Key Terms, Concepts and questions to ponder

Lecture 5: Primates - their importance in understanding human evolution

You should become familiar with the following terms and concepts from this lecture and your accompanying readings in Campbell et al. You should also give some consideration to the problems and issues mooted in the "To Ponder" section.

Vocabulary

Primates

Prosimii (prosimians)
- lemurs
- lorises
- tarsiers

Anthropoidea (anthropoids) - monkeys, and apes including humans
- Ceboidea - Platyrhini - New World monkeys
- Cercopithecoidea - Catarrhini - Old World monkeys

Hominioidea (hominoids) - apes, lesser and greater including humans
- Hylabatidae (hylabatids) - gibbons and siamangs
- Pongidae (pongids) - orangutans
- Panidae (panids) - gorilla, chimpanzee, bonobo (pygmy chimp)
- Hominidae (hominids) - humans

features characterizing Primates

features characterizing hominoids

reproductive strategies: parental investment
- K - selection - pattern of few offspring and extensive parental care
- r - selection - pattern of large number of offspring and little parental care

To Ponder

1) What selection pressures might have selected for bonobo behaviors?

2) What selection pressures might have selected for chimpanzee behaviors?

3) How does the environment contribute to selection pressures in terms of distribution of food resources?

4) What behavioral characteristics are likely to have been displayed by the common ancestor of chimps, bonobos and humans?

5) Can we always recognize when similar modern traits are derived from a common ancestor, as opposed to similarities which evolved in parallel?

6) What is the role of sexual dimorphism in Primate species?

7) What are the roles of canines and canine dimorphism in Primates?