

égards prématurées » (p. 13). En effet, les exemples sur lesquels s'appuie l'ouvrage ne représentent que partiellement la diversité autochtone de l'ensemble du Québec. La particularité de la situation socioéconomique des communautés amérindiennes de la vallée du Saint-Laurent, souvent évoquée dans l'ouvrage, est difficilement généralisable à l'ensemble des Amérindiens de la province. Bien que l'on fasse référence à quelques moments aux Algonquins de l'Outaouais et de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, aux Micmacs de la Gaspésie et aux Innus de la Côte Nord, davantage d'exemples de communautés des régions éloignées apporteraient profondeur et nuances à l'analyse. Ces exemples permettraient, d'autre part, de témoigner plus efficacement de la diversité des adaptations autochtones qui est soulignée en conclusion.

Plus particulièrement dans le cinquième chapitre, Gélinas esquisse plusieurs pistes de réflexion pertinentes pour les études autochtones qui, aujourd'hui plus que jamais, ne peuvent faire abstraction des problématiques relatives à la cohabitation, au métissage et aux transformations des relations entre Canadiens français et Autochtones. Dans une section qui s'intéresse aux contextes de proximité, Gélinas évoque l'importance des mélanges entre ces deux groupes. La mouvance des frontières identitaires qui s'opèrent au sein des communautés autochtones est d'ailleurs clairement mise en perspective. Les questions alors soulevées sont d'une importance capitale. Malheureusement, encore une fois, le lecteur reste sur son appétit. À titre d'exemple, Gélinas souligne le fait que les unions mixtes témoignent de rapprochements entre individus appartenant aux deux groupes. Or, dans quelle mesure ces mélanges sont-ils révélateurs d'une réelle cohabitation entre Blancs et Autochtones au Québec? Comment sont-ils perçus par les Autochtones des différentes communautés? Le fait qu'il y ait un certain nombre de mariages mixtes sans qu'il y ait affirmation de Métis au Québec n'est-il pas révélateur de l'importance des tensions et de la polarisation qui existent entre Autochtones et Canadiens français?

D'une actualité brûlante au Québec, ces thèmes et questions de recherche génèrent tensions et débats. Leur évocation dérange parce qu'elle remet en question les catégories en place relevant de l'idéologie dominante véhiculée, encore aujourd'hui, par l'imaginaire populaire, les politiques et les lois du gouvernement fédéral, et par certains intellectuels canadiens français. Dans ces conditions, on peut supposer que le livre de Gélinas ne passera pas inaperçu.

Quelle que soit l'issue des débats autour de la question de la cohabitation, de la proximité et du métissage entre Canadiens français et Amérindiens dans le Québec d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, *Les Autochtones dans le Québec post-confédéral* est une source d'inspiration pour quiconque s'intéresse sérieusement aux dynamiques régissant les relations trop souvent conflictuelles entre les deux groupes. Il opère un défrichage de sources historiques utiles à l'exploration d'une période peu étudiée et pourtant si cruciale pour notre compréhension de la situation actuelle. Il ouvre indéniablement le chemin à une nouvelle lecture de l'historiographie nationale québécoise, nous

pousse à réfléchir sur la conception de l'autochtonie et impose un regard nouveau sur la nature des rapports qu'entretiennent les Canadiens français avec l'altérité autochtone.

Référence

Lavoie, Michel

2007 Politique sur commande. Les effets des commissions d'enquête sur la philosophie publique et la politique indienne au Canada, 1828-1996. *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* 37(1):5-23.

Anne Innis Dagg, *Social Behavior of Older Animals*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009, 225 pages.

Reviewer: Anne Zeller
University of Waterloo

Anne Dagg, who has conducted field research on African ungulates, has laboriously gathered information on older social animals from a huge range of sources. Since this is not a well-researched topic, she combed through monographs, journals, newspapers and personal accounts to assemble this record based on a wide range of social animals. The approach is much like Elizabeth Thomas' (1993) work on dogs because the animals are named and referred to from the perspective of their value to the social unit, although all the material is meticulously referenced. Birds and humans are also included among the examples of social species, with the result that this book provides a valuable cross-taxonomic evaluation of the importance of older animals in the social sphere, as well as some comparisons of social functions useful when studying humans.

Most theoretical approaches to animal behaviour focus on the adaptive success of the reproductive strategies of males and females. According to Darwin, the differentially successful production of offspring is the most important contribution an animal can make, while sterile or post-reproductive individuals are adaptively useless. However, more modern theories assess the contributions of these individuals to the success of their relatives' offspring and they have thus become the focus of recent work. This book does consider the reproductive contribution of such individuals but mainly focuses on the behavioural and social transition from prime adult to old adult.

Some older animals continue to reproduce, although at a slower rate, and this may be individually adaptive in terms of having the resources and energy to successfully rear these late stage offspring. Older animals also contribute to their groups as repositories of knowledge about the location of resources when conditions become difficult. They can be excellent leaders as is demonstrated by elephant matriarchs who guide their families over hundreds of miles to find water and food. The herds led by the oldest matriarchs seem to be the most successful. The old females seem to know the individual calls of many others sent from long distances and respond with appropriate action, including caution and defensive postures

to defend calves when unknown elephants are approaching. Post-mature individuals provide a resource that the young can learn from and have been observed trying to teach youngsters how to cope with environmental problems and difficult dietary items. They encourage the young to eat unfamiliar foods when dietary resources are strained. Post-reproductive female orca whales pass on hunting strategies, echolocation skills, and guide the young through hundreds of miles of passages between the islands on the west coast of Canada. Therefore, culling elephant herds and whale pods by killing the older individuals can have devastating impacts on group cohesion and eventual group survival.

Older humans in non-industrialized societies are an extremely valuable source of cultural knowledge, concerning survival strategies and as stewards of the rights to water and resources. As groups become Westernized, this respect for elders can decline as younger individuals become the interface with the dominating society, but in many cases elders are regaining respect as repositories of language and cultural values. This parallelism in the social value of older group members should not be lost on us.

Human primates are a little different from monkeys and apes because they can and do actively teach their young. Older non-human primates must be well respected by the group if non-familial youngsters are going to pay attention well enough to learn from them. Aging adult male and female primates usually have different ends to their life stories. Most older females remain with their groups and help support their daughters and care for their grandchildren. Most aging males either drop in rank—no matter how dominant they were in their prime—and are frequently peripheralized by more active troop members or they leave their troop and try to join another. Sapolsky (1996) argues that the older males leave home because they have no history in their new group and therefore are not hounded by the now high ranking younger males who they had harassed when in their prime. Primates accept their decline in influence as they age in a variety of ways which range from decreasing levels of aggression to strategic alliances to maintain as much influence as possible. High ranked matriarch baboons may retain their influence until they are extremely decrepit, supported by a large network of family. In fact, it may be one of the matriarch's daughters who finally takes over the ranking position because the whole matriline would support her against any other female who might attack.

Dagg summarizes each of her chapters on motherhood, rank, reproduction, family life and captive animals by attempting to pull together material from various species—wolves, lions, whales, primates, birds and ungulates—that she discusses. These brief summaries provide an overview of the pattern of activities and how they contribute to the success of the species. Success in her terms ranges from being as ephemeral as more relaxed families, more paternal care and playful interaction, to the pronounced value to some groups of older females who help care for young and lead their groups. Some older

females also fight for their groups once the danger of impact on their reproductive success is reduced.

Dagg's final conclusions are that most wild animals who reach an advanced age are no longer interested in leadership, reproduction, fighting or making strenuous efforts at socializing. Many become loners if they can no longer keep up with their group, living in small areas with sufficient food, water and shelter to sustain them. Those who can (keep up) continue to be social although usually mainly with their family members. Older animals do not necessarily lose their spark and can exert themselves if necessary, as revealed by older pets who have rescued owners from fires or gone for help when needed. Some older animals defend their group or their grandchildren if attacked and may perish in doing so. One of the most revealing anecdotes about the desire for social contact came from Lyall Watson (2002) who reported seeing an old African elephant matriarch whose whole herd had been hunted to extermination. She came down to the seashore where Watson, who was studying her, found her staring out to sea and he felt the low rumble of infra sound that elephants use for long distance communication. About 100 meters offshore was a blue whale, also a species which uses low-pitched sounds for long distance undersea communication. It was lying on the surface of the water, facing the elephant, with its blowhole exposed. Watson felt that these two large, lone animals were communicating.

The importance of the social bond is also revealed by the behaviour of some animals when their long-term associate dies. This is particularly true in paired animals, but has also been seen in primate groups in the wild where bereaved mothers may grieve for lost offspring. This is confirmed by the increased level of glucocorticoids found in the bereaved animal's blood—hormones which are also found in stressed humans. Profound, even mortal, depths of grief have also been observed in chimpanzees and gorillas, as well as many other animals. Some zoos are now taking animals' emotional responses into account and are allowing cagemates to spend some time with the bodies of their mates or associates. One gorilla even tried to rouse his dead mate by putting her favourite food into her hand. Apes, elephants and other long lived, highly social animals seem to respond hormonally and behaviourally in ways very similar to human grief.

The overall effect of this book is to introduce a very humanistic approach to the investigation of this understudied stage of life among a variety of animals. It reveals extensive parallelisms with human behaviour as well as a wide range of responses to the challenges of increasing age. She also discusses learning, teaching, and friendly social relations in enough detail that a student looking for the extent of such activities, long studied among humans, across a range of species, will find the book useful. The material is thoroughly referenced and thoughtfully presented in a form that is accessible to a wide range of readers.

References

Sapolsky, Robert M.

- 1996 Why Should an Aged Male Baboon Ever Transfer Troops?
American Journal of Primatology 39(3):149-157.

Thomas, Elizabeth Marshall

- 1993 *The Hidden Life of Dogs*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Watson, Lyall

- 2002 *Elephantoms: Tracking the Elephant*. New York: Norton.
-