's somewhat disturbing." Disturbing enough that

Roddy's face has been insured for \$100,000.

"Has your skin started to rot yet?"

"No, no, not yet. I have a marvelous make-up man, Freddie Blau, who puts a lot of stuff on my face to protect it. And then, we made a deal when I came to do this series that the make-up can be on my face only a certain number of hours a day. Having had experience with the films beforehand, I know where the exhaustion point is. When the make-up's been on about 10 hours, you start to get really bugged."

The make-up puts enormous demands on the actors who play apes. On a hot day out at the Fox ranch, an actor can lose as much as ten pounds. And, as Roddy told SMASH, it's something of a losing battle — from the moment the make-up goes on, it starts to come off. "Even so," says Roddy, "I enjoy the reality of the appliance. It's really very effective."

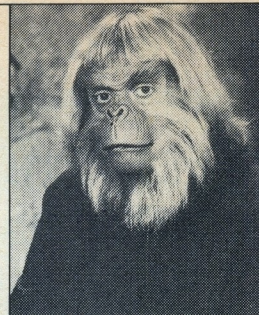
When Roddy says "appliance," he's referring to the basic structure of the ape masks. It was invented by John Chambers who designed and built artificial limbs for wounded soldiers in World War II. Chambers was faced with a difficult problem. He had to create ape faces that would still express a whole range of human emotions. But Chambers was able to draw on his bizarre background to solve the task. He knew how to fashion almost any part of the human body, he knew how to make it look life-like, and he knew how to give it maximum flexibility.

It's fascinating to watch the ape make-up in action, but it's not exciting enough to account for the enormous popularity of the gorilla thrillers. What else makes *Planet of the Apes* so appealing?

It just may be that *Planet* owes its success to the very simple, even funny, idea on which it's based. As Ron Harper, who plays astronaut Alan Virton, suggests: "The complete reversal of animal and human roles is full of possibilities. I think that's what interests people and holds their attention."

In addition, *Planet* just naturally satirizes the human condition. "We have the opportunity to make some comments about what is happening in our civilization today," explains Jim Naughton, who plays Ron Harper's fellow astronaut. "After all, the Planet of the Apes exists because humans destroyed themselves and their world through nuclear war.

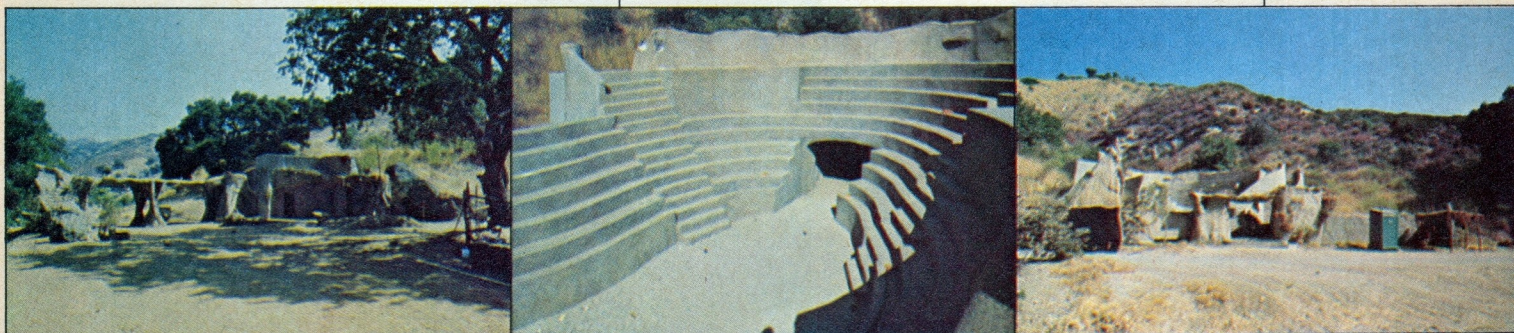
"Also, man is the only primate that makes war on his own kind and for what often appear to be some pretty lousy reasons. Apes don't do that. That's one of the points that is often brought out



The diabolical Dr. Zaius has been played each time by a Shakespearean actor — in the movies, by Maurice Evans, in the TV show, by Booth Colman.



Almost all the gorillas are played by stuntmen. But Urko is played by actor Mark Lenard who still has fans from his brief appearance in another sci-fi show, *Star Trek*.



When Rod Serling wrote the first screenplay for *Planet*, he described an ape city with skyscrapers, airplanes, trains, and cars. But the studio figured it would cost about 100 million dollars to build. So instead the set designers came up with a cheaper idea — a primitive ape civilization that looks as though it's been carved out of stone.

in the scripts. The apes are afraid that if humans get powerful, they won't just wipe out the apes. They'll wipe themselves out, too, as they did once before."

Roddy McDowell agrees. "The apes mistreat humans in the same way that humans mistreat each other today. I don't think this point is directed at any particular ethnic situation. It's just that the fabric of the show's material seems to cover all the kinds of prejudice and injustice we are guilty of.

"But basically," Roddy cautions, "the show is just great entertainment. And if you try to read into it any deep, momentous undercurrents, you risk becoming a terrible bore."

What has made *Planet* so entertaining? Well, for one thing, the apes have been going through their changes as they've moved from Boulle's book, to the movies and on to TV. And these changes have made the story far more agreeable to larger numbers of people.

The most noticeable change is that the apes have gotten dumber over the past ten years while the humans have gotten smarter. In the book, the humans are capable only of animal noises; in the TV show, they can speak. In the book, the apes live in a society identical to ours — they even send rockets into space with laboratory humans aboard. In the movies and TV, the apes live in a culture that is primitive, at best.

Ever since the 19th Century when Charles Darwin proposed that men and apes were closely linked, many people have angrily resisted the idea. Somehow it was just too degrading to think that apes and humans were relatives. And Pierre Boulle's book made the concept more threatening than ever. His apes did more than drive cars and own veg-o-matics, though surely that was bad enough. No, the worst thing of all was that they experimented on humans just as we experiment on apes today.

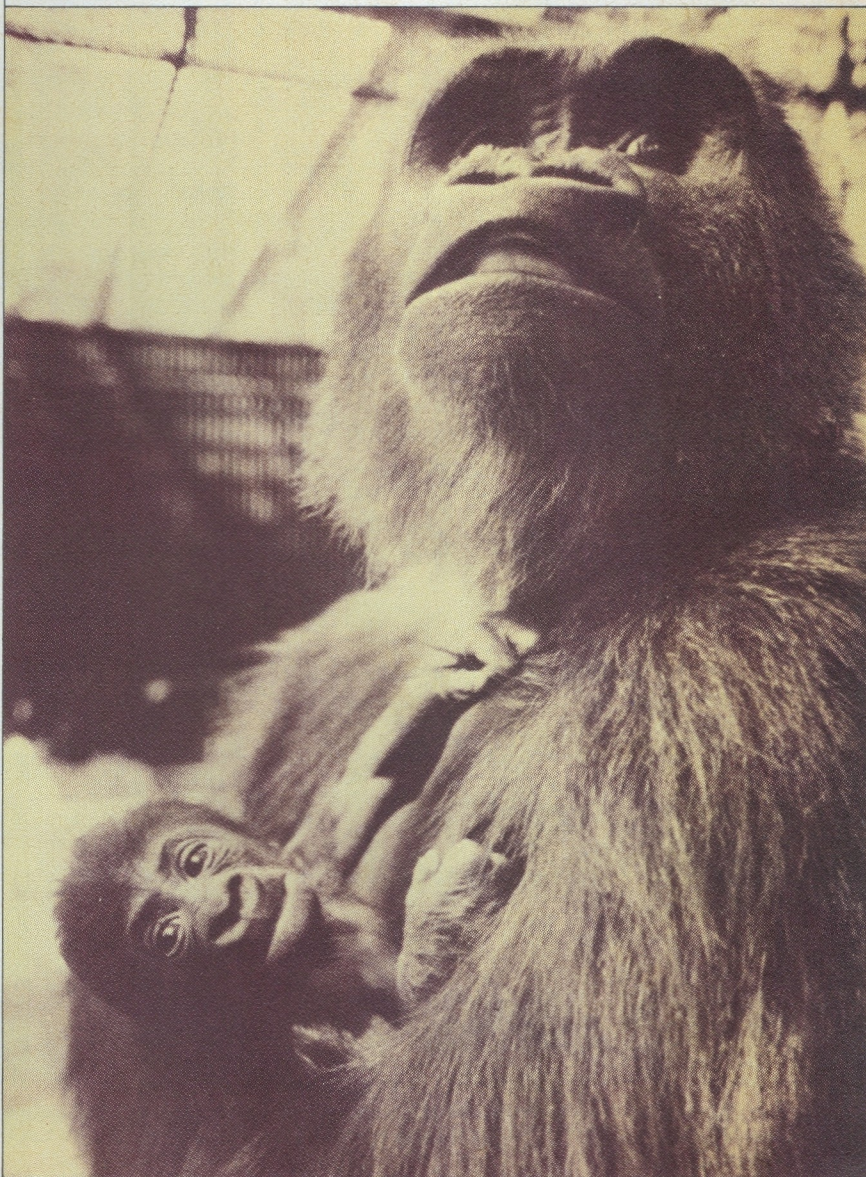
But the movies and TV show have kept their viewers' sensitivities in mind. The apes' intelligence falls far short of the astronauts'. And, of course, far short of the TV audience's.

And when you come right down to it, the TV show is really played more for adventure than for anything else. As Ron Harper points out, it's certainly not heavy science fiction.

"We had Pete Irwin, one of the Apollo astronauts, on the set one day," says Ron. "I was doing a scene where I took a magnetic disk out of the spaceship and explained that we might find a pocket of technology where we could run the disk through a computer and go back in time. Afterwards, I went over to Colonel Irwin and asked 'Does what I'm doing make any scientific sense?' And he said 'You're in big trouble!'"

In truth, *Planet's* format is a familiar one. There are two heroes, one blond, one dark, with totally different personalities. They make wisecracks and play off each other until crisis, always just around the corner, strikes. Then they heroically pull together and manage — just barely — to come out on top. In the tradition of classic good guys like the Lone Ranger, they also have a loyal sidekick from the enemy camp. There's just one special twist — Tonto was an Indian; Galen is an ape. ★

CHIMPS, ORANGUTANS & GORILLAS— JUST HOW MUCH ARE THEY LIKE PEOPLE?



New York Times: Lee Romero

WHO ARE APES ANYWAY?

What makes science fiction so fascinating? Well, good sci-fi always contains a certain amount of fact. And it's that kernel of fact that makes a reader think—maybe, just maybe, the story could be true.

So what about *Planet of the Apes*? Is it all a bunch of nonsense? Or do apes and humans share enough in common even now to make you wonder? Are simians and men enough alike to make you believe that if apes had thousands of more years to evolve, some time in the future they *could* rule the Earth?

It's hard to say. But there's no harm in a little educated guessing. So SMASH presents a barrelful of ape-facts to help you monkey around with the idea.

Chimps are more like us than any of the other apes are. They have the same blood substances, the same facial expressions, the same outgoing personalities. They are also considered the most intelligent of all the apes. This probably explains why Galen, the astronauts' sympathetic friend in TV's *Planet*, is a chimpanzee.

It's possible that orangutans are just as intelligent as chimps, but they are too shy for experts to know for sure. Still, they have done some remarkable things. An orangutan in New York's Central Park Zoo used his trapeze as a tool to press open the bars of his cage. And another in a travelling cage supposedly picked up a workman's wrench and began to unscrew the bars.

To the human eye, orangutans look hilarious. They have bright brown skin and screaming orange hair that looks as though it came out of a bottle. Somehow, they manage to look like foolish satires of the ape population. It may be for this reason that the orangutans in *Planet* are the silliest and most pompous of the apes. They, more than the gorillas and the chimps, parody pompous, silly people.

Gorillas, on the other hand, have been done dirt. King Kong had already set their cause back about 2 zillion years when *Planet*, seizing on their hulking mass and brooding looks, made them the thugs in the show. In truth, gorillas are gentle vegetarians who, outside of zoos, show concern for their old and their sick. They are peaceful, mild-mannered, and really very shy.

PHYSICAL FACTS

Apes and men are separated from other animals by one very special fea-

ture: their thumbs operate independently of their other fingers so that they can grasp objects, hurl them, and fashion them into tools. This unique characteristic is called an "opposable thumb." Apes and humans also have opposable big toes that serve the same function.

To this day, apes are able to use their feet with almost as much skill as we use our hands. But as man has come to depend on his feet for walking and very little else, his gift of opposable toes seems to be fading. Some humans can use their toes like fingers and pick up objects, even draw with them. But most of us find our feet are merging into one solid lump of flesh.

The apes in Pierre Boulle's book seize upon this fact to explain how they've advanced so far. After all, they declare, they have four "hands" and therefore have an edge over man. It's not an unreasonable argument.

There is no sharp contrast between the bodily forms of men and apes. But three major things separate us: man, in proportion to his size, has much longer legs, longer, broader thumbs, and a much larger brain. Therefore, we can walk upright, use our hands with greater precision than apes, and constantly expand our knowledge and understanding.

TWO GREAT APE STORIES

Holy Molar

One special thing about apes is the constant attention they give to grooming each other. All apes spend many hours parting one another's fur to search and destroy bugs, dirt and lice that lurk within.

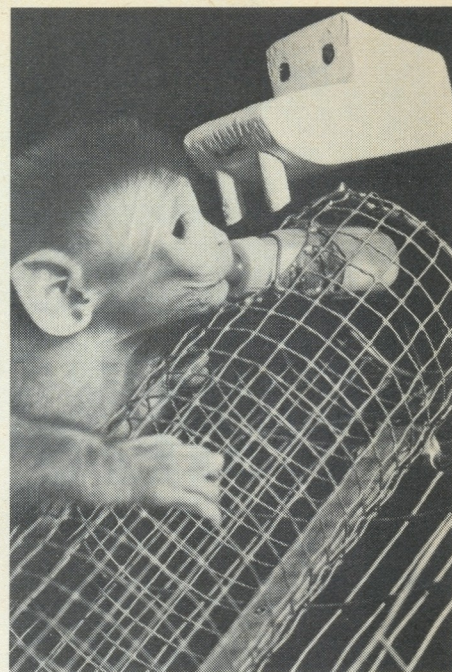
But a female chimp named Belle took the grooming process farther. When a young chimp named Bandit was losing his baby teeth, Belle opened his mouth and used her fingers to remove the food that was stuck between them. Then she shaped tools out of twigs and extracted one of Bandit's loose teeth.

Reflection Inspection

When they're about 10 months old, babies begin to recognize themselves in mirrors. But when most animals look in mirrors, they react as though they're seeing another animal.

Apes are different. Four young chimps were placed in separate cages with a mirror as each one's sole companion. For the first two days, each responded as though it saw another chimp. But by the third day, the little apes were using the mirrors just as humans do — getting a good look at themselves and inspecting parts they couldn't otherwise see.

TOUCHY TESTING



Because apes and monkeys are so similar to humans, they are constantly used in experiments. The hope is that these monkey trials will tell us more about ourselves.

One famous series of experiments used monkeys to explore the nature of human love. As part of the test, infant monkeys were separated from their mothers and brought up in isolation. These 'deprived' monkeys became completely anti-social and were unable to mate when they grew up.

Other baby monkeys were given mechanical mother substitutes. Although these mothers had warm cloth covers, they were designed to torture the infants by inflicting pain. As hideous as these 'mothers' were, the baby monkeys still clung to them as their only source of comfort.

The tests told us a lot about love. But many of them put the monkeys through unnatural and gruesome experiences.

One of the most horrifying chapters in *Planet of the Apes* deals with similar laboratory tests — except, of course, the subjects are humans. The apes justify the tests just as we do. They use them to learn more about their own society, to cure diseases, to invent new surgical techniques.

Should we experiment on animals? One could argue either way. What do you think? Send your ideas to SMASH and we'll try to print as many of your letters as we can. ★

Send your letters to SMASH
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