Mendoza and Mason draw attention to differences in the physiology and temperament of primate species and their relation to their social structure. Socha reviews blood group serology in non-human primates, including investigatory techniques. Rumpler gives his view of the monophyletic origin of lemurs based on analyses of their karyotypes. Smith et al. give a report of their work on rhesus macaque transferrins and albumins.

Volume 2 is concerned primarily with physiology, morphology, and taxonomy, but in several of the papers these elements are tied in with broader views of evolution and make statements about behavior as well. The broad integration of anatomy, physiology, and behavior attempted in various degrees here makes possible a more complete view of the particular adaptations of each primate species. This volume provides an opportunity to refresh one's view of the progress of primate evolutionary studies.

Volume 3 has 15 papers and ranges from socialization, sex, and social behavior to studies of vocalization and, finally, conservation and captive breeding of primates. Some of the papers are fairly extensive reviews. These include Poirier on primate socialization, Feistner and McGrew on food-sharing, Nadler and Dahl's "Sexual Behaviour of the Great Apes," Tattersall and Sussman's "Ecology and Behaviour of the Malagasy Primates," Poirier and Kanner's review of Asian colobine society, and Mittermeier on primate conservation. Others are more specific in their topic: Chivers' "Social Behavior of the Lesser Apes," Seth et al. on rhesus monkey behavior, Coelho and Bramblett on behavior of baboons.

As with volume 2, there is an attempt to give the historical background in many of the papers and lead up to the present status of the topic covered. Volume 2 is the better integrated, having fewer papers and a better relation between their topics. Volume 3 does have the integrating theme of ethology, but the offerings are narrower in focus and rather less interrelated. Both volumes could benefit by an added chapter which integrates the efforts of the individual contributors.

PAUL E. SIMONDS
Department of Anthropology
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon


We are accustomed to regard the study of philosophy as a kind of high-minded intellectual enterprise exemplified by the denizens in the Grove of Academe in ancient Greece and by scholarly professors at subsequent institutions of higher learning. There is an ambivalence in our attitude towards the term, however, and although we think of philosophy as being the height of intellectual activity on the one hand, on the other we tend to regard it as relatively divorced from the things that really matter. The argument about how many angels can dance on the head of a pin is repeatedly cited as a demonstration of just how inane philosophical disputation can become even though the Medieval concern about whether angels were corporeal entities or not was never phrased in that fashion. So we tend to treat philosophers with a mixture of uncomprehending admiration and unwarranted scorn.

Occasionally philosophy will have an impact on science as, for example, has been the case with "The New Archaeology" where the influence of Sir Karl Popper led to the development of a fearsome hypothetico-deductive jargon and a denigration of induction to the extent that basic fieldwork almost came to a halt. Most practitioners of science, however, plug along with relatively little attention given to the philosophical niceties of what they are about.

Every now and then, however, we get confronted with philosophically based questions from students or colleagues that force us to focus on what philosophers are actually saying. Some of Popper's effects have already been mentioned. More recently, we have been confronted with what seems on the face of it to be an even more irrational position. One school of philosophers has emerged which claims that the realm of scientific endeavor has not succeeded in producing any
accumulation of our comprehension of the
world over the past the past several centu-
ries. These philosophers go by the name of
"relativists," although no two are exactly
alike. Obviously most scientists regard such
a claim as a patent absurdity, but it has been
offered in all seriousness and most of us are
not sufficiently skilled in formal philosophi-
cal argumentation to be able to frame a
definitive rebuttal.

Larry Laudan, in his gracefully written
little book *Science and Relativism,* has come
to our rescue. Since the time of Plato, philos-
ophers have favored the format of a dialogue
to present their ideas, and Laudan has bor-
rowed and expanded upon this to present his
treatment of the problems facing relativism
in the form of a conversation held over a
three-day period by four fictive members of
the American Philosophical Congress.

These four figures represent the major
philosophical positions currently identifi-
able: realism, positivism, pragmatism and,
of course, relativism. Each is a clever amal-
gam of real functioning philosophers past or
present. For example, the relativist is por-
trayed as Quincy Rortabender, a combina-
tion of Willard Van Orman Quine, Richard
Rorty, and Paul K. Feyerabend, and includes
aspects of Thomas S. Kuhn. Laudan recog-
nizes that neither Kuhn nor Quine accept
the relativist label, but he maintains that
their writings have unmistakable implica-
tions for the relativist position. Quincy in
fact is far less of a nihilist than the “anything
goes” stance of Feyerabend, and, although he
does defend the relativist manifesto that
"The way we take things to be is quite inde-
pendent of the way things are," he remains
quite gracious during the course of the de-
bate even though the other three rather gang
up on him.

The realist is Karl Selnam, evidently a
combination of Popper, Roy Wood Sellars,
and Hilary Putnam. He has less to say than
the others in the debate, and the character is
less well drawn. This may be because it is
hard to see a fully developed realism in
Popper’s writings. The positivist is Rudy
Reichfeigl, a combination of Rudolf Carnap,
Hans Reichenbach, and Herbert Feigl. Fi-
nally, the pragmatist is Percy Lauwey, a
mixture of Charles Sanders Peirce and John
Dewey with major doses of Larry Laudan
himself.

Although Laudan defends the view that
the relativist position is “profoundly wrong-
headed,” he does not present it in the ex-
treme forms that invite ridicule and scorn
since, as he notes in his introduction, he is
“not interested in cheap victories.” In the
three days of debate recorded, the antago-
nists deal with all of the issues in a most
civilized manner and with a minimum of the
rarefied jargon that often keeps non-philos-
ophers in the dark when they attempt to
grapple with the core writings of the various
schools of thought.

Most scientists tend to assume key aspects
of positivism, pragmatism, and realism, and
will be quite comfortable with the position
defended by Laudan. If one really wants to
see how these various views differ, there is
no better book to consult. However, since it is
written in conversational form, that means
one has to plow through a lot of discussion to
get the various points. The conversations
are arranged by subject starting with the
matter of “Progress and Cumulativity”
through “Theory-ladenness and Underdeter-
mination," “Holism,” “Standards of Success,”
“Incommensurability,” and “Interests and
the Social Determinants of Belief.”

For most of us, perhaps the nicest thing
about his book is the knowledge that it has
been written. It is comforting to be able to
cite the writings of a first-rate professional
philosopher as a defense against the attacks
of the extreme relativists. Laudan’s pragma-
ticism is rooted in the traditions that ema-
nated from the Scottish School of “Common
Sense” in the eighteenth century, and so too
is the Darwinian biology that underlies our
own field. The two are happily compatible,
and it is nice that we can continue to pursue
our chosen research gambits secure in the
knowledge that full philosophical justifica-
tion has been provided by a scholar of the
stature of Larry Laudan.

C. LORING BRACE
Museum of Anthropology
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan