

College students observe 'monkey business' at zoo



Students from the College of Biology 212 traveled to Washington Park Zoo last week to participate in an Educational Research Program on primates (monkeys). The program, headed by instructor Ginny Weber, received a grant from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and provides an opportunity for undergraduates to collect data in a zoo

research documents the behavior of the animals and to determine their psychological action patterns such as feeding, grooming, eating and vocalization are being recorded.

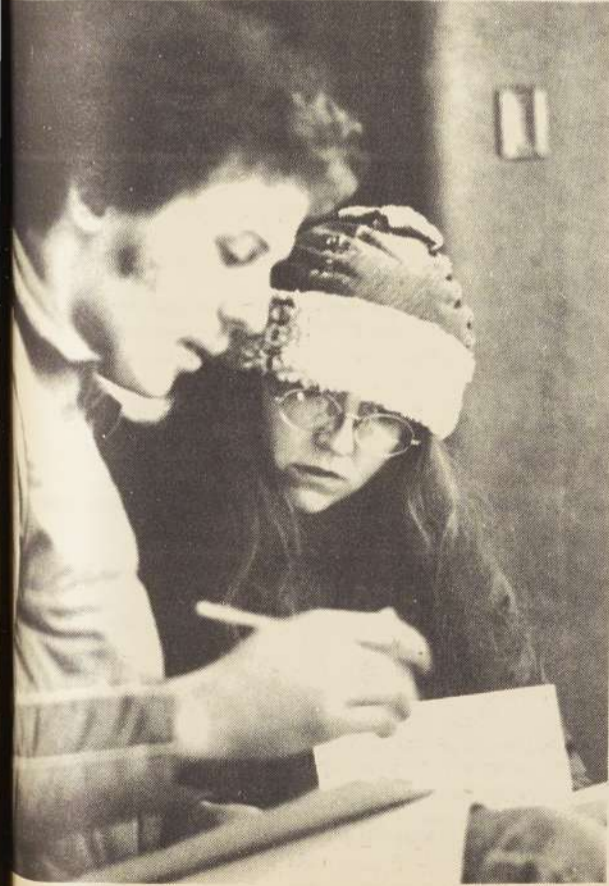
opportunities to apply the knowledge learned has been provided for the studies are so basic that they lie within the descriptive stages, according to officials at the primate center.

recorded, such as rock-climbing or a tendency toward destruction, are objective behavior habits. The zoo environment is designed to be as natural as possible and exaggerated.

most obvious conclusions from the behavior studies of primates concerns space. Monkeys

are curious, exploring animals that, in a natural setting, range great distances foraging for food. Gibbons and baboons, for example, travel 10 to 20 miles a day, while even the more passive chimpanzees travel five miles each day. The small, confined, empty, cubicals allotted to the primates contrast immensely from their previous homes.

Unfortunately, the zoo management has no plans to create a more suitable primate habitat. The administrators at Washington Park Zoo which control the money flow are against any major changes, according to primate officials.



College biology students Nels Peterson and Maria Stayer (far left) compare notes on a recent field trip to the primate center of the Washington Park Zoo where they observed behavior of chimps, orangutans and baboons. Above, Ginny Weber, Biology 212 instructor, discusses behavior with Donna Schwartz and Joe Intile.

Photos and story by Ted McKenna

