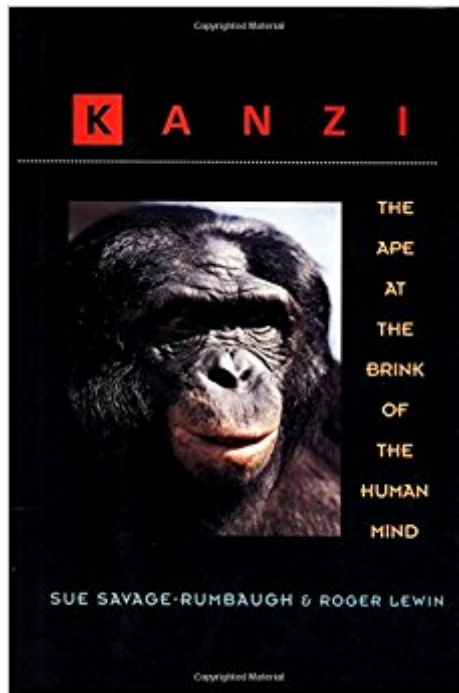


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Kanzi: The Ape At The Brink Of The Human Mind



Synopsis

"Kanzi offers any number of crucial insights into the workings of the mind." — "The New York Times Book Review" The remarkable story of the "talking" ape who is proving animals can think. Though he cannot physically speak, Kanzi understands an impressive amount of spoken English and communicates by punching symbols on a special keyboard. This book tells Kanzi's incredible story and explores its intriguing ramifications. SUE SAVAGE-RUMBAUGH (Decatur, Georgia) is one of the world's leading ape-language researchers. ROGER LEWIN (Cambridge, Massachusetts) is the author of 12 books, including co-authorship of the best-selling *Origins* with Richard Leakey.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sue Savage-Rumbaugh (born 1946) is a primatologist most famous for her work with two bonobos, Kanzi and Mulika, investigating their apparent use of "Great Ape language" using lexigrams and computer-based keyboards. She is also the co-author of *Apes, Language, and the Human Mind*. In this 1994 book, she and science writer Roger Lewin have summarized her research at teaching chimpanzees to use a specially-designed keyboard to communicate with trainers. She writes of her early concerns, "This absence of full comprehension in language-trained apes was, I felt strongly, a more fundamental criticism of ape-language research than the absence of syntax, as demonstrated by Terrace. Cooperative comprehension is fundamental to language, and two-way communication that does not reflect comprehension is not language, no matter what other attributes it may

possess."She details her reaction to an attack on such ape language work by behaviorists such as B.F. Skinner, who "explained that, although the sequence of events might look like 'sustained and natural conversation,' it was in fact the result of strict conditioning procedures." She writes, "One issue that undoubtedly had provoked the behaviorists' attack was my conclusion that Sherman and Austin were exhibiting conscious intentionality during their communication--a clear red flag to those who believe behavior should simply be viewed as responses to external stimuli. As a result I became labeled a cognitive psychologist."She writes that "Kanzi was clearly doing this (i.e., comprehending language).

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