

Fact and Opinion

by Stephan MacLEOD

FACT: Gorillas are shy and peaceful. The only natural enemy of gorillas has always been human beings. Gorillas are still hunted for meat (bushmeat) and trophies in some parts of Africa, and they are caught in traps set for other animals.

OPINION: If gorillas are so "shy and peaceful", then who put the bug up their ass on that damned Planet of the Apes?

FACT: Gorillas communicate with each other by using gestures, body postures, facial expressions, vocal sounds, chestslaps, drumming and odors. Although they cannot make the sounds of human speech, gorillas are capable of understanding spoken languages and they can learn to communicate in sign language.

OPINION: Just because they can communicate in sign language, doesn't mean we should give them their own radio shows.

FACT: Gorillas are very intelligent, and they share with us a full range of emotions: love, hate, fear, grief, joy, greed, generosity, pride, shame, empathy and jealousy.

OPINION: Unlike most robots, gorillas feel shame when they kill their master.

FACT: They laugh when they are tickled and cry when they are sad or hurt.
OPINION: You'd be surprised how ticklish a 500 pound monkey is when you touch its special area.

FACT: Gorillas cry with sounds, not tears.

OPINION: I cry with sounds and tears when a gorilla mistakes me for a banana salesman.

FACT: A typical gorilla family includes one silverback, the strongest male and the undisputed leader; one immature male between 8 and 13 years old; three or four adult females, who ordinarily stay with the silverback for life; and three to six youngsters under 8 years old. Some groups are larger or smaller than this, and males sometimes travel alone or form bachelor groups.

OPINION: Having three of four adult females might seem ideal for most silverbacks, but it's tough work to keep track of all their birthdays.

FACT: Gorillas sleep about 13 hours

each night and rest for several hours at midday. They build new sleeping nests every night by bending nearby plants into a springy platform, usually on the ground or in low trees.

OPINION: You'd get tired too, if you were constantly being harassed by Dian Fossey (or Dr Jane Goodall - whichever's less unfunny).

FACT: When not resting they spend most of their time looking for food and eating it. They eat mostly plant foods: leaves, shoots, fruits, bulbs, bark, vines and nettles. They also eat ants, termites, grubs, worms and insect larvae.

OPINION: Those poor creatures. Why won't anybody feed them some Chicken McNuggets?

FACT: There are three types of gorillas: Western Lowland, Eastern Lowland and Mountain gorillas. The names refer to the different areas of Africa where they live.

OPINION: You could get specific and use a different name to indicate where each type of gorilla lives, or you can try and force consumers to guess which part of Africa their monkey

meat tastes like.

FACT: Mountain gorillas are the most critically endangered, with conservative estimates of only 400 to 600 living at this time.

OPINION: Living in the mountains allows these gorillas to get a good shot at the humans below them when they are throwing feces.

FACT: In the past, whenever an infant gorilla was captured for a zoo, the mother and often the other members of the family were killed as they defended the baby.

OPINION: That makes sense. Mothers tend to overreact when you're trying to kidnap their young. Just ask Macauley Culkin.

FACT: Now the most serious threat to free-living gorillas is the human population explosion. As more and more people take over the land for agriculture, logging and other development, the gorillas have nowhere left to go.

OPINION: The solution for most problems like this is to either build a call center and put these gorillas to work, or a casino so we can take their money before they all kill themselves.

Hawktåler Couchtard

Nine sprring is coaming!

nmnm Ces't pas spring mais Fawll.

NMNNMMNN mon dos, au saucure au saucure!!!!

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