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Born in 1974 in Bonn, Germany
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PROJECT

Timescapes of Behavior: Long-Term Research and the Birth of Behavioral Ecology

By measuring, collecting, and analyzing, long-term projects in behavioral ecology have translated animals' lives into vibrant understandings of the changing landscapes in which they live. Ecologists have measured changes in animal populations and behavior from season to season, each year's observations adding to the scientific value of observations carefully acquired in previous decades. When these projects started as small, scrappy enterprises, their horizon of expectation extended only a few years into the future. By the 1990s, the accumulation of longitudinal data meant that incoming students could start analyzing questions before they even ventured to the field. Valuable on their own, in intellectual synergy these data provide a remarkable record of our planet's ecosystems' transformations in the past half century.
Each chapter of my planned book follows the history of an animal and a place where scientists have studied its behavior for decades. As research tools have changed along with the requirements for receiving permission, so too have scientific practices and the forms of collaboration required to sustain science in the long term. The shared experiences of negotiating research permits, months spent away from campus, writing grants to the same agencies, and the tendency, as projects diversified, to study multiple animals at the same site, contributed to a shared sense of enterprise, despite the profound differences in landscapes and animal biology. Behavioral ecology as a discipline thus came to embrace organismal diversity as part of its mandate, just as conservationists lauded biodiversity as a sign of a healthy landscape.
From laughing hyenas to endangered jays, the lifetimes of individual animals make tangible how they are adapting, or not, to changing local conditions. Their fates, and ours, are woven together through time and place.

Recommended Reading

Milam, Erika Lorraine. Looking for a Few Good Males: Female Choice in Evolutionary Biology. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.
Milam, Erika Lorraine, and Robert A. Nye, eds. Scientific Masculinities. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015.
Milam, Erika Lorraine. Creatures of Cain: The Hunt for Human Nature in Cold War America. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019.

TUESDAY COLLOQUIUM, 07.11.2023

The Hyena & the Jay: Long-term Research and the Birth of Behavioral Ecology

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE FELLOWS' LIBRARY

Milam, Erika Lorraine (Cambridge,2021)

The evolution of Darwinain sexualities

https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=185369374X

Milam, Erika Lorraine (Pittsburgh, Pa,2019)

The stigmata of ancestry : reinvigorating the conflict thesis in the American 1970s

https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1853694975

Milam, Erika Lorraine (Princeton,2019)

Creatures of Cain : the hunt for human nature in Cold War America

https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1039779638

Milam, Erika Lorraine (Chicago, IL,2015)

Scientific masculinities

https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=846787105

Osiris ; second series, volume 30

https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=846787105

Milam, Erika Lorraine (Baltimore,2011)

Looking for a few good males : female choice in evolutionary biology

https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=734566395

Animals, history, culture

https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=734566395