



## BOOK LAUNCH

23 February 2010

Daunt Books

158-164 Fulham Rd London

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

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[www.theapeofsorrows.com](http://www.theapeofsorrows.com)

**WHAT kind of species goes in for collective suicide?  
 Have our powers of self-invention to date been deeply misconceived?  
 Periods of decline usually contain the seeds of renewal.  
 What will it take for us to survive?**

"The only measure we have of any animal's intelligence is whether it leaves its habitat enhanced or depleted, and by this measure the human is the least intelligent of all creatures. "

The Ape of Sorrows examines human behaviour through the simple but powerful rubric of animal intelligence, presenting a new view of humans as a magnificent, if misguided species which lost its way as it evolved beyond its niche to be niche-less, and separate, from all other non-linguistic animal life.

The Ape of Sorrows opens with a gripping retelling of the monkey brawl at London Zoo in the 1930s. It goes on to examine the history of our relationship with animals, and the development of our scientific, cultural and religious thought and practice through the millennia - the story that has brought us to this point of extreme instability in the 21st century.

Author, philosopher and historian, Maurice Rowdon brings a personal philosophical view to bear on our present state, offering an explanation as to how and why we are apparently so tragically committed to the destruction of this planet, our evolutionary mutations revealing a hard-pressed creature who seems to have had no other course.

The Ape of Sorrows is the culmination of 15 years of dedicated thought completed in the months before the visionary author's death in February 2009.

**BIOGRAPHY:** *Maurice Rowdon (1922-2009) earned degrees in History and Philosophy at Oxford University and published twelve books on animal and human intelligence, travel, and war. A writer of fiction and non-fiction as well as a prolific playwright, he also taught his own breathing system, evolved from yoga practices, in California and Europe. In the latter years he lived with his wife, Dachiell, who survives him, in France and London.*

**NOTE:** MAURICE ROWDON wrote twelve books on human and animal intelligence, and with great prescience on the shape of human culture, past, present and future.

➤ **Of Talking Dogs**, 1978:

"one of the most remarkable animal books ever written"; Evening News

➤ **In Italian Sketches**, 1963:

he casually wrote that cars would eventually be banned from city centres and politics in the future would be determined by environmental issues

➤ **Of Perimeter West**, 1956 (before the construction of The Wall in 1961)

"the most important novel to come to us out of England since 1945"; Welt und Wort

**FRONT COVER:** Lucian Freud, "Small Portrait 2001"

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