

Study: male caregivers live longer

Among humans and other primates, lifespans of males and females more equal when he helps with raising the children

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back to 1780. For the animals, they examined the life history of up to 1,500 animals in each species.

The pattern that emerged, said Allman, is that among primates that closely shared the care of offspring, the male-female lifespans also were nearly the same. But in species in which males took almost no part in child-rearing, the females outlive the males by a wide margin.

For instance, in chimpanzees, where the male has almost no role in raising the young, there are about three times more females than males in the adult population.

Among mountain gorillas, where fathers will protect and play with their young, females have only a slight survival advantage.

Allman said that among humans, based on the 200 years of Swedish data, the women tend to live 5 percent to 8 percent

longer than the men.

Among two primates, the owl monkey and titi monkey, fathers carry their young from shortly after birth, except for brief periods of nursing. Allman said that titi monkey males actually tended to outlive the females and lifespan was about the same among the genders of the owl monkeys.

Allman said that among some new world monkeys, such as the marmoset, males appear to highly prize the young and up to four males may share parenting duties.

"There have been reports that some fathers will actually steal the children of others," said Allman.

Website attracts curious, interested

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Internet, he had 27,000 people connecting to it.

The question on gays elicited this response from Dennis P., who identified himself as a homosexual from Tucson, Ariz.:

"I think the answer lies in the question, 'Why do some straight men feel they have to sound macho?' Sometimes, whether it is a gay or straight man, the reason is simply that he is advertising for a mate (or at least a sexual encounter)," he said.

The site is drawing positive reviews from diversity experts and newspaper columnists.

Leonard Pitts, a columnist for The Miami Herald, wrote: "If we come to grips with the ways we differ, we might begin to see

the ways we do not."

Detroit News columnist Betty DeRamus called the site an overdue forum for people to "pose the questions they dare not raise in public. Many of these questions, even the stupid ones, stem from ignorance and isolation rather than raw racism."

Carmen Vazquez, manager of diversity training and education at the Newspaper Association of America in Vienna, Va., says she is addicted to the site.

It presents "everyday people talking with each other, everyday people either venting their anger or giving their perspective. That's soul food for me," she said.

Cindy Clardy, 47, of

Southfield, Mich., is a frequent reader of the Y? forum. A self-described lesbian, she said, "I post more in the sexual orientation section than the other sections, but I read them all."

Responding to the question about the term African-American, Jeffrey S., 42, of Pensacola, Fla. wrote: "I've been Negro (on my birth certificate), Colored, black and now African-American. Do you think they put this to a vote? I may wake up tomorrow and be a man of color."

Some questions generate more responses than others.

One that drew a dozen asked: "Why do blacks have larger than average lips?"

"Average, compared to what?" replied Alex, 39, of Lawrenceville, Ga. "It's all a matter of how you define what 'average' is and in this country 'average' means 'white.' This means that anything that isn't white is therefore different or non-average. See how strange that is?"

The Y? Forum's Web site is www.yforum.com

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duce and store their own food via ingenious root structures, which may appear round and scaly, like onions (true bulbs), hard and flat (corms), or long and fleshy (tubers and rhizomes). Rhizomatous perennials that hail from Africa include lily of the Nile (*Agapanthus* spp.) and red-hot poker (*Kniphofia* spp.). Both have been hybridized for improved hardiness and expanded color range.

Gardeners in temperate climates use showy agapanthus as focal points in borders or plant them en masse on sunny slopes. In cold climates (Zone 5 and north), the perennials embellish patios and pool decks when planted in containers and tubs (when frost threatens, pots may be stored in a greenhouse or large cold frame.).

Bearing tight, ball-shaped clusters of blue, lavender, or white funnel-shaped flowers, agapanthus enjoy having their roots pot-bound, as long as they receive plenty of water in summer. Well suited to containers is "Peter Pan", an 18-inch dwarf sporting sky-blue flowers. Winter hardy in Zone 6 (a protective blanket of leaves or straw is a good idea) are the Headbourne hybrids, including azure-hued "Blue Banube," pastel "Blue Giant" and "Bressingham hybrids, considered the deepest blue available. Deer-proof agapanthus make excellent cut flowers and may be dried and used in arrangement. Rhizomes should be planted in rich, well-drained soil, in sun or light shade. Thick, straplike foliage remains handsome long after blossoms fade. In general, the narrower the leaf, the hardier the cultivar.

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