

EDITORIAL NOTE

A Demographic Analysis of the Membership of the American Society of Primatologists: 1992

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the membership of the American Society of Primatologists (ASP) with a detailed analysis of the characteristics of the members that constitute the Society in 1992. The analysis is a timely one, coming as it does in the 15th year of the Society's existence, and a decade since the only other quantitative analysis of membership trends in the Society was published [Dukelow et al., 1982]. The task of membership analysis is an important self-evaluative one, especially since the Society is held together not necessarily by disciplinary interests (as is, say, the Animal Behavior Society or the Society for the Study of Reproduction), but rather by an affinity for the taxon of organisms the members study: primates. Analysis of membership trends can emphasize or highlight changing disciplinary representation within the Society as a whole, and can aid in evaluating the adequacy of representation of these disciplinary interests in Society business (e.g., in membership and leadership positions in Society committees) and in the Society's journal, the *American Journal of Primatology*. I hope to impart to the members a sense of history about the demographics of the Society in its early years, and to provide a documentation of changes and consistency in these demographic profiles across the 15 years of its existence.

I present below information on the American Society of Primatologists as reflected in the 1992 membership. Information is presented on the age-sex structure of the Society, and details of age-sex structure of the three major disciplines represented in the Society: anthropology, psychology, and zoology. The research focus of the Society's members is characterized, and the geographic distribution of members is evaluated. I also present a statistical profile of the contributions to primate conservation by the members of ASP, and the level of involvement of the members in subscriptions to the Society's official scholarly journal, the *American Journal of Primatology*. Where possible, comparisons are drawn to Dukelow et al.'s [1982] previously published data on ASP membership.

MEMBERSHIP EVALUATION

All of the information presented in this analysis was provided with the voluntary consent of the members of the Society. On the annual membership renewal form, members were asked to provide the following information: discipline and decade in which terminal degree was (or will be) awarded, one major area of research interest, and gender. In addition, membership status (Full, Student, and Retired) was indicated on the membership renewal form. Donations to the ASP Conservation Committee, membership to the International Primatological Society, and subscription to the *American Journal of Primatology* were also indicated on the annual renewal form. I utilized all information available on each renewal form, but excluded a member from analysis for a particular category if specific information was not explicitly provided for that category (for instance, gender,

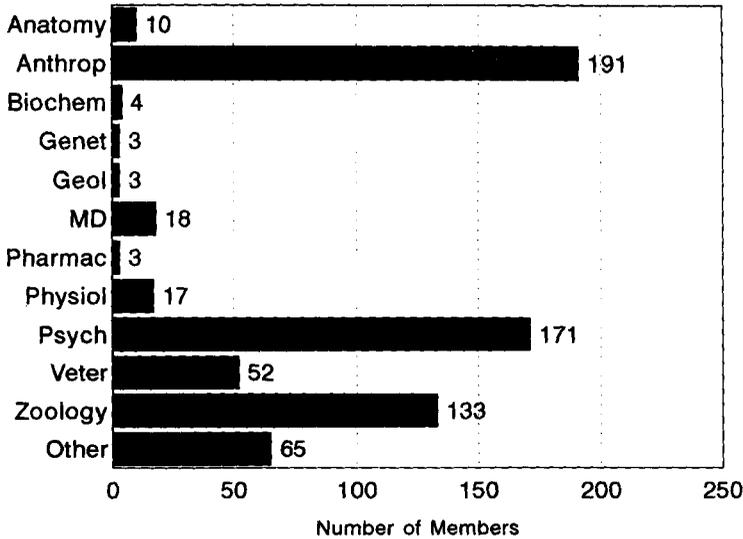


Fig. 1. Academic discipline of origin for members of the American Society of Primatologists. Number of members indicated for each discipline.

research interest, or decade of terminal degree). Members were informed that the information they provided would be used for the purposes described here, and were given the option to withhold information if they so chose.

The methods used for this membership analysis differ slightly from those utilized by Dukelow et al. [1982]. In the earlier case, a panel of four ASP members reviewed membership lists and assigned areas of research interest, while in the present analysis I relied on members' self-reported descriptions of research interest. Therefore, differences between 1982 and 1992 values for research interests may reflect a difference in assessing research areas rather than actual demographic trends in the research emphasis of Society members. In addition, some categories used in the Dukelow et al. analysis (e.g., "anthropology") were considered too broad for characterizing research specialization and therefore were not used here.

RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

The American Society of Primatologists had 670 registered members as of September 15, 1992. Women slightly outnumbered men in the ASP, constituting 51.8% of the Society (347 women members). There were 153 student members (22.8%), 512 full members (76.4%), and 5 retired members (0.7%) registered in 1992. These data reveal a steady yet controlled growth in the size of the ASP over the last decade, up 28.6% from 1982, at which time there were 521 members. There has also been an increase in the proportion of student members in the ASP, up from 15.4% student membership during the years 1977–82.

Demographic Analysis of ASP Membership

The American Society of Primatologists is truly a diverse professional organization. Members in the Society originate from at least 20 different disciplines. Figure 1 presents the number of members that received their terminal degrees in the 11 most common disciplines, along with a 12th category "Other" which in-

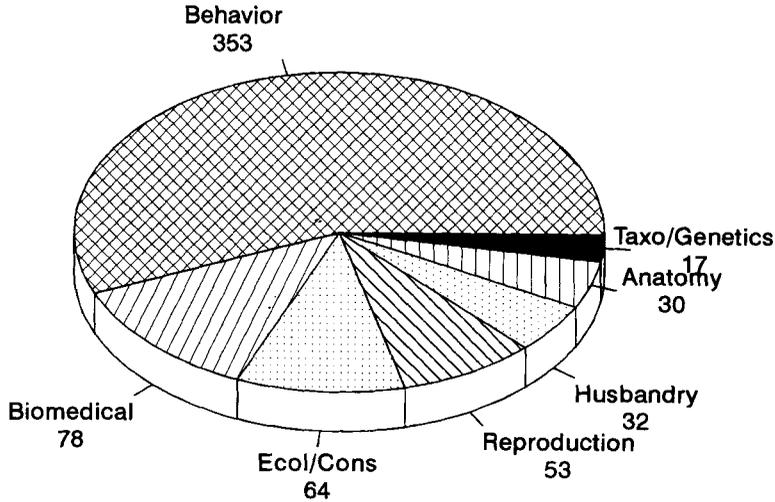


Fig. 2. Self-described primary research interests of members of the ASP.

cludes both members who are trained in disciplines that are not widely represented in the ASP, along with those members who did not report the discipline of their terminal degree. Anthropology is the discipline of training for the largest block of ASP members, with 28.5% of members receiving their training in this area. Psychology (25.5%), biology/zoology (19.6%), and veterinary sciences (7.7%) are other disciplines that are well represented in society membership.

Members were asked to provide a single descriptor that most accurately portrayed their predominant research interest. The results of their responses are presented in Figure 2. Of the 627 members who responded to this question, 56.3% indicated that their primary interest was primate behavior. In 1982, only 45.2% of the ASP were classified as having a primary research specialization in behavior. If the 1992 responses for *biomedical* and *reproduction* are combined (as they were in 1982), the proportion of the Society engaged in biomedical research, broadly defined, has not changed dramatically in the last decade (28.3% in 1982 vs. 25.6% in 1992). The percent of Society members who reported ecology or conservation as their major specialization rose from 2.5% of the ASP in 1982 to 10.2% in 1992.

The age-gender analysis of ASP membership, where "age" is defined as the self-reported decade during which the terminal degree was or will be awarded, presents some interesting profiles. Figure 3 presents these data for all ASP members, and for those in the three most numerous academic disciplines (anthropology, psychology, and zoology). There are dramatic departures from equal representation of men and women in the Society by age in the overall membership and in each of the academic disciplines. Men in the ASP who received their terminal degree in the decades of the 50s and 60s outnumber women who received their terminal degree during the same period by as much as 7:1. Society membership for members who received their terminal degree in the 70s and 80s is more evenly distributed by gender, and these trends are reflected in each of the three well-represented academic disciplines. For recent PhD's and student members in the Society as a whole, women outnumber men by a factor of approximately 3:1. This distribution holds for all three disciplines, although it is less pronounced in psychology and zoology than it is in anthropology.

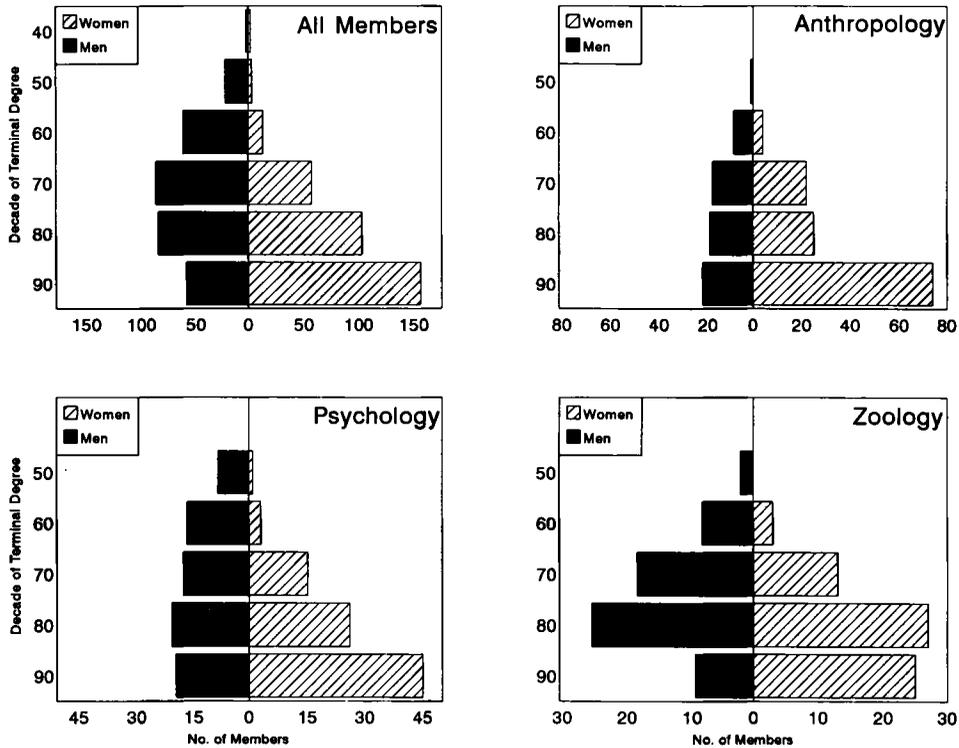


Fig. 3. Population age-gender pyramids for the American Society of Primatologists. Age is defined as the year in which members reported they received (or will receive, in the case of currently enrolled students) their terminal degree. The pyramids for all ASP members are presented in the upper left quadrant, along with particular blocks of ASP members: those who received their terminal degrees in anthropology, psychology, and zoology. Note the different scales for each pyramid.

Geographic Distribution of ASP Members

Membership in 1992 came from 40 of 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and 21 foreign countries. Figure 4 presents the geographic distribution of ASP members. Broader population trends in the U.S. are reflected in the ASP membership distribution, with north- and southeast coastal states, west coast states, and the industrial midwest states containing large numbers of members. No members were registered from the following states: DE, HI, ID, ND, NH, NV, VT, WV, WY, and UT. The seven states in the continental U.S. with Regional Primates Centers (CA, GA, LA, MA, OR, WA, and WI) have 33.6% (n = 225) of the ASP membership within their borders. However, members whose institutional affiliations were listed as Regional Primate Centers (n = 55) constituted a considerably smaller percentage of total ASP membership (8.2%). Table I lists the number of members from each Primate Center, and the proportion of each state's members who are at the respective Primate Center.

Dukelow et al. [1982] presented summary statistics for ASP membership according to broad geographic categories. Table II presents a comparative analysis of the geographic distribution of ASP members in 1982 and 1992 according to these categories. While no large scale shifts are evident, several smaller-scale changes have occurred within the last decade. The percentage of ASP membership from the

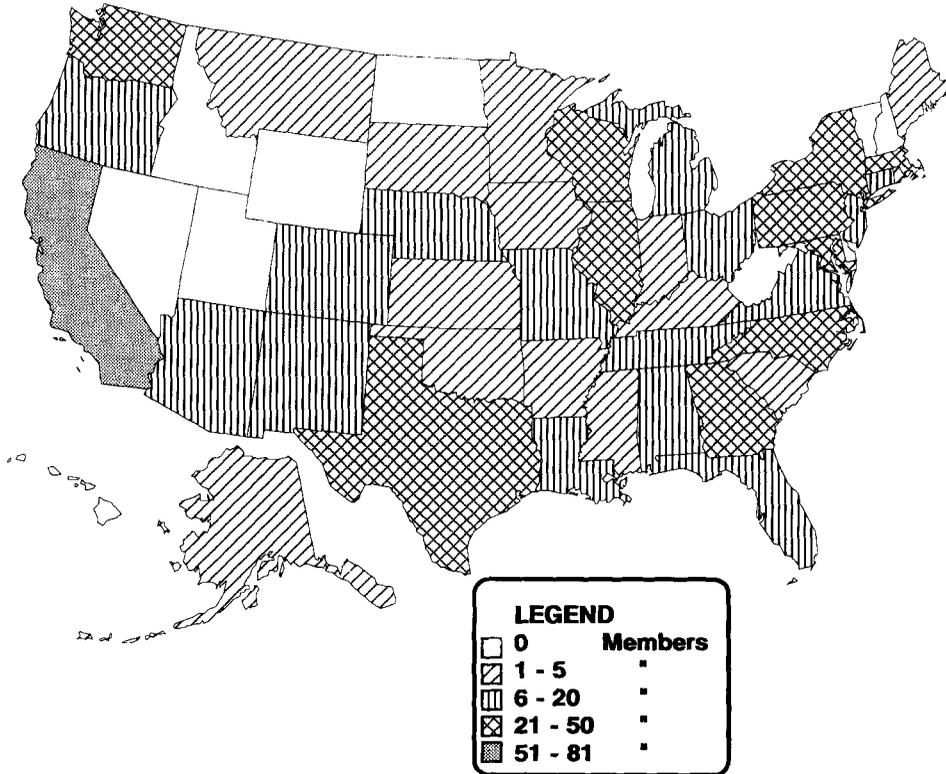


Fig. 4. Geographic distribution of ASP members within the 50 states of the U.S.

TABLE I. ASP Members at Regional Primate Research Centers

Primate Center	No. of members	State total	% at Primate Center
California	6	79	7.6
Yerkes	10	40	25.0
Tulane	5	12	41.7
New England	6	21	28.6
Oregon	5	11	45.5
Washington	11	32	34.4
Wisconsin	12	30	40.0
Total	55	225	24.4

Pacific Slope states has declined 2.4%, and increases in percentage representation of ASP membership were recorded for the Northeast (+1.4%), the Southeast (+1.3%), and the North Central (+2.1%). Small or no changes in percentage representation were recorded for Rockies/Great Plains states, Puerto Rico, Canada, or Mexico. Foreign memberships constituted 7.8% of the ASP in both 1982 and 1992. Foreign members were registered from the following countries: Canada (12), Brazil (8), United Kingdom (5), Australia (3), France (2), Germany (2), Italy (2), Japan (2), Kenya (2), Spain (2), Switzerland (2), Indonesia (1), Ireland (1), Mauritius (1),

TABLE II. Geographic Distribution of ASP Membership: 1982 vs. 1992*

Geographic location	1982		1992		Change	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Pacific Slope	114	22.3	135	19.9	21	-2.4
Northeast	106	20.7	150	22.1	44	1.4
Southeast	92	18.0	131	19.3	39	1.3
North Central	69	13.5	106	15.6	37	2.1
Rockies/Great Plains	73	14.3	97	14.3	24	0.0
Puerto Rico	7	1.4	8	1.2	1	-0.2
Canada	8	1.6	12	1.8	4	0.2
Mexico	2	0.4	1	0.1	-1	-0.3
Other Foreign	40	7.8	39	5.7	-1	-2.1

*Pacific Slope: CA, OR, WA, AK, HI; Northeast: ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, PA, NY, NJ, DE, MD, DC; Southeast: LA, AR, MS, AL, GA, FL, SC, NC, VA, TN, KY; North Central: MN, WI, IA, IL, MI, IN, OH, WV, MO; Rockies/Great Plains: AZ, NM, NV, UT, CO, WY, ID, MT, ND, SD, NE, KS, OK, TX.

Mexico (1), Netherlands (1), Norway (1), Peru (1), Taiwan (1), Tanzania (1), and Thailand (1).

Additional Membership Information

Several other items of miscellaneous information were extracted from the membership roster. First, the performance of the program designed to promote the efforts of the ASP in the sponsorship of conservation efforts through the voluntary financial contribution option on membership renewals was evaluated. About one in every four members (176/670; 26.3%) opted to make a tax-deductible contribution to the ASP Conservation Fund. The total amount received for this purpose from voluntary contributions was \$2,853.87. This represents an average donation per contributing member of \$16.21, and an average contribution per ASP member of \$4.26. Contributions ranged in size from \$2.60 to \$575.00. ASP members who renewed their memberships after the published calendar deadline were required to pay a \$5.00 late fee. All of the income produced by the late fee is directed toward the Conservation Fund. Of the 176 contributions to conservation, 116 of these (65.9%) were \$5.00, and a high proportion of these were likely associated with late registration. This suggests that the level of truly "voluntary" contribution to primate conservation efforts sponsored by the ASP is much lower than the overall statistics suggest.

Second, the level of subscription to the journal sponsored by the ASP was assessed. Approximately one out of five members ($n = 144$, 21.5%) subscribed to the *American Journal of Primatology* in 1992. Twelve of these subscribers were foreign members, and 132 were U.S., Canadian, or Mexican subscribers. Twelve of 151 (7.9%) student members subscribed to the journal.

Third, joint membership in the national and international primatological societies was assessed. Many ASP members are also members of the International Primatological Society. In 1992, 306 ASP members (45.7%) were members of both the national (ASP) and international (IPS) primate societies. Approximately half of the full members (51.3%) were members of both societies, while only 29.8% of student members were registered in both Societies.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The data presented in this membership analysis reveals that the American Society of Primatologists is a diverse and growing professional organization. The

society has enjoyed slow growth in membership numbers over the last decade, with a proportionate increase in student members. Students comprised 15.4% of the ASP in 1982, but in 1992 students represent 22.5% of the ASP. To the extent that some proportion of today's student members become tomorrow's full members, the high level of student membership can be viewed as a positive sign and bodes well for the continued growth of the ASP. The diversity of disciplinary origins evident in the 1982 membership analysis has been maintained, as has the diversity in research interests. Anthropology is the discipline-of-origin for the highest proportion of ASP members, followed by psychology, zoology, and veterinary sciences. Behavior is the primary research focus for over half of the ASP members, followed by biomedical research, ecology/conservation, and husbandry.

There were dramatic differences in the proportionate representation of men and women in the ASP as a function of the decade in which the terminal degree was awarded. When the youngest (academically and probably chronologically) members of the Society are considered, there is an approximately 3:1 ratio of women:men members (156:56). It will be of interest to monitor these trends across the next several years to assess the persistence of this demographic characteristic.

The geographic distribution of ASP members has not changed dramatically in the last decade, with only small decreases in the proportion of members from Pacific Slope states and increases in the proportion of members from the Northeast and North Central states. Understandably, states which have Regional Primate Centers within their borders have higher numbers of members than states without Centers. However, memberships from individuals who list their business address as Regional Primate Centers is low. Memberships from foreign countries continues at levels typical of those found in 1982, and the greatest increase in foreign membership comes from Brazil (0 members in 1982, 8 members in 1992).

Dukelow et al. [1982] concluded their membership analysis by stating that geographic location and research specialization of ASP members were sufficiently diverse so as to promote the long-term vitality of the ASP. The data presented here are consistent with this notion, and they suggest that the American Society of Primatologists has sufficient momentum to propel the society and its scientific and conservation agenda into the next century.

This report benefits greatly from suggestions and comments received from W. R. Dukelow, M. J. Raleigh, and many ASP members who expressed interest in this analysis and in the future of the American Society of Primatologists.

Jeffrey A. French, Treasurer and Chair,
Membership and Finance Committee, ASP
Department of Psychology
University of Nebraska at Omaha

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