

support their case. Writing in a conversational tone, the authors draw the reader in to the discussion of what research teaches about the benefits of physical play. Relying on both human and animal research, DeBenedet and Cohen build an argument to convince even the most ardent opponents of rough play.

The remainder of the book is a bit surprising. In the remaining six chapters, the authors explain, illustrate, and teach adults how to roughhouse. They begin by encouraging parents to explore such activities in a section called “Get Started with Instant Roughhousing.” In this chapter, they lay out some helpful hints to make roughhousing fun and free from (serious) injury, and then they describe “moves” to get the reader started in the role of parental roughhousing facilitator. From classics such as Airplane (think of lying on your back with the baby balanced on your up-stretched knees) to Olympus Mons (imagine acting out an erupting volcano) the authors describe activities that will get the reader roughhousing in no time at all. Chapters 3 through 6 offer examples of themed activities and present line-drawn sketches to illustrate what these activities might look like. For example, in the chapter titled “Flight,” the parent reads about how to toss a child in playful and enjoyable ways. While surprising, these sketches and clear instructions on roughhousing offer a unique perspective on rough play. This instruction manual for playing with a child may seem unusual to some, but for the parent who wants to be more physical and does not know where to start, this is a useful guide. This unique approach to encouraging adults to rethink the rough, physical, sometimes worrisome play of

children should be commended. The effort to go beyond a conceptual discussion of rough play with children, to provide concrete examples of how this play actually happens and what it looks like is laudable and offers a service to parents not found in other books on play.

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—Brenda Boyd, *Washington State University, Pullman, WA*

### **Games Primates Play: An Undercover Investigation of the Evolution and Economics of Human Relationships**

*Dario Maestriperi*

New York: Basic Books, 2012. Contents, images, notes, references, index. 302 pp. \$27.99 cloth. ISBN: 9780465020782

I should first make one thing plain: Dario Maestriperi’s *Games Primates Play* is not a book about primate play behavior. In fact, the book mentions neither games nor playing—at least not in the sense of our collective pursuits as play researchers. Rather, it concerns human relationships and social currencies. Thus “games” refers to human politicking, cooperation, and social-behavioral quirks. Why do we avoid eye contact with other people in elevators? What does the length of an e-mail response indicate about rank and status? How might taking a colleague to lunch trump work ethic alone in determining whether or not you receive a promotion at work? What does your ability to recover from a lover’s tiff indicate about your rank in a romantic relationship? Maestriperi takes the reader on a journey through the

social condition, using richly illustrative examples from other primate (and some nonprimate) species.

Each of the nine chapters deals in depth with one aspect of human relationships, including dominance, nepotism, rank and status, cooperation, love, and social bonds. Each topic is discussed from an evolutionary perspective and uses animal models, candid observations, and oftentimes historical and cultural anecdotes. The narrative is rooted in the appropriate scientific literature, but accessibly so, making the overall effect a highly readable popular-science book. Indeed, Maestriperi manages to weave together solid scientific references with whimsical anecdotes in writing that is engaging, warm, often humorous—and therefore memorable. I found his discussion of the Italian system of *raccomandazione* (“recommendation”) especially interesting, which added a unique cultural dimension to a book that could very easily be considered one for only those of us who study nonhuman primates. Anthropologists, psychologists, and others are likely already familiar with Maestriperi’s research, but this is an overview that will interest workers in many other fields too, given its primary focus on the human condition.

*Games Primates Play* is a book geared ostensibly toward a nonprofessional, educated, and interested audience. Maestriperi’s true skill lies in communicating the science simply but effectively, while never condescending to the reader. The author produces effortless reading in a wonderful overview that I would recommend to interested students and colleagues. The topics are accessible and lend themselves perfectly to class discussion. Thus for me,

this book may be used with other literature as a pleasant teaching tool. However, while *Games Primates Play* has broad appeal to those from various academic fields, its “game theory” (i.e., economics) approach, rather than a strict play-behavior focus *per se*, means that many readers of *this* journal may find the book has limited appeal. For others, it will be a happy addition to our bookshelves.

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—Kerrie Lewis Graham, *Texas State University—San Marcos*

### **Vice City Virtue: Moral Issues in Digital Game Play**

*Karolien Poels and Steven Malliet, eds.*

Belgium: Acco, 2011. Tables, notes, references. 351 pp. \$54.96 paper. ISBN: 9789033484681

In June 2011, the United States Supreme Court struck down a 2005 California law banning the sale of some violent video games to minors on the grounds that there is no tradition of restricting children’s access to depictions of violence in the U.S.A. That case is just one example from an ongoing debate about what scholars Karolien Poels and Steven Malliet, in their *Vice City Virtue*, call “moral issues in digital game play” (p. 21). Over the last three decades, scholars have investigated and debated the risks associated with, and the effects of playing, digital games. With this anthology, editors Poels and Malliet enter into the debate with hopes of moving it beyond a narrow focus on violent game effects, while providing the kind of nuanced view of morality that enables