

Homicide or humanity: What makes humans human?

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

What a piece of work is man! Everyone agrees on that much. But what exactly is it about *Homo sapiens* that makes us unique among animals, let alone apes, and when and how did our ancestors acquire that certain something? The past century has seen a profusion of theories.

We're Killers:

According to anthropologist Raymond Dart, our predecessors differed from living apes in being confirmed killers—carnivorous creatures that “seized living quarries by violence, battered them to death, tore apart their broken bodies, dismembered them limb from limb, slaking their ravenous thirst with the hot blood of victims and greedily devouring livid writhing flesh.” It may read like pulp fiction now, but after the horrific carnage of the Second World War, Dart’s 1953 [article](#) outlining his “killer ape” theory struck a chord.

We Share Food:

In the 1960s, the killer ape gave way to the hippie ape. Anthropologist [Glynn Isaac](#) unearthed evidence of animal carcasses that had been purposefully moved from the sites of their deaths to locations where, presumably, the meat could be shared with the whole commune. As Isaac saw it, food sharing led to the need to share information about where food could be found—and thus to the development of language and other distinctively human social behaviors.

Read full, original post: [12 Theories of How We Became Human, and Why They're All Wrong](#)