



## BOOK REVIEW

**The Nonhuman Primates.** Edited by Phyllis Dolhinow and Agustin Fuentes, Mayfield Publishing Company, Mountain View, California, 1999, xii + 340 pp., \$ 28.95 (paperback)

**Essentials of Animal Behaviour.** By P. J. B. Slater, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 1999, x + 233 pp., \$54.95 (hardback), \$19.95 (paperback)

Dario Maestriperi<sup>1</sup>

Although many monographs and edited volumes on primate behavior have been published in the past, instructors and students have been uncomfortable using them as textbooks for various reasons, ranging from their excessive length to the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the information contained. *The Nonhuman Primates* is a new volume edited by P. Dolhinow and A. Fuentes that is mostly targeted to an undergraduate audience. Similar to *Primate Societies* (Smuts *et al.*, 1987), *The Nonhuman Primates* is structured in two parts. Part 1 offers an overview of all the major taxonomic groups, whereas part 2 is focused on selected primate behavioral topics. Several chapters in part 1, including those on the apes, macaques, atelines, and prosimians, offer a concise but also comprehensive and updated review of the literature. However, some important taxonomic groups such as the baboons were left out of part 1, and some chapters focus on a single species or topic rather than cover an entire taxonomic group. Part 2 is weaker than part 1 in terms of both the homogeneity of the material and its average quality. Instead of providing a traditional overview of topics such as foraging, aggression, mating, or communication, part 2 is a mix of chapters discussing general concepts such as dominance or kinship and chapters

<sup>1</sup>Committee on Human Development, The University of Chicago, 5730 South Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637.

focused on specific topics such as the history of primatology, primate aging, infanticide, or ape language research. Some of the chapters in part 2 contain new and interesting material, whereas others are outdated and/or narrowly reflect the authors' personal interests and opinions.

When compared to *Primate Societies*, the main advantages of *The Nonhuman Primates* are that it contains some recent information, is shorter and easier to read, and also provides information about the mechanisms regulating primate behavior rather than just its adaptive value. For example, whereas *Primate Societies* carefully avoided any discussion of physiological variables, *The Nonhuman Primates* offers some informative and entertaining chapters on the digestive processes in the colobines, the energy expenditure in the Callithricidae, and the physiology of male reproductive strategies in macaques and baboons. The main problem with using *The Nonhuman Primates* as a textbook is that students will learn something interesting about these specific topics but may come away without knowing much about primate grooming, mating, communication, or parenting behavior. Similar to other previous books on primate behavior, *The Nonhuman Primates* can be useful for teaching but must be integrated with other reading materials.

*Essentials of Animal Behaviour* is a revised edition of Slater's earlier book entitled *An Introduction to Ethology* (1987). In the preface of the new edition, Slater justifies the change of title with the observation that the word *ethology* to describe the study of animal behavior has fallen from use. Although the book has a new title, its content is still quite old and does not accurately reflect the changes in perspective that have accompanied the study of animal behavior in recent years. The book has a structure similar to that of early ethology textbooks, with three initial chapters on motor patterns, sensory systems, and motivation followed by three chapters on the development, evolution, and function of behavior. It ends with a chapter on communication and one on social organization, which even includes a one-page discussion of human behavior(!). Clearly, the aim of the book is to provide undergraduate students with a concise (<250-page) overview of the main concepts, methods, and empirical findings of animal behavioral research. Most of the concepts and examples discussed, however, are taken from the early years of animal behavioral research, and therefore *Essentials of Animal Behaviour* reads more like a history book than an updated textbook. With little extra effort, undergraduate students can acquire the information contained in Slater's book from the introductory chapters of *Perspectives on Animal Behavior* (Goodenough *et al.*, 1993), and then proceed to learn about the brain, endocrine system, biological clocks, orientation and migration, sexual selection and sexual behavior, parental care and mating systems, and many other interesting topics from the rest of the book.

## REFERENCES

- Goodenough, J., McGuire, B., and Wallace, R. (1993). *Perspectives on Animal Behavior*. New York: John Wiley.
- Smuts, B. B., Cheney, D. L., Seyfarth, R. M., Wrangham, R. W., and Struhsaker, T. T. (eds.) (1987). *Primate Societies*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.