

A Field Investigation of the *Nonpuppetus teletubitus* Social Behavior

Dale R. Lockwood*

Institute for Televised Ecology, 742 Evergreen Terrace, Springfield USA

Introduction

Recently there has been discussion about the sexual and social behavior of a group of organisms that is yet to be classified but which I will refer to as *Nonpuppetus teletubitus*. This species has the common name, Teletubbies. It has been suggested by lay persons that one member of this species has demonstrated homosexual tendencies (Falwell, 1999; Darrow, 1997). The research presented here includes a field study of the only known colony of *N. teletubitus* as well as a classification scheme for the organisms. Before discussing the field data, a brief review of the taxonomy of related organisms will put the work into proper perspective.

Classification

The genus *Nonpuppetus* is placed in the family *Foamicae*. There are two genera in the family, *Puppetus* and *Nonpuppetus*. Within the genera there are several known species. The most important species seen to date are *Puppetus muppetus* and *Nonpuppetus muppetus* (Hensen). *P. muppetus* consists of a wide range of individual forms. There is currently debate as to whether these forms represent true subspecies or the species is a large collection of highly polymorphic interbreeding forms. The subspecies supporters have identified a list of variants which include *homindsimulii* (see Count, Bert and Ernie for specific examples), *monsterii* (see Zoe, Cookie Monster and the oft sighted Elmo), *amphibsimulii* (Kermit being the archetype of this subspecies), and *swinesnoutii* (Miss Piggy representing this subspecies).

The genus *Nonpuppetus* is composed of many forms that are currently debated as to the classification level. Since these forms appear to be even more diverse than the *P. muppetus* forms, *N. muppetus* is probably an incorrect classification and each form is probably a unique species. There are several species identified including *N. avesgrandites* (Big Bird is the archetype), *N. snufflupigus*, *N. purpodinosauritus* and *N. godzilla-japonicus* (not to be confused with *Digitus godzillicus* - which has only been seen since last year (and by a very few unfortunate people)). It should be noted that *N. godzilla-japonicus* has not been seen since its encounter with *N. mothracus* in the mid 1970s. This species may be extinct. Most members of this genus are only found in the television habitat, thus direct interaction is impossible (unless the field researcher is willing to sleep with Hollywood producers).

One species, *N. disneycus* actually thrives on contact with *Homo sapiens*. This species was a narrowly ranged endemic (confined to small tracks in California and Florida) but

Address Correspondence: dale.lockwood@colostate.edu

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recently has become an invasive species both in Europe and Asia. It appears that it may migrate through a behavior known as "ice shows" but whether this is how it moved to other continents is still an open question. It is unclear whether it will survive in its European habitat. The French appear to view it as a pest species and have been working hard on exterminating the organisms and their habitat.

The genus has a large diversity of body forms, but each species appears to be a narrowly distributed endemic (probably due to the well known law of copyright which states that wealth is proportional to the exertion of control by the parasitic hominids that attach themselves to the *Foamicae* organisms).

As we shall see from the results of the field study, the identification of the species *N. teletubbitus* is open for scientific debate.

Methods

I awoke at 6:30 in the morning (which was without a doubt the most difficult part of the study) and turned on the local PBS station. Like most *Foamicae* it appears only in the television habitat. Thus, I was able to eat breakfast without disturbing the behavior of the organisms at the study site. After about twenty minutes I concluded the study. There appears to be a dangerous side effect for all observers of *teletubbitus* who are older than three years of age - watching an entire episode can turn your brain into an eggplant (which may explain the rash claims about the social dynamics of the group that are currently in the media).

I noted the dynamics of the group, which consisted of four organisms. At no time during the study was any overt sexual contact observed. The group did hug often but owing to the fact that they have no genitalia I concluded that no sexual activities were taking place.

Results

The study was a simple field observation, but a series of quantitative data were collected regarding the social dynamics of the group (Table 1). The data regarding reproductive behaviors is elusive. The four members of *N. teletubbitus* that appeared in the habitat did

Table 1: Behaviors

Behavior	Number observed
Reproductive	0
Hugs	1*
Kisses	0
Dancing	4
Running	3
Riding a scooter	1

*All four individuals hugged together

not produce any offspring. It is unclear whether these are mature individuals or adolescents. Evidence supporting adolescents appears with the observation of a care-taker vacuum cleaner, referred to by the individuals as “Nu Nu”. Either these are an advanced culture in which most menial tasks have been parsed out to machines or the group of children is at least partially cared for with the aid of mechanical devices.

Given the absence of any clear reproductive behavior, no direct conclusions about the orientation of any individual can be addressed. The study did indicate that the individuals appeared to be well adapted to their environment, relatively predator free and generally happy.

Discussion

It has been suggested that the *N. teletubbitus* known as Tinky Winky (having only four known organisms in the species makes identification of individuals extremely easy - especially for two year olds) is homosexual. The report that made this claim stated that Tinky Winky has a masculine voice, carries a purse, is purple and has antenna shaped like a triangle so it must be homosexual. Since these organisms are clearly not human the male voice and purse are clearly anthro-centric bias in the observations. In fact the claim of a purse is culturally specific in that men of many cultures carry "purses". It should be noted that in this study it was determined that the other organisms all appeared to have more feminine voices. If voice range of *N. teletubbitus* has similar relationships to humans, we might conclude that Tinky Winky is the only male. Since it takes two to tango (as it were) it would be hard to determine Tinky's sexual orientation in the absence of others of the same sex. As to the claim that the purple marking of the teletubby distinguishes it as a homosexual, I would refer the person who proposed this notion to try it out in the locker room of the Minnesota Vikings. The purple coloring does not appear to be a cryptic pattern nor does it seem to be an attractant such as colorful feathers in birds.

As for the claim that Tinky Winky's triangle growth on its head is an indication of homosexual signaling, it should be noted that at no time during the study were the growths on the heads of any teletubbies used in any behaviors. This species is not well researched and the purpose of the antenna like protuberances is not clearly identified. It could serve as a group signaling device or be used in communications or sensory perception of the environment. These antennae could also be the sexual organs for the species. If this is so, then each member of the species appears to be of a unique sex. Thus the concept of homosexual as derived from a binary sexual species would have no relevance to a species with such complex genetic composition. From the observations it would appear that these antennae do not serve as sexual organs and that the organisms appear to be devoid of any such structures.

Since no *N. teletubbitus* has been born to the four known since their discovery and none appear to have any genitalia, it is likely that the species reproduces asexually. If this is the case then the concept of homosexuality cannot be applied to the species. It should be noted that none of the tubbies appear to be undergoing binary fission or budding so the other possibility is spontaneous generation. We can only hope that the "researchers" at one of the scientific creation institutes are actively investigating this possibility. Thus in

the absence of any evidence of sexual activity among any of the teletubbies the claim of homosexual behavior simply cannot be supported.

During the study no other *N. teletubitus* seemed overly attracted to Tinky Winky. But all were willing to hug one another at various times. Thus it appears that the social structure is of a tight community of happy Foam creatures devoid of sexual behaviors .

Since there are four distinct forms observed and no apparent mating it can be seen that the difficulties in classifying *P. muppetus* and *N. muppetus* also apply to teletubbies. Are these four individuals of closely related species or is the species highly diverse? Which ever is the case, it is clear that since these are the only known examples, rather than creating a hostile environment towards them as has been attempted with the spurious claims of sexual behavior, we need to develop a teletubbies recovery plan. There should be an immediate call to have these organisms listed under the Endangered Species Act.

One explanation for the unusual claim of sexual orientation of the teletubby by some observers is probably Dan Quayle Syndrome. This disorder as manifested by a former Vice President in regards to the television character, Murphy Brown, is simply not having the common sense to distinguish between real life and your television set. Unfortunately, the condition may not be reversible.

References:

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