

Early dog: Cro-Magnon's best friend

There are those who argue that the domestication of dogs is little more than a vehicle by which modern-day humans express their own neuroses. However, now comes evidence that the person-dog relationship — even if it does include foisting one's hangups upon Fido — began well before the concept of neurosis was even a twinkle in Freud's unconscious.

Indeed, the only thoughts of dog-lovers at that time probably centered on hunting for food and finding adequate shelter. There is reason to believe that as long as 12,000 years ago humans chose to domesticate, rather than hunt, the dog. Recent finds at two sites in Israel yield "concrete evidence for some kind of special relationship, perhaps domestication, between man and dog/wolf... around 12,000 BP," say researchers Simon J. M. Davis of the Hebrew University and Francois R. Valla of the Centre de Recherches Préhistoriques in Jerusalem.

The primary evidence, reported in the Dec. 7 NATURE, was uncovered in the remains of a stone dwelling at the Mallaha site in northern Israel, where the Epipalaeolithic culture of the Natufian lived 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. Found there was a human skeleton, flexed on its right side, with its hand upon what the researchers have determined to be the remains of a three- to five-month-old puppy. Various analyses of these fossils, plus others found at the terrace of Hayonim in western Galilee, indicate — although not positively — that they are those of dogs, "rather than small wolves," say the researchers.



Dwelling at the Mallaha site in Israel's upper Jordan Valley shows a human skeleton with its left hand clutching the remains of a puppy (upper left, next to skull).

These findings — particularly at Mallaha — "support evidence... for interaction between man and canids in the Epipalaeolithic," the researchers conclude. "The puppy, unique among Natufian burials, offers proof that an affectionate rather than gastronomic relationship existed between it and the buried person." They add that it also appears that members of the ancient culture may even have selectively bred their dogs. □

Sex in Cleveland: 'Retreat into Silence'

As if Cleveland residents didn't have enough problems already, parents in that city appear to be having a difficult time adjusting to the nation's changing sexual attitudes and practices. Actually, the 1,461 Cleveland parents sampled in a newly released report by the Project on Human Sexual Development, based at Harvard University, could be representative of any "large, urban community... not on the often-sampled east or west coast," according to project researchers.

The 11-month, \$200,000 survey examined parents with a wide range of religious, social, educational and financial backgrounds. The 500-page report paints a complex picture of mothers and fathers who are somewhat confused about their sexual feelings.

"Today's parents are struggling to reconcile new realities and new attitudes with the messages they received while growing up," says the project's executive director, Elizabeth J. Roberts. "Although our study shows little behavior change [as compared with the previous generation of

parents], many attitudes are changing and parents are questioning their own sexual values," she says. "The parents we interviewed are in transition and as a result are uncertain, confused, and still cannot talk about sexuality with their own children."

"As a result, despite the strong desire of mothers and fathers to provide for their children's sexual education," she says, "Cleveland parents still retreat into silence."

While parents say they want their children to know about erotic activity by the time they are teenagers, less than 12 percent — less than 15 percent of the mothers and 8 percent of the fathers — have ever talked with their children about premarital sex, intercourse, venereal disease or contraception. Other findings in the study point to the disparity between parents' attitudes and actions. They include:

- Although almost half the parents now believe that running the house and caring for the children should not be solely the woman's responsibility, the mothers are still responsible for all or most house and

child care.

- They rank marriage and children highest on their list of life satisfactions, but most now believe their children need not marry or have children.

- Almost half the parents no longer believe that men and women should have different roles in life but "find it difficult to act in accordance with this belief." Forty percent of the mothers hold jobs of any kind, compared with 95 percent of the fathers.

- Fathers do not usually talk about sexuality with their children. When discussions take place, the mothers provide the sex education for both sons and daughters.

- Parents are more tolerant about erotic conduct by their sons than their daughters.

"Many parents say they are 'waiting' for their child to ask questions," says Roberts. "But as they wait, the child may be learning not to ask. When parents do talk with their children about sexual issues, it is only about issues the child raises, usually 'easier' topics (such as pregnancy and birth, marriage and divorce or the physical differences between men and women). Parents' responses are usually brief, simplistic and discourage further discussion." □

Science and China

The People's Republic of China feels it must drum up support and an appreciation for science and technology at the grassroots level if its ambitious modernization goals (SN: 6/3/78, p. 358) are to be achieved, according to William D. Carey, executive director of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was among 12 AAAS board members who just returned from three weeks in China at the invitation of its scientific and technical community. Before leaving, AAAS and Chinese officials signed a cooperative agreement. The thrust of that cooperation will be an exchange of lecturers and assistance by the AAAS in China's efforts to popularize science and to upgrade its long-neglected technical libraries and laboratories.

China's modernization drive follows on the heels of a campaign to deemphasize science and technology that lasted for more than a decade. Carey said propaganda during that period accused technical training of building an elite cadre in contradiction to China's proletarian goal. Its new leaders seek to reverse that attitude, and may even send over a special delegation next year to study strategies for popularizing science, Carey told reporters Tuesday. Along that line, he said they have discussed meeting with and inviting science writers to China.

A separate Chinese delegation will come over to confer with the AAAS and our science-related agencies around June. □