



Current Perspectives on Sexual Selection: What's left after Darwin? (History, Philosophy and Theory of the Life Sciences)

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This root-and-branch re-evaluation of Darwin's concept of sexual selection tackles the subject from historical, epistemological and theoretical perspectives. Contributions from a wealth of disciplines have been marshaled for this volume, with key figures in behavioural ecology, philosophy, and the history of science adding to its wide-ranging relevance. Updating the reader on the debate currently live in behavioural ecology itself on the centrality of sexual selection, and with coverage of developments in the field of animal aesthetics, the book details the current state of play, while other chapters trace the history of sexual selection from Darwin to today and inquire into the neurobiological bases for partner choices and the comparisons between the hedonic brain in human and non-human animals.

Welcome space is given to the social aspects of sexual selection, particularly where Darwin drew distinctions between eager males and coy females and rationalized this as evolutionary strategy. Also explored are the current definition of sexual selection (as opposed to natural selection) and its importance in today's biological research, and the impending critique of the theory from the nascent field of animal aesthetics. As a comprehensive assessment of the current health, or otherwise, of Darwin's theory, 140 years after the publication of his *Descent of Man*, the book offers a uniquely rounded view that asks whether 'sexual selection' is in itself a progressive or reactionary notion, even as it explores its theoretical relevance in the technical biological study of the twenty-first century.

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Editorial Review

Review

“This is a wide-ranging collection of articles on the evolutionary mechanism of sexual selection. ... This work will be a valuable addition to biology, history, and philosophy library collections, accessible to senior undergraduates and above. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through professionals/practitioners.” (R. Paul Thompson, *Choice*, Vol. 53 (8), April, 2016)

“Current Perspectives covers a wide range of topics surrounding sexual selection. ... the book stands as an excellent crash course for anyone hoping to catch up to speed on, in particular, the history of sexual selection. The book’s engagement with the historical literature is impressively thorough and probably the book’s most notable overall strength.” (Sara Weaver, *Metascience*, Vol. 25, 2016)

“The chapters of the current book are divided into three sections, essentially organized as past (history of sexual selection theory), present (current challenges in sexual selection theory), and future (animal aesthetics). This organization provides the reader with an excellent context for the concepts introduced in each of the chapters. ... This book, appropriate for serious scholars of evolutionary theory as well as graduate-level coursework on sexual selection theory, advances the discussion and strengthens the development of the theory.” (Robert D. Mather, *PsycCRITIQUES*, Vol. 60 (36), September, 2015)

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