



Dr. Bernstein wrote this "Autobiographical Note" by request.

I was born in Brooklyn New York in 1933. At age 14 I was selected to spend the summer at Columbia University to learn about Nuclear Physics so that I could be a docent at New York's Grand Central Palace for the "Man and the Atom" exhibit for the city's Anniversary celebration. In addition to comparing electromagnetic, gaseous diffusion and centrifugation techniques for separating Uranium isotopes to make bombs, I entertained the public by foolishly converting silver dimes (back then they were silver) into cadmium. A failure as an Alchemist, Physics seemed obvious. Two years later I went to Cornell (the first one in my family to ever go to college) and realized that I really did not enjoy Physics. On the other hand, I had never had a pet at home and discovered that I loved playing with animals. Since the Psychology Department worked with live animals and the Zoology department did not, I got my Bachelor's degree in Psychology with a minor in Zoology.

From there I went to the University of Chicago and nine months later finished my MS with Eckherd Hess; the next week I had to report to the Air Force for Flight School, but ended up as a "special weapons" research officer. (The Korean War was in progress and I had an ROTC commission.) Two and a half years later the Air Force allowed me to leave (the war was over and they had no use for me). I returned to Chicago and got my PhD. under Austin Riesen in 1959 while still maintaining ties to Zoology. While working in the labs at the University of Chicago, Northwestern Medical School and the Brookfield Zoo, I began a family and we took in an infant rhesus monkey for on-the-job-training in preparation for rearing children. Penrod (star of two Pennsylvania Cinema Register films) lived with us for the next five years and was one of many monkeys, cats and dogs and miscellaneous animals that our children grew up with in the home.

I applied for one job, at the Yerkes Laboratories of Primate Biology convinced that I would get it and spend my life studying primates. Riesen did prevail upon me to submit an application for another job but I can't even remember if they even received it as I did get the job at Yerkes in Orange Park Florida. I continued my affiliation as the Laboratories moved to Atlanta and became the Yerkes Regional Primate Research Center of Emory University. During this time I mixed laboratory studies with field work in Panama, Malaysia and Thailand and continued to do both types of research for my academic career, spending time in Colombia, Indonesia, India, and Japan.

In 1968 I was a single father of four small children and took the opportunity to teach my first classes at the University of Georgia, where I kept a part time appointment until 1971 when I accepted a full time position in the Psychology Department. However, I continued my research program at the Yerkes Field Station splitting my time between the two institutions until 1991 when I stopped my research at Yerkes and began research on the Georgia campus, and at other institutions, and continued my field work. My students have continued to work at Yerkes, and other institutions, and to do field work.

After 1991 I devoted more time to faculty governance. I served as Graduate Coordinator in the Department and later accepted the Interim Headship when Pat Miller had been selected as the next Head and could not take it immediately. Roger Thomas agreed to come back as Interim Head but only for a few months and I took the last four months. Administrative tasks are always "immediately" and I learned that there is always another way to do what needs to be done no matter what you might believe on the face of it in reading the rules. There is always an obscure rule that is not well publicized that someone will tell you about only if you ask nicely. You can accomplish things, but it takes a lot out of you to do so.

I have been active in professional societies and held several offices, including President of the American Society of Primatologists. I was one of the founders of both this Society and the Animal Behavior Society and held positions in the International Ethological Society and the American Institute of Biological Sciences. I also saw service with the Institute for Laboratory Animal Resources of the National Research Council and served on editorial boards, becoming very active as a reviewer of grants and publications for a variety of agencies.

Not having the good sense to retire at a sensible age I continue to enjoy teaching, research and University life too much to sit at home and not be an active part of it. I remarried in Athens (the third time was the charm) and our combined family includes six children, nine grandchildren (and counting) and we greatly enjoy our family, including the annual mass vacation to someplace where we can camp, or swim on a coral reef. Fortunately all of us enjoy anything that has to do with water and the outdoors (my children learned about the rain forest first hand when I took them into the field with me as preschoolers).

I will likely be around in the department for as long as I am able, and always willing to talk to anyone who cares to drop by.

Note added by website author/manager:

Dr. Bernstein's early contributions to the Yerkes Laboratories of Primate Biology are cited extensively in:

**Dewsbury, D. A. (2006). *Monkey farm: A history of the Yerkes Laboratories of Primate Biology, Orange Park, Florida, 1930-1965.*
Lewisburg, P: Bucknell University Press.**

**Roger K. Thomas
Website Author/Manager**