

MEASURING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN TEMPERAMENT AND FRIENDSHIP IN RHESUS MONKEYS (*MACACA MULATTA*)

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Assessing the capacity of temperament ratings conducted in one context to predict behavior in another context is of interest to nonhuman primate researchers, yet there are still relatively few studies addressing this issue. I examine the methods of the infant Biobehavioral Assessment Program run by John Capitanio at the California National Primate Research Center, in which rhesus monkeys aged 90-120 days are rated on 16 traits after participating in a 25-hour battery of tests evaluating their emotional and physiological reactivity. Researchers have used these temperament ratings to predict a variety of social and health outcomes, with my own studies focusing on juvenile affiliative relationships (a.k.a. friendships). I explore the methods I used to assess friendship involvement in follow-up studies conducted at ages one (N=57) and two (N=28), in which I observed monkeys living in 0.19-hectare outdoor corrals containing multi-male, multi-female groups of 100-150 individuals. One particular temperament factor, Equability (reflecting the degree to which infants displayed an easygoing, calm, and slow-moving disposition), predicted both the number and identity of peer friends. Specifically, subjects scoring high in Equability as infants had fewer friendships at age one. Also, monkeys preferentially affiliated with peers similar to themselves in Equability at both ages one and two. Finally, friends most similar in Equability at age one were most likely to have continued their friendship through age two. My findings suggest that temperament ratings made in a novel, nonsocial context during infancy can be used to predict social relationships in a naturalistic setting later in development.

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