

Study: Gorillas also have culture

21 February 2006

U.S. scientists reportedly have identified the hallmark of culture -- behavior passed on by social rather than genetic influences -- among gorillas.

The study showed, for the first time, great apes are capable of developing behavioral traditions that are peculiar to specific groups, earthtimes.org reported Tuesday.

Researchers studied approximately 370 gorillas in 25 groups in 17 U.S. zoos and discovered 48 distinct behavioral differences among gorillas in different groups, which indicates the gorillas learned their behavior from the group in which they lived and not through genetic influences. The differences were noted even among different groups within the same zoo.

Lead author Tara Stoinski of Zoo Atlanta said the differences included the varying use of tools, signals to other gorillas and courting behaviors. The cultural conditioning had been previously observed among chimpanzees, orangutans and bonobos, earthtimes.org reported.

The study was presented this week during the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

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APA citation: Study: Gorillas also have culture (2006, February 21) retrieved 8 December 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-02-gorillas-culture.html>

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