

**A LONGITUDINAL ASSESSMENT OF PERSONALITY IN CAPTIVE, WESTERN LOWLAND GORILLAS**

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Personality has been argued to represent a useful tool in the management of captive animals. For example, such information might improve decision making about forming social groups, relocating individuals and breeding introductions. However, the usefulness of personality measurements relies on the assumption that personality is a stable trait across time and context. A preliminary analysis of stability in personality traits of captive male western lowland gorillas found consistency in ratings on three of four personality factors (Perdue et al., 2009), suggesting stable personality traits do exist for gorillas. However, this study was limited in that: 1) it did not include females; 2) it only looked for stability over a relatively short portion of a gorilla's lifespan (7 years). To further our understanding of personality stability in both sexes and across a greater portion of the lifespan, the results of personality assessments first conducted in 1993 and then replicated in 2010 on approximately 150 gorillas will be presented. Correlations between personality factor scores in 1993 and 2010 will examine the consistency of traits over time. This database represents one of largest for any non human primate and is also the only to have assessed the same individuals at significantly different periods in their lifespan (e.g. immaturity to adulthood; young to old adulthood), thus providing important insights into the stability of personality in great apes.

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