ISHE MEMBERS MOURN LINDA MEALEY'S PASSING

The cloud that hung over the ISHE meeting in Montreal has not disappeared. Our wonderful friend and colleague, Linda Mealey, passed away on November 5, 2002. She would have been 47 on December 17th.

Linda combined the best of everything that made a true scholar. She was smart, insightful and creative. She called it as she saw it, but kept her comments on the level of scholarly criticism. She was also a dedicated teacher who cared a great deal about attracting new students and young investigators to our organization.

Linda was not in Montreal, but her presence was strongly felt. Unable to deliver her twin study of facial asymmetry and parental favoritism, she faxed copies of notes and handouts to me – she did so several times when it turned out that pages were missing. She worried about the business meeting and managed to make important materials available. I spent several sessions exchanging e-mails with her from the Internet cafe across from the hotel - we mostly discussed ISHE.

Above all, Linda was my good friend and I know that ISHE meetings will not be half as much fun for me without her. But I smile thinking of the time that I knew her.

- Nancy Segal

While serving as ISHE President, Linda undertook many additional responsibilities. She was a Councillor of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society, and chaired the Aaron Beck Award Committee of the Across-Species Comparisons and Psychopathology Society. I think it helped ISHE to have Linda active in these sibling societies. While undertaking these administrative duties, she has kept up her scholarship and extensive teaching. As is her style, she has published studies on a wide range of topics in top journals, and usually with her undergraduates as coauthors. She has also published an impressive number of letters, book reviews, encyclopedia entries, and journal commentaries, again illustrating her dependability and dedication. The previous issue of the Bulletin carries a typically clear, careful and informative book review by Linda. Before being President, Linda served very ably for five years as Book Review Editor of the
Bulletin, which I was editing then. She wrote reviews, solicited them, and, as you can imagine, dogged those who had agreed to submit them but were dilatory.

Some momentous events in the history of ISHE took place during Linda's tenure. The European Sociobiological Society merged with ISHE. Successful congresses were held in Salamanca and Montreal. And the Owen Aldis bequest was offered.

It was this last event that entailed a tremendous amount of work and worry for Linda. As explained to me by a tax lawyer, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service is afraid of granting tax-exempt status to any organization that might shift money to terrorists, so it now imposes onerous requirements on organizations applying for such status. As a result, Linda expended untold hours of labor trying to understand the arcane legal requirements and to satisfy tax agents with little understanding of scientific societies. Her labors and persistence proved fruitful. ISHE now has secured tax-exempt status and the bequest will be received intact. The Society and human ethology will reap the benefits of her work for the indefinite future.

Linda was more than just the president of our society, fulfilling presidential duties. She took a real personal interest in the people who made up the society, and worked tirelessly to recruit new members. She was a terrific colleague who made ISHE such a wonderful academic home for people interested in human ethology. We will all miss her dearly.

- Glenn Weisfeld

In honor of Linda's dedicated service to the Society, the Board of Officers has voted unanimously to name our biennial Young Investigator Award, the Linda Mealey Award. The award was something very valuable in her eyes, and she worked very hard to publicize it, manage it, and keep the contest open and fair.
Society News

Since August Peter LaFreniere has been acting as Interim ISHE President in addition to his role as Bulletin Editor. A major portion of this role involved working out the details of the Aldis bequest and the resulting implications. We currently anticipate receiving the bequest possibly as soon as December 2002 or early in 2003. A number of tasks have been accomplished since the Montreal meeting so that ISHE is in position to accept receipt of these funds, including the following:

1. Revise Article 16 (that establishes a Board of Trustees)
2. Select an investment fund manager
3. Articulate an investment policy
4. Articulate a spending policy
5. Select a slate of candidates for election to the Board of Trustees

All of these points are discussed in sequence below:

After extensive discussion in Montreal in Board Meetings and with input from members at the General Assembly (as reported in HEB, September 2002) officers worked to revise Article 16 and have now voted unanimously (with one abstention) to adopt the following amendment to the ISHE by-laws:

Article 16

Section 1: A Board of Trustees shall be established to:

(a) designate for the Society, a paid financial advisor and a tax accountant:

(b) determine the Society’s fiscal and investment policy in consultation with the financial advisor;

(c) in consultation with the financial advisor and Board of Officers, allocate to the Treasurer, a biennial budget including a salary for the Bulletin Editor and sufficient funds to cover operating expenses and reimbursements;

(d) design and publish guidelines for funding of scholarships, fellowships, conferences, and other relevant projects;

(e) review applications and proposals submitted by the Board of Officers for major non-operating expenditures such as scholarship and fellowship opportunities, projects for commission, and the hiring of full- or part-time temporary staff.

Section 2: The Board of Trustees shall be composed of 6 members, including:

(a) A maximum of 4 Society Past-Presidents (if there are more than 4 past-presidents willing to serve the most recent 4 past-presidents shall be appointed to the board);

(b) At least one individual elected from the membership for a maximum term of 4 years at the General Assembly by all eligible voters, or by Bulletin mail ballot.

(c) appointed financial advisor to serve as non-voting member of the board.

Note: additional elected members are needed when there are less than 4 past-presidents who are willing and able to serve on the board.

With the arrival of a new past-president board member, the most senior of the elected members may be asked to step down before the completion of their term. This acts to insure that there will always be only 5 voting members of the board, including at least one individual elected from the membership. Current ISHE officers are not eligible for board membership in order to maintain a separation of function and a system of checks and balances.

Section 3: The Board of Trustees shall conduct its ongoing business by mail, email, telephone, or FAX, and shall meet at a minimum of once very two years at the biennial ISHE conference for votes, as described in Article 10, Section 5.

Section 4: Trustees shall have expenses paid (travel and accommodations) to attend Board meetings, and other necessary costs (e.g. fax, phone bills).

-adopted November 12, 2002
2. Selection of an investment fund manager

Having examined (and rejected) a number of mutual fund managers, LaFreniere recommended 3 options and officers selected TIAA-CREF, a very large scale, not-for-profit firm that specializes in serving educational and scientific not-for-profit societies like ISHE. The reasons for this are straightforward:

a. They have assets that are measured in hundreds of billions providing an economy of scale and vast array of investment options.

b. As a nonprofit, their fee structures are well below average for the services we require.

c. They offer a portfolio manager who is accessible to ISHE anywhere in the US. This expert can provide us with a flexible, diversified asset allocation strategy that is designed to meet our investment goals and minimize any risks. This would be tailored to fit our spending strategy.

3. ISHE investment policy

We currently envision a conservative investment strategy that will be articulated in consultation with our appointed financial advisor. This would likely include a diversified portfolio containing bonds, money market, and foreign and domestic equities. On a down year in the stock market (like we have been seeing recently) we would expect slight profits (2%), rather than net losses. In an average year we could expect profits of 6-8%; in a good year we might exceed 10-12%. We would stabilize spending allocations by averaging across years.

4. ISHE spending policy

ISHE currently spends approximately $20,000 annually, mostly on our quarterly bulletin ($5000/yr) and biennial conference ($25,000/evvery 2 years) plus additional expenses. As of June 2002, the Treasurer reported a balance of $13,277.

We expect that in 2003 we would begin spending at least double the current annual expenditure. Additional expenses will include an upgraded bulletin and research scholarships to advanced students and possibly new investigators, as well as other academic and scientific expenses that would increase the visibility of the Society and attract new members. The first spending initiative will be the establishment of the Owen Aldis Research Fellowship. After one year we expect to increase spending gradually to match income received from our investment fund, which we anticipate to be approximately 1.5 million dollars.

5. Candidates for election to the Board of Trustees

Senior ISHE members were nominated by various officers to serve on the board. All of the following members have a long history of active participation in ISHE.

**BALLOT FOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES ELECTIONS**

Please vote for a maximum of two candidates

- THOMAS ALLEY
- JOHN RICHER
- RUSSELL GARDNER
- CAROL WEISFELD
- Write In: ____________________________

Send vote by mail or e-mail to:

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BOOK REVIEWS

Comparative Primate Socioecology


Reviewed by Marina Butovskaya, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Leninsky Prosp. 32a, 117334, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: butovsk@orc.ru

An important task of contemporary evolutionary anthropology is to disclose continuity between primate social structures and human social institutions such as systems for transferring social information, systems of kinship, marriage, and social stratification (Butovskaya, 1999; Cronk, 1999; Low, 1999). Primatology now has one of the leading positions in the development and testing of socioecological paradigms, and there is no surprise that a book entitled Comparative Primate Socioecology would be of great interest for a broad range of specialists, evolutionary anthropologists, human ethologists, psychologists.

The book is organized in three parts and includes 15 chapters and the editor’s conclusion. According to their own professional interests, the contributors focus on various domains: Part 1, Comparative methods (Maclarnon, Robson-Brown, Purvis, & Webster); Part 2, Comparative life history and biology (Roos & Jones; Lee; Blurton Jones, Hawkes & O’Connell; Barton; van Schaik, van Noordwijk & Nunn; Plavcan); and Part 3, Comparative socioecology and social evolution (Kappeler; Strier; Williamson & Dunbar; Bean; Foley; Mace & Holden).

From the very first pages the book captured my attention. The readings went smoothly from one chapter to another, advocating new ideas and hypotheses in socioecology. I will give more details on those chapters that are closest to my own scientific interests.

Part 1 demonstrates the recent success in development of comparative analysis and addresses the problems of phylogenetic constraints on ecological and behavioural diversification. Some explanations for the high stability of certain traits in taxa regardless of contemporary environment are provided. In Chapter 1, Ann Maclarnon demonstrates the power of the comparative method in primate socioecology. Chapter 2, by Kate Robson-Brown raises the question of statistical dependency in the analysis of shared features in closely related species descended from a common ancestor. The main benefits of an historical approach to comparative analysis using the sleeping traits as an illustration are demonstrated.

Part 2, “Comparative life history and biology”, is really profound. It consists of six chapters that focus reproduction, growth and energetic requirements in nonhuman primates and modern humans. Caroline Ross and Kate Jones (Chapter 4) address factors promoting the rate of population increase (age of first and last reproduction, and birth rate). Authors provide exhaustive information on reproductive rates (adult body weight, interbirth interval, birth rate, age at weaning, maximum life span, etc.) and diet in 100 nonhuman primate species and mortality rates in 25 species. The authors conclude that communal breeding is one of the most effective strategies to increase reproductive rates. To what an extent this conclusion is relevant to humans can be found in one of the later chapters (see Chapter 6, Blurton-Jones et al.). Chapter 5, “Comparative ecology of postnatal growth and weaning among haplorhine primates”, by Phyllis Lee, may be of great interest to specialists in growth and development. Lee makes the important suggestion that in risky environments a higher birth mass, high growth rate and lower relative weaning weights are expected. Under such conditions mothers would be more inclined to invest in fetal and postnatal growth over a short period of time, and the author concludes that “higher weaning weights are associated with high growth rates, longer lactation period and with slow rates of brain growth during the lactation period”(p.131).

Chapter 6 is written by one of the pioneers of human ethology, Nicolas Blurton-Jones, cultural anthropologist Kristen Hawkes, and archaeologist James O’Connell. The tight connection between the potential helping
opportunities and use of highly productive resources difficult to acquire and process (nuts, tubers) is demonstrated. The list of main critical points raised against the grandmother hypothesis have been thoroughly analyzed and valuable comments in favor of the important role of grandmother helpers in hunter-gatherers are presented. The reader's attention is drawn to a fact that has been rarely mentioned by other scholars: the quite narrow diet breadth among hunters and gatherers. Both Kung and Hudza in Africa and Ache of South America are basically exploiting a relatively small number of plant species (9-10) in comparison, for example, with chimpanzees (43 species for regular use and 41 additional species). Importantly, authors challenge the role of hunting as leading parental investment strategy, and demonstrate that under certain conditions matrilocality could have been more beneficial, than patrilocality.

Chapter 8, by van Schaik et al., is among the most interesting in this section. It provides a thorough review of the modern infanticidal hypothesis and female counter strategies. First, it is evident that male infanticide is not typical in communal breeders like cercopithecoids, cercopithecoids or hominoids. This chapter presents a number of predictions about correlation between sexual strategies and infant care, variations in the length of the mating period, attractivity-enhancing signals and risk of infanticide in non-communal breeders and support these predictions with sound empirical data. Infanticide in most non-human primate species is typically explained as a male reproductive strategy. Obviously, parallels could hardly be made with human infanticide, classified my most scholars as parental manipulation strategies.

Part 3, "Comparative socioecology and social evolution" should be of special interests for students familiar with disputes about the driving forces of sociality and mechanisms of within group cohesion (Clutton-Brock & Harvey, 1977; Dunbar, 1988). Most socioecological studies have been done on Old World primates, and it is not by chance that for nearly three decades an ecological model of female bonding was intensively developed (Wrangham, 1980). With time, more data on other primate taxa accumulated. Some of them are summarized in this section. Readers would greatly benefit from reading Peter Kappeler's chapter that examines Lemur social structure and convergence in primate socioecology, as well as the evolutionary forces behind it. Kappeler suggests that female-female, male-female and male-male social relationships in group-living lemurs are radically different from those of anthropoids. It seems reasonable now that most socioecological theories developed for Old World anthropoids are of limited value for other primate taxa.

In Chapter 13, "Ecology of sex differences in great ape foraging", Allison Bean discusses a possible role of energetic constraints between sexes. Chapter 14, "Hominid behavioural evolution: missing links in comparative primate socioecology", written by Robert Foley will be of special interest to anthropologists. Foley proposes a general picture of comparative hominid socioecology and presents his reconstruction of posture, locomotion, life history, and feeding preferences in different hominid species. Four key points in humans evolution are presented: the origin of bipedal locomotion in Miocene; the shift to meat eating, followed by hominid expansion from Africa in Pleistocene; the start of modern human life history, when typical human-like cognitive and behavioral patterns were established around 300,000 years ago; and finally, the population density becoming a significant global factor during the last 20,000 years.

Chapter 15 by Ruth Mace and Clare Holden "Evolutionary ecology and cross-cultural comparison: The case of matrilineal descent in sub-Saharan Africa" will be of special interest to human ethologists. My impression is that this chapter should be considered in close connection with chapters 4 and 6. Specialists may know that cross-cultural comparison based on formal statistical methods has become unpopular with cultural anthropologists due to the rise of post-
modernist thinking. The data analyses by Mace and Holden are a good move in the direction of overcoming the misunderstandings between behavioural ecology and cultural anthropology. They demonstrate that the occurrence of matrilineal descent systems in sub-Saharan Africa can be understood in adaptive terms. Interestingly, "matrilineality is a strategy that favors the female line, but it arises not because females have 'won' in battle to control resources, but because men do not want to control those resources" (p.403). Matrilinearity is an optimal strategy in those societies where men have fewer opportunities to provide substantial investments in their offspring.

In summary, the book leads the reader to the inevitable conclusion that sociality became an important means of ecological adaptation in primates. The book bridges gaps between evolutionary anthropology, psychology and cultural anthropology. Finally, I think the book as a whole is a tremendous success and will be useful and inspirational for new generations of students in courses on Physical Anthropology, Evolutionary Anthropology, Human Ethology, and Evolutionary Psychology.

References


Marina L. Butovskaya. is Head of the Center of Evolutionary Anthropology, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences and Professor of Anthropology at the Center of Cultural Anthropology, Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow. She is a graduate of the Department of Physical Anthropology, Biological Faculty, Moscow State University in 1982, and received her Ph.D. in Primate Ethology in 1986

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Play and Exploration in Children and Animals


Reviewed by Peter Gray, Department of Psychology, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467. E-mail: grayp@bc.edu

We live in an era in which children's play appears to be less valued by parents, educators, and behavioral researchers than it was in times past. Surveys taken over decades suggest that the present generation of children in North America are afforded less time and opportunity for free play than were past generations (Holmes, 1998); grammar schools in the United States are increasingly eliminating recess or replacing it with structured physical activities (Johnson, 1998); and researchers are devoting less attention to play than they did two or three decades ago.

One measure of the lack of current research interest in play, noted by Power in the book under review, is the almost complete absence of discussion of play in the most recent (1998) edition of the Handbook of Child Psychology. What could be more important to understanding children than understanding their play? Yet, the Handbook, often considered to be the most authoritative review of contemporary research and theory in child psychology, has no chapter on play and contains (according to its index) references to play on only about 15 of its 4,000-plus pages. Most of the references are brief, and related issues, including exploration and
curiosity, are not even mentioned in the index. In contrast, the previous (1983) edition of the Handbook did at least have one full chapter on play. Power’s stated goal in Play and Exploration in Children and Animals (p 2) is “to rekindle an interest in children’s play among child development researchers by offering a comprehensive and current review of the literature, and by demonstrating the value of an evolutionary approach to its understanding.”

The book indeed is a comprehensive and current review of the research literature on the play of infants and young children. Power categorizes the varieties of play discussed in his book into five types: solitary object exploration and play; play fighting; locomotor play; social object/social pretend play; and parent-child play. The first three of these classes are discussed in three pairs of chapters (Chapters 2-7), with the first member of each pair devoted to animal’s play and the second to children’s play. The remaining two classes are each discussed in single long chapters. While Chapters 2-7 occupy 198 pages total, Chapter 8 (on social object and sociodramatic play in children) occupies 80 pages, and Chapter 9 (on parent-child play) occupies 94 pages. Sandwiching these chapters, and completing the book, are a brief introduction (Chapter 1) and conclusion (Chapter 10). The book’s scope is deliberately limited to exclude formal games and play among children beyond the early grammar school years.

The review is evenhanded, unbiased, and largely atheoretical. The focus is on contemporary research, not history or theory. Even the classic works of Karl Groos (1898; 1901), which set the stage for evolutionary analyses of children’s and animal’s play, are ignored in this book. Also not mentioned is Vygotsky’s (1933/1978) fascinating argument that all play involves implicit rules and that through play children practice self-control, which is essential to human existence. In defense of Power’s choice to focus on empirical evidence and pay scant attention to theory, one might argue that theories of play are relatively easy to make up, while real facts about play are hard to find. Power’s basic question, throughout, is “What do we know about play?” not “What ideas have people developed about play?” He does an excellent job of addressing the question, in prose that does justice to the work reviewed and yet is understandable to readers new to the topic.

A reading of the book reveals that we know a good deal about the structure of children’s and animals’ play, but very little about its developmental effects or evolutionary functions. The book contains good descriptions of the varieties of ways in which animals and young children play. Moreover, the comparative approach nicely illustrates continuities between children and the young of other mammals in exploration, object play play fighting, and locomotor play. While other authors (e.g. Symons, 1978; Vygotsky, 1933/1978) have used knowledge about the structure of play to develop arguments about its function, Power avoids this path, referring to it at one point (p 394) as representing the logical fallacy of affirming the consequent. (The statement, “If play has function Y it will have structure X.” does not, according to formal logic, imply that play that has structure X will have function Y.) Instead, throughout the book, Power attempts to find evidence for the functions and effects of play in correlational and experimental research, and he concludes that such evidence is largely lacking.

Many studies, especially in the 1970s, showed positive correlations between qualities of play in children and various desirable social and cognitive “outcomes” in their development. However, as Power repeatedly reminds us, such correlations never provide good evidence for cause and effect. Does a particular type of play promote positive qualities in the child, or do the positive qualities promote the particular type of play, or are they both promoted by some third variable or set of variables? Even correlational studies that examine changes over time cannot truly answer the question of causation. Experimental studies, in which play is somehow manipulated, encouraged, or “trained” in one set of children for comparison with another set, pose other methodological difficulties. As Power points out, close examination of many such studies suggests that what was manipulated may not have truly been play, that the behavioral effect measured may have been fleeting, and that superior performance of the “play” group on outcome measures could well be explained by confounding variables that were part and parcel of the attempt to induce or influence play. Moreover, when such studies show a lack of effect, one can always argue that the play manipulation was paltry compared to play that
occurs in the course of a child's life outside of the experiment. Perhaps the best current evidence for developmental consequences of play is that found in experiments with rats, in which young rats are deprived of interaction with other young rats (but not deprived of interaction with less-playful older rats) during the relatively brief developmental period when their drive for rough-and-tumble play is at a peak. Such studies have revealed clear, persistent social deficits in the play-deprived groups (e.g. van den Berg et al., 1999).

Power has done us a great favor by reviewing, so thoroughly and cautiously, the existing empirical literature on the play of animals and young children. He leaves it up to his readers, however, to decide how the review might be used as a foundation for further study. Power often points out at the end of sections that "more research is needed." Clearly, however, what we need is not just more research, but new conceptions of how to conduct research in this important, fun, but too much-neglected realm of human and mammalian behavior.

References


Associate book review editor Peter Gray has been a Professor of psychology at Boston College since 1972. Peter Gray's textbook Psychology, now in it's 4th edition, has led the trend in academic psychology towards the full integration of psychological, biological, and socio-cultural theory and data.

Erratum

Our apologies to Reviewer J. Anderson Thomson, Jr., M.D. for omitting the by-line for the review of:


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Cooperation among sperm cells?

When sperm cells race to the grand prize of an unfertilized egg, the rule is always "every man for himself" - or so biologists have assumed. But Harry Moore of the University of Sheffield in England reports that the sperm of the European wood mouse actually collaborate, linking together into a cluster to speed the trip to an egg. Traveling in a bundle of hundreds or thousands of cells appears to offer an aerodynamic edge: Moore has shown that sperm swimming together reach an egg almost twice as fast as those that go solo. He and his colleagues also find that certain sperm in each cluster are preprogrammed to sacrifice themselves, giving up their adhesion molecules (which are essential for egg penetration) to help break up the sperm cluster when it approaches an egg. The discovery is the first major evidence of altruism among mammalian sperm, but there may still be competition in the behavior. In female wood mice who mate with more than one partner, for example, the true test may be which animal's sperm can build the better cluster, rather than which one has the fastest individual cells.
New Books


Instructions for Book Review Authors

- Book reviews should usually be less than 1200 words unless the work being reviewed is particularly lengthy or more than one book is being reviewed at one time. Reviews may be considerably shorter if that is appropriate.

- Multiple book reviews should be titled; others generally are not.

- All reviews should include information on price ($US, if available), length (pages), and format (hardback or paperback).

- All reviews may include the publisher's mail, e-mail or web address and must include the book's ISBN.
NEW. Authors should provide a 2-3 sentence description of their relevant background and/or experience. This is in addition to the complete mailing address and email address which are to be placed at the start of the review (see outline below).

- The preferred format is shown on the following page.
- Be sure to provide page numbers for all quotes.
- If possible, please submit reviews electronically via e-mail as an attached file. PC/MS-Word format is preferred.

Book reviews, even if solicited by an editor, are not automatically accepted. If accepted, they are subject to editing by one or more of the editorial staff. Authors will be consulted about any substantive changes.

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English text . . .

II. References


Fred A. Reviewer is Associate Professor of Animal Behavior at the University of Eastern Tasmania. He completed his graduate work in Ethology at the University of Western Australia in 1981. He has studied free-ranging langurs in India, as well as a variety of captive primates.
ISHE Conference Expenditures

Hotel  
$6686.66

Plenary expenses  
$3990.09

Editor’s expenses  
$1430.00

Printing  
$749.30

Banquet  
$3798.96

Gifts  
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III.

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Current Literature

Compiled by Johan van der Dennen


Caron, J.E. (2002) From ethology to aesthetics: Evolution as a theoretical paradigm for research on laughter, humor, and other comic phenomena. Humor - International Journal of Humor Research, 15, 3, 245-281 (no address available)


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Pavelka, M.S.M. (2002) Change versus improvement over time and our place in nature. Current Anthropology, 43, S37-S44 (Univ. Calgary, Dept. Anthropol., 2500 Univ Dr NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4, Canada)


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