

**Sex and Friendship in Baboons.**

Barbara Boardman Smuts. 1985. New York: Aldine de Gruyter. xvi + 303 pp. ISBN 0-202-02027-4. Hardbound. \$34.95.

As intelligent animals living in relatively large social units where close contact with many individuals increases tensions and competition for rank, baboons use 'friendships' with members of the opposite sex to their 'political' and reproductive advantage. Most of these interactions are nonsexual because females are not interested in sex except for a brief period between infants. Sex is, however, not the only attraction between male and female and these relatively brainy primates require more than simply sex, food, and security from predators to lead a successful life. Politics and non-sexual friendships are not a unique trait of humans.

Daily life for baboons is as routine as it is for humans. Although important social events are infrequent, daily behavior builds up one's expected success during successive days and months. It is this less well studied but yet essential aspect of baboon behavior that Barbara Smuts approaches from an evolutionary perspective. The theoretical framework of Darwinian natural selection with the currency of genetic success as the criterion for fitness does not dominate the book but subtly underlies the observations of normal life in a baboon troop.

The book concludes with a comparative discussion that focuses on human behavior. Human-style social behavior may be far older than we suspect and thus as a cause for our uniqueness fades away as primates gain in 'humanity'. As Smuts concludes, our species may learn something to our benefit by studying other primates from our perspective. At least we may finally discover what some extra brain cells have contributed to our undoubted uniqueness. Because baboons have been interacting in crowded groups far longer than has our own species, their solutions to social problems may be revealing.

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**Foundations of Comparative Ethology.**

Edited by Gordon M. Burghardt. 1986 (stated 1985 in book). Van Nostrand Reinhold. xix + 439 pp. ISBN 0-442-21061-2. Hardbound. \$48.50.

A facsimile collection of previously published papers compiled and commented on by the editor. Like other "Benchmark"-like publications, this book illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of this publication strategy. The strength lies in weaving together historically important papers on a topic (some of which are not available in many libraries or which have not before been translated into English) with commentary relating them to the current state of the field. Burghardt does a commendable job in exploring the work that stemmed from Darwin's seminal work in animal behavior to the beginning of the modern synthesis with Lorenz's early work. Although particularly useful to researchers, instructors and students at places with limited libraries, these volumes are typically prohibitively expensive. They are available only as hardbound books with considerable blank spots on pages because of the constraints of facsimile printing. With increasingly cheaper and more available photocopying and interlibrary loan services, these books provide a model for a useful class exercise in an advanced class in an area: have the students compile such a collection of papers that were historically important in the development of the field. Of particular interest would be how much overlap there appeared in articles chosen and the reasons for the selections.

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