
Preface to the Second Edition

'Like a map, a book is the product of not one person but many.'

(Miles Harvey, *The Island of Lost Maps*)

'Success is the sum of a lot of small things correctly done.'

(Fernand Point)

In the fourteen years since the publication of this book, there have been many advances, in the fields of sexology, reproductive physiology, and primatology. I was very pleased, therefore, when Oxford University Press asked me to write a second edition of *Primate Sexuality* for a new generation of students as well as for established scholars. Many postgraduate and post-doctoral researchers have told me that they have found the book to be a valuable work of reference, and a useful guide when designing their own projects, or when preparing manuscripts for publication. The feedback I have received has been most useful in helping me to revise and extend the text.

It is most unlikely that I will undertake any further revision of this book in another 14 years. By that time, at well over 70 years of age, the task of assimilating the enormous and expanding literature on primatology and reproductive biology may well be beyond me. The field must be advanced by younger scientists; and rightly so. Unfortunately, professional opportunities are lim-

ited, and very few younger workers are able to devote themselves to full time research on primate reproductive biology. Indeed, it was never my original intention to specialize in studies of sexual behaviour; I entered the field purely by chance as a young Ph.D. student, more than 40 years ago. Since that time, it has been my good fortune to study a very wide range of primate species, and to work in laboratories, zoos, museum collections, and at field sites around the world. In the process I have made many friends, and accrued a huge storehouse of memories. Some of these memories become more vivid as the years pass. In my mind's eye I can clearly visualize the majestic mountain gorillas of the Virungas National Park, mandrills in Gabon, pottos and talapoin monkeys in the rain-forests of Cameroon, golden monkeys in the Qinling mountains of China, and many others. It has been a privilege to observe such beautiful animals, and I am grateful to the many colleagues, students, and friends who have helped make my own work possible.

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*Is there a fatherless book,
an orphan volume in this world?
A book that is not the descendant
of other books?*

(Carlos Fuentes)

So many books and articles have been written about primates that a few words of explanation are advisable when adding another title to the list. In my defence, it is fair to say that no detailed comparative volume on the subject of primate sexuality has been published until now. This is despite the fact that any complete study of primate reproductive biology must include the subject of sexual behaviour. Information on the sexual lives of prosimians, monkeys, and apes is scattered throughout a vast literature, so that more than 2000 sources have been cited in the present volume. In distilling and reviewing this information, I have kept two objectives in mind. First, I have attempted to construct some picture of how sexual behaviour has been shaped by selective forces during primate evolution. This has involved making comparisons of mating systems and mating tactics, as well as an exploration of copulatory patterns, genitalic morphologies, and sperm competition across the various primate lineages. Second, I have examined the proximate, endocrine, and neurological mechanisms which control the development and integration of sexual behaviour in males and females. Human sexuality has been included within these goals and placed in proper comparative perspective. Man is but one of approximately 250 extant primate species; all of them are fascinating.

Congreve once remarked that he 'could never look upon a monkey without very mortifying reflections'. On the contrary, the more I have studied primate

behaviour, the greater my sympathy for the human condition has become. This has been a gradual process, however, taking place over the past 28 years. Perhaps Wordsworth was nearer the mark when he said that he had learned to view nature 'not as in the hour of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes the still, sad music of humanity'. Certainly, there is little room for complacency when viewing modern society's treatment of sexual matters. In Britain, for example, frequencies of divorce, under-age pregnancies, abortions, sexually-related crime, and sexually transmitted disease are all on the increase. Yet we invest relatively little either in research on human sexuality, or in the provision of sexual education for our children.

I should like to thank several colleagues who have helped tremendously in the preparation of this book. Jane Armitage typed and retyped the many draft versions and Claire Nevison prepared over 100 of the graphs and histograms. My especial thanks go to Matthew Anderson for tireless work and assistance with all aspects of preparing the typescript, illustrations, and reference list. All three of these friends have a great sense of humour; they cheered me up at times when the task seemed too great. I am most grateful to staff at Oxford University Press, for encouragement and guidance in preparing this book, and to Michael Tiernan and Ian Davies for their painstaking contributions at the copy-editing stage. To John Bancroft, who has written the Foreword, my particular thanks, and best wishes for the future of the Kinsey Institute.