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Monkey Brains

By Andrea Campbell

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You're a primate, I'm a primate, monkeys are primates!

Even before the release of my book *Bringing Up Ziggy*, I was studying all aspects of primates. And I'm not alone. By observing the other levels of primate order in behavior and learning, we often discover many similarities between ourselves and our closest biological species.

Psychological researchers at Columbia University conducted tests showing that rhesus monkeys can decipher the difference between one, two and three. Now, Elizabeth M. Brannon, Ph.D. and Herbert S. Terrace, Ph.D., both psychologists at Columbia, designed experiments to discern whether monkeys could learn rules for putting objects into categories, and then apply those rules to a new set of objects.

Not so surprising to me, the scientists found that animals can not only be taught to count but actually understand the concept of numbers. The results of this new research was published in the January issue of the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*.

For this particular study, researchers created computer displays with numbers one, two, three and four using visual objects such as circles, ellipses, squares or diamonds of varying size and color. Three monkeys were then taught to touch each display in numerical order, for example, using a two in ascending order, one in descending order.

Overtime, the monkeys were trained on some 35 different displays. Assessing their continued progress, the researchers then tested the monkeys on 150 new displays, only to find their performance did not falter.

In order to check their efforts, the scientists needed to determine whether the monkeys actually understood the relationship between the numbers. This time, the monkeys were tested using pairs of numbers they had never seen before—five, six, seven, eight and nine.

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The results are quite illuminating as one who knows primates would think they should be. In the first round of testing with the higher numbers, both monkeys who had been trained to respond in ascending numerical order arranged the new numbers correctly 75 per cent of the time.

Later on, after tests where the answers were positively reinforced, all three monkeys responded correctly at a level above chance guessing.

Dr. Terrace says, "The results of these experiments provide compelling evidence that number is a meaningful dimension for rhesus monkeys."

It's not unusual that tests such as these are also compared to the results of rats and children. In this case, the researchers pointed out that the monkeys were trained on the ordering skills for approximately six months. They also estimated that it took children learning numbers thousands of

repetitions to master similar concepts.

The researchers also found several performance similarities between monkeys and people on comparable tasks. To explain, they say that monkeys are more accurate and quicker to order pairs of numbers the further apart the numbers are, in other words, ordering four and nine is easier than placing four and five for both humans and monkeys.

In my book I tell a story about how Paula, another foster mother for a Helping Hands monkey Emma, has taught her little charge to decipher colors. Paula used colored Easter eggs to help facilitate the process. Paula bought a set of big plastic eggs and put a treat inside a particular color, say, the blue egg. When she asked Emma to show her the blue egg, if the monkey was correct in her choice, she was allowed to procure the treat inside. Emma learned all of the primary colors in this way and even went on to learn to differentiate between a spoon, knife and fork.

Not too bad for a species we call a "lessor" primate!

Andrea Campbell lives with Ziggy, in Hot Springs Village, Arkansas. She is the author of BRINGING UP ZIGGY: What Raising A Helping Hands Monkey Taught Me About Love, Commitment, and Sacrifice. Visit her web site at: www.andreacampbell.com

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Andrea Campbell lives in Hot Springs Village, Arkansas, in the Ouachita Mountains. Andrea is the author of eight books on a variety of subjects including criminal justice, the law, primatology and entertaining and parties... Her website is located at andreacampbell.com

The Hypnotic Power of Confusion

By Joe Vitale

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"Did you walk to work or carry a lunch?"

Huh?

My father asked me that question more than 25 years ago. I still remember it. Why? Because it's a ridiculous question.

A famous comedian in the 1950s used to ask people, "Got a banana?" The question might make sense if asked in the right situation, but he asked it everywhere. I've forgotten the name of the comedian, but I still recall his question. Why? Because it's strange.

As I write this, I am creating new business cards for myself. I decided to add a confusing line to it. After some fun brainstorming with my girlfriend, I settled on, "Ask me about the monkey."

Why is "Ask me about the monkey?" worth putting on my business card? As with my father's question and the comedian's question, it stops your brain in its tracks. It makes you pause. It makes you focus on ME. The theory is that once you stop someone with a confusing line, you can then implant a hypnotic command right after it.

In other words, if I write something like, "Apples desk fly dirt," and then follow it with, "Read my new ebook," the chances are very high that you are going to want to read my new ebook.

Why? Because the first line jammed your mind, and the second line slipped into your brain while you weren't looking. I've just upped the odds that you will buy my new e-book. And if you don't, of course, it doesn't matter because I never really told you to go buy it. See?

The same thing will happen on my new business cards. Since I'm now known as "The World's First Hypnotic Marketer," I wanted a strange, confusing line on my new card. When someone sees, "Ask me about the monkey," and then asks me about the monkey, I can simply point out that I practice hypnotic selling and I just got them to do what I wanted.

The Japanese practice this "hypnotic confusion," but probably unknowingly. A friend of mine who flew to Japan reported to me that the English phrases on all the Japanese products were

bizarre. A tube of toothpaste might say, "Green days you not sing." A box of cookies might say, "Wood above fish."

How can you use this secret right now? Don't be afraid to be confusing. People tend to sort out whatever you say anyway and make sense out of it using their own terms. If you are describing your product in great detail, be willing to toss in something odd. It may increase sales.

If not, swirl up!



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