



Endocrinology of Social Relationships

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Endocrinology of Social Relationships From Brand: Harvard University Press

In social relationships?whether between mates, parents and offspring, or friends?we find much of life's meaning. But in these relationships, so critical to our well-being, might we also detect the workings, even directives, of biology? This book, a rare melding of human and animal research and theoretical and empirical science, ventures into the most interesting realms of behavioral biology to examine the intimate role of endocrinology in social relationships.

The importance of hormones to reproductive behavior?from breeding cycles to male sexual display?is well known. What this book considers is the increasing evidence that hormones are just as important to social behavior. Peter Ellison and Peter Gray include the latest findings?both practical and theoretical?on the hormonal component of both casual interactions and fundamental bonds. The contributors, senior scholars and rising scientists whose work is shaping the field, go beyond the proximate mechanics of neuroendocrine physiology to integrate behavioral endocrinology with areas such as reproductive ecology and life history theory. Ranging broadly across taxa, from birds and rodents to primates, the volume pays particular attention to human endocrinology and social relationships, a focus largely missing from most works of behavioral endocrinology.

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Editorial Review

Review

The first volume to pull together the emerging field of human behavioral endocrinology as the product of a long evolutionary history exerting subtle influences throughout modern societies. The distinguished and authoritative assemblage of authors share their enthusiasm and leave no doubt that this will be an influential scientific discipline in the years to come. (Katherine E. Wynne-Edwards, University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine)

The editors and their authors have produced a definitive and scholarly, yet readable, state-of-the-art presentation of a fascinating and timely topic. This landmark volume is rich in ideas, conclusions, and questions for the future. As the editors point out, we are all being exposed, like it or not, to hormones in the environment and to ads full of claims about the benefits of administering hormones. We need to understand how such hormones might (or might not) be affecting social relationships. Will spraying on some oxytocin make your colleagues like you? Probably not, but reading *Endocrinology of Social Relationships* produced warm feelings about the ability of good science to illuminate the human condition. (Elizabeth Adkins-Regan *Science* 2009-05-29)

[This book] is an incredible resource for anyone who has studied or ever wondered about the biological underpinnings of human's (or even non-human's) social interactions...In the past 15 years, there have been many studies published on the topic of hormones' roles in social relationships, but never before has there been one definitive volume that reviews the entire area with such a high degree of accuracy. Given that some developments within this area have been recent, the book represents a formidable effort to collect the modern work into one volume, and as a result, it will serve as a "go-to" text for many years. (Maryanne Fisher *Evolutionary Psychology*)

About the Author

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