Hinde, Robert A. (1923-) Encyclopedia Article

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British biologist.

Robert A. Hinde, trained as a biologist, is best known for his studies of the effects on infants of short-term separation from their mothers. During the late 1950s, Hinde established a colony of rhesus monkeys to serve as his laboratory. There he conducted extensive research that led to new information on human interpersonal relationships. Later he concentrated on children ages three to six and their relationships both with their mothers and their peers.

Hinde earned an undergraduate degree at Cambridge University and a doctorate at Oxford University. In 1950, he became curator of the Ornithological Field Station of the Sub-Department of Animal Behavior. Later he was named Royal Society research professor and honorary director of a medical research council unit. His early work centered on ethology, the study of animal behavior. During the 1960s, his interests expanded to include the relations between ethology and other disciplines, particularly psychology, and the mother-child bond.

Among Robert Hinde's more influential studies were those that showed that an infant's attainment of independence was largely a function of maternal behavior. He observed that rhesus mothers encouraged independence in their infants before the infants themselves appeared to seek it. Hinde also demonstrated that an infant's presence affected the mother's relationship to other adults and argued that an **attachment** relationship more likely reflected the contributions of both the mother and infant, rather than that of the infant alone. The dynamics of relationships, therefore, reflected an ongoing interplay between the traits of the individuals involved and the nature of the relationship.

For Further Study

Books

Hinde, Robert. *Animal Behaviour: A Synthesis of Ethology and Comparative Psychology.* New York: McGraw Hill, 1966.

——. *Biological Bases of Human Social Relationships.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974.

——. *Toward Understanding Relationships.* London: Academic Press, 1979.