



BEHAVIOR

PRIMATE PSYCHOLOGY.

Edited by Dario Maestripieri. Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press. \$65.00. xi + 619 p. ill.; index. ISBN: 0-674-01152-X. 2003.

This book has 16 chapters, each focusing on a fundamental aspect of primate social behavior (aggression, conflict resolution, sexuality, attachment, parenting, social development and affiliation, personality, emotions and behavioral flexibility, and psychopathology), communication (nonvocal communication, nonlinguistic vocal communication, and language), and cognition (cognitive development, social cognition, and brain substrates for communication, cognition, and handedness).

Maestripieri's first chapter is enlightening and persuasive. The brilliant Italian primatologist from the University of Chicago reviews the many ways in which human psychology and primatology have in the past crossed each other's paths. As first proposed by Darwin, humans and other primates share in their common evolutionary origin, so "[s]tudying the mind and behavior of nonhuman primates can potentially enhance our understanding of the proximate regulation and adaptive value of many human mental and behavioral processes. The converse is also true: the human species can provide a good model with which to study the mind and behavior of our closest relatives" (p 5). *Primate Psychology* succeeded in this task: it provides an updated source of information (although mostly restricted to the relatively few species extensively studied in the laboratory), and it will help primatology as well as psychology students to exercise in scientifically grounded comparisons between human and nonhuman primates. Some chapters, such as the one by Bering and Povinelli, are a testimony to the hot, ongoing controversies on topics (such as perspective taking and other social cognitive skills) that can be differently interpreted using representational or cue-based explanations.

Despite its merit, the book has some weak points.

A few chapters fail in the original aim of providing an overview of primate behavior. For example, Owren et al.'s discussion would have benefitted from a wider examination of the research on vocal communication in nonhuman primates. The chapter by Higley did a good job of reviewing the role of serotonin and testosterone on aggression, but there is no mention of the effects of other neurochemicals and hormones. Also, the scarce number of illustrations and graphs in some chapters is unfortunate.

ELISABETTA VISALBERGHI, *Istituto di Scienze e Tecnologie della Cognizione, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Roma, Italia* and PIERFRANCESCO FERRARI, *Neuroscienze, Università di Parma, Parma, Italia*