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This is similar to Charlie's Angels if they were scientists. Louis, a scientist, enlists the help of 3 brilliant women to study great primates. They go out and become part of the primate pack and bring back lots of data. The 3 women weave in and out together from time to time. The story is mostly told in 3 parts and each woman gets a part. Jane Goodall is recruited first to study chimps. Dian Fossey is next to study Gorillas and if you have seen the 80s movie Gorillas in the Mist go see it now and then finish this review. Birute Galdikas went to Indonesia to study the Orangutans. I had never heard of Birute Galdikas before. I thought this was a great introduction to these amazing women and they are strong female women from real life. The art was safe and fun. Louis said women are patient and better to be accepted into a society. He also thought they were smarter. He was correct. A perfect example of a good idea that's poorly executed. Things ended on a vague note and I'm not sure how I feel about it. Is it or isn't it nonfiction? This book, I believe, set out to make people aware of female scientists, but in the end, I was left not knowing what was true and what wasn't. One of the questions that we frequently get asked about this book is: is it nonfiction? The answer is: it's difficult to tell. Primates is ostensibly a nonfiction biography about three different women who work with primates: Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Birute Galdikas. It tells about their lives and their work, and the author and the illustrator both did a lot of research and endeavored to

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be as faithful as possible to the historical realities of their subjects. So, why is it difficult to tell if it's nonfiction? Graphic novels are one of those things that it's hard to fit in the nonfiction category because everything is so described that it's just about impossible to be 100% accurate. For example, with Jim Ottaviani's previous book, the #1 New York Times Best Selling graphic novel *Feynman*, we had to have a whole big discussion about the depiction of Richard Feynman as a person who rolled up his sleeves. Apparently, in real life, he didn't roll up his sleeves ever. But in the book, he had his sleeves rolled up all the time and the depiction of him as a person who was always getting down to work was emblematically portrayed in those rolled sleeves. So does it matter to an illustrated biography that the artist depicts the character with her hair in a ponytail in one panel when in that moment in real life it was actually in a braid? Or that the artist drew the character in a blue shirt when the shirt she was wearing that day was actually white? Does it make the book fiction instead of nonfiction? You decide.

Primates is an ambitious book that largely succeeds at giving a slice of life look to three amazing scientists and their contributions to primatology: Birute Galdikas, Jane Goodall, and Dian Fossey in the field. I was familiar with Goodall and Fossey, but I confess to have never read about Galdikas, and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn about her work here. Each of these women were selected by Dr. Louis Leakey, premier anthropologist to study and observe in the field. Goodall and Fossey had no formal training when they began working with Leakey, as he saw it, not being bogged down with jargon and method, but a clear view of primate study. Nuance and development are hard to bring in a graphic form: subtleties and glances, and general feelings, but author Ottaviani and illustrator Wicks perform some spectacular character development of the three Trimate scientists, and their sponsor/benefactor Leakey here. Leakey comes across both lecherous and generous: he recruits young women and there are implied relationships and then works to get funding and sponsorships for each woman to do their fieldwork unimpeded. He believes that women's keen observation skills work well in the field, and with Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas he sponsors their PhD education at Cambridge University. Each woman is profiled as they begin

Delta of Venus

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Kushiel's Dart

Sappho's Leap

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His Wife Messalina

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and the Classical
Tradition

Tropic of Cancer

The Piano Teacher

I, Claudius

Sex and the City

The Nude: A Study in
Ideal Form

Thy Neighbor's Wife

their studies Goodall with the chimpanzees in Tanzania, Fossey with the gorillas in Rwanda, and Galdikas with the orangutans in Indonesia setting up camp, establishing patterns in the primate populations, and slowly getting deeper into the primate society The cartoon illustrations may lead people to think this is geared to a young audience and it could be read and understood by 10 The design and style was well thought out Some of the interactions between the three scientists could have been confusing, but the illustrator made note to change the fonts for each Goodall gets a curvy cursive, Fossey gets a serif typewriter font, and Galdikas gets a block script The format does limit any true detail, but this book is meant to give you an amuse bouche, so the reader can get a cursory glance at each scientist, and follow up with the provided bibliography for many details later It worked on me I want to read about these extraordinary women now 2016 Book Riot Read Harder Challenge a non superhero comic Jim Ottaviani Returns With An Action Packed Account Of The Three Greatest Primatologists Of The Last Century Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, And Birut Galdikas These Three Ground Breaking Researchers Were All Students Of The Great Louis Leakey, And Each Made Profound Contributions To Primatology And To Our Own Understanding Of Ourselves Tackling Goodall, Fossey, And Galdikas In Turn, And Covering The Highlights Of Their Respective Careers, Primates Is An Accessible, Entertaining, And Informative Look At The Field Of Primatology And At The Lives Of Three Of The Most Remarkable Women Scientists Of The Twentieth Century Thanks To The Charming And Inviting Illustrations By Maris Wicks, This Is A Nonfiction Graphic Novel With Broad Appeal So, my little sister was reading this and I picked it up last night because it looked cute and interesting so then I went and read the whole thing, of course I already knew a bit about Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey, but I don't think I'd ever heard of Birut Galdikas This book is a fascinating look into all of their lives and the fearless and groundbreaking work they did I really loved the artwork, it's really adorable. For the most part, I liked how it was written However, there were a few confusing shifts in point of view The three narrators perspectives are in different handwriting but I often forgot whose was whose There were also some gaps in the narrative that I found jarring I had a feeling a lot of things

Atomised

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were glossed over because the book is meant to be kid friendly also I guess many years had to be skipped over at parts so that it wasn't hundreds of pages long But over all, I really enjoyed it It's a very interesting, touching, and inspiring story. When I put a hold on this book through my public library, I had no idea that it was a graphic novel meant for teenagers All that registered for me was that it was a new book about my personal hero, Jane Goodall, as well as two other admired women, Dian Fossey and Birute Galikas. It is a graphic novel, so it doesn't take long to read maybe an hour or so I would consider it to be a gentle introduction to the work done by three indomitable women for those who are unfamiliar with it. I guess because I grew up watching National Geographic specials about Jane, I just can't believe that anyone is unaware of her work I spent my teenage years wanting to be her Unfortunately, there were no chimpanzees on my little stretch of Canadian prairie, so I had to practice on other animals gophers, sparrows, even cats and dogs And no one who is interested in either primates or wildlife conservation is unfamiliar with all three women But we all have to start somewhere, so this is a good introduction for the next generation. It's obvious that Ottaviani and Wicks have done their homework The lives of the three researchers are portrayed accurately, although they feel a bit brief Although the book's jacket says that it is meant for teens, to me it felt like it would be better for slightly younger children, maybe the tweens I would like to think that teenagers would want something a bit substantial, but it's been a long time since I was a teen and even then I probably wasn't typical. It is definitely a sanitized version nowhere is it explicitly stated that Dian was murdered for her conservation work, although it is pointed out that her extreme views didn't make her many friends in Africa and it says that she is buried next to her beloved gorilla, Digit Jane's personal life ceases to be mentioned after the birth of her son no mention is made of her divorce and remarriage There is one humorous reference to her presenting to a dance partner at a conference, but since the concept of presenting, i.e. assuming a sexually receptive pose like a female chimp, is never explained elsewhere in the book, I wonder how many young readers will have any idea why it is supposed to be funny Birute's divorce is treated very matter of factly, when I believe that it was

actually a very painful, bitter parting And none of her children, Canadian or Indonesian, are ever mentioned. Not that I expect a children's books to probe the details of these women's personal lives, but why include their personal lives at all Surely it's supposed to be their research that is featured, as suggested in the subtitle Not a complaint, but an observation none of the drawings really look like the women Sometimes I had difficulty deciding if I was looking at Dian or Birute and had to depend on the dialog to help me sort them out Jane was obvious because she was made very blonde was she ever that blonde Louis Leakey is portrayed as considerably less eccentric that he truly was and his wife, Mary, is drawn wearing a man's suit and smoking a cigar perhaps accurate of some period of her life, but rather dismissive In the only figure where she appears, she says to Birute, Married, eh Good, not like the other ones Perhaps a jab at Louis rather unprofessional interest in all the women with his occupational reach. A strange mixture of research and the personal I would definitely give the book to children of the appropriate age Perhaps it's my extra knowledge of the life details of these three women that leaves me feeling a bit uneasy Those with less background might not notice some of the digs and jabs I also wonder if a story about male researchers would include so many details of personal relationships Somehow I doubt it and that is the source of my misgivings. I so wanted to love this book The artwork is fantastic, and the three scientists Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Birute Galdikas come across as individual personalities, each admirable, tough, and dedicated in her own way. Unfortunately, as other reviewers have pointed out, there are some problems My biggest beef is the parroted belief of Louis Leakey that women are better in the field because they're perceptive and patient than men It would be nice if there was anything here to challenge this totally sexist and paternalistic notion Instead, the book seemed to endorse it. Also, the point of view is confusing, and it was difficult for me to pick the book up after putting it down I think this aspect of the book could be too challenging for a young reader So much is told in first person, only to be called out as partial fiction in the author's note, ugh I had believed while reading that these were actual quotes from the scientists And finally, I wish there was about the fieldwork these women did and the significance

of their discoveries That is pretty glossed over, each woman s work reduced to one major discovery In the meantime, their personal lives get fairly detailed treatment I imagine they ll want to be remembered for their work, not their rocky love lives. Overall, a disappointment It has a great cover, the illustrations are so well done, and I do like the subject matter So at least a few redeeming qualities. When I was in primary school, we had to read a book titled Great Men and Women Do I need to mention that Gandhi was the only person of color in the book At least there were two women Marie Curie and Florence Nightingale I am glad that times have changed in that respect, and that young people can find books that are somewhat representative today In my home the name Leakey was used as often as the name Kardashian seems to be used by the media today, so imagine my delight in learning that Louis Leakey played a key role getting these women scientists started on their careers There are some Goodreads reviewers who are unhappy with Leakey s stance that women would be better in the field because they were perceptive and patient than men Doesn t bother me one bit Women getting a leg up because of a sexist attitude is actually a refreshing change. This is a graphic biography of sorts about the three greatest primatologists of the last century Jane Goodall Chimps , Dian Fossey Gorillas , and Birut Galdikas Orangutans It is not non fiction as the book blurb proclaims In the afterword the authors state Some of what you just read is fiction There are holes in this story, huge gaping holes, and when the lives of the three women intersect, the text is often confusing as to who is saying what But I say that as an adult reader, and I plan to add the books in the bibliography to my TBR list. This book is targeted for a young adult audience read tween , so the art is cute and colorful, and the timeline and events highly simplified This would be a fun way to introduce kids especially girls to these three ground breaking researchers who each made profound contributions to primatology and to our own understanding of ourselves. When my daughter was two, we watched a lot of David Attenborough documentaries Planet Earth especially She named the polar bear trio in the first episode after her, her mother, and her infant brother I, the papa bear, was at the office One of our favourites though was an episode of The Life of Mammals that we found on Netflix called

Social Climbers It's all about monkeys and it's amazing to watch I know all kinds of animals are smart and use tools and surprise us constantly with their ingenuity there's just something wonderful about these creatures in particular My daughter and I always had a grand time snuggling up and watching the habits of these intelligent animals unfold under the warming tones of Attenborough's soothing narration. When I heard First Second would be publishing a non-fictional account of three of the foremost pioneers in primate studies, I was intrigued When I discovered that it was written by Jim Ottaviani, I had to have it His Feynman is one of my favourite non-fiction comics Ottaviani's sense of what out of everything to convey is masterful I couldn't wait to burn through Primates Attenborough primed me for the book and Ottaviani's involvement sold me on its viability, but I was wholly unprepared for Maris Wicks. Wicks wants you to think this is imaginary Jane Goodall but I choose to believe it is real life Wicks herself swooping in to make all things beautiful Wicks is beautiful.¹ Wicks is gorgeous Wicks is vibrant and verdant and lush and bright and comfortable and lively This is cartoon art of the first caliber I fell in love within pages Her sense of these animals is perfect Before reading Primates, I probably could have imagined any number of artists exploring Ottaviani's script with him Now, that is impossible Wicks owns Primates as much as Ottaviani if not ². Adding to the tremendous strength of Wicks' work on the book is her choices in colouring It probably helps that she both illustrates and colours the work herself and that she evidently has some pretty mean skill with a palette I've used words like verdant and lush and lively to describe her art It's because of the colours This is one of the greenest books I own And not just some sad mix of drab greens that might dot the hillsides in your standard, grim contemporary fantasy adventure Nah, Wicks' greens punch you in the face with how happy they are This is a book that makes sitting for hours and days and weeks in the jungle to catch a glimpse of some monkeys doing something anything well, it makes that jungle seem like the best place in the world to belt's like they can see into each other's souls And lest we imagine that Wicks has made a lie of the arduous routines that Primates' three protagonists underwent, I like to read this as Wicks transcending the mundane world of insect bites and cold

mornings and wet clothes and cramping muscles and instead delivering us into the transformative mindset of the women who would happily endure these things for months and years in service to their dreams In that sense, I think Wicks has captured something marvelous, something beyond words Because while these women are built of tremendous determination, it s the joy they take in these animals that is what fuels that stubborn willpower Primates tells the overlapping stories of three women who through hard work that others were unwilling or unable to take on discovered new things about chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans Two of them, Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey, were familiar to me I had seen several documentary pieces on Goodall in high school circa 1990 and I was at least aware of the 1986 Sigourney Weaver film about Fossey, Gorillas in the Mist even if it was a bit outside my interests at the time Birut Galdikas was entirely unknown to me though the delightful fact from the cover that she wore a blade on her hip helped me anticipate her section Each of these women are deeply associated with primate studies and each were tied together through the early direction of Louis Leakey.4As a primer on these three women s work, Primates is perhaps a wild success The reader is given a fair assessment of both the content of their work and a glimpse into its importance The act of reading is almost wholly without challenge and is even invigorating through the different narrative voices Ottaviani uses for each of the women and briefly for Leaky as well I found myself happily drawn into their own recollections of their work For the neophyte in whom this book sparks interest, an initial list of resources for further studies is provided being boring and lame and sometimes satisfied with too little, I simply opted for Wikipedia to round off some of the corners to my own body of knowledge in respect to these women. Someone familiar with these women and their scientific contributions will doubtlessly find Primates a less lively read than I did as would anyone approaching a text aimed at an audience with a lower proficiency in a subject A book of 133 pages dedicated to biographizing three lives is going to understandably overlook much of the content of those lives This is not a criticism, but may be important for fans of Goodall or Fossey or Galdikas to keep in mind Ottaviani does make understated references to certain things that those

familiar with his subjects will pick up on An example And another One time Ottaviani and Wicks were a bit too coy, I think, and the mystery still eats at me My wife too as it turns out She read Primates a day or so after I finished, sparked by my exuberance for Wicks art After she turned the last page, I began to probe her as I am wont regarding her assessment of the work I interrupted her just as she was getting started with the question Was there anything you didn t get A pause of consideration and then we spoke in unison What did she sit on We still don t know I tried Google and read a couple biographical articles on Galdikas, hoping against hope the event would be described to no avail Maybe some day For now, when I think of Primates, two thoughts pop into mind before any others 1 Soooooo pretty and 2 What did she sit on If you read all that and somehow are confused as to what I think, here s the short version I very much enjoyed Primates It s a lot of fun even if it may leave the reader hoping for information I would have happily read the same book had it been 270 pages long I might even had done so had it been 380 Maybe not, but probably Primates three or, briefly, four narrators are not as buoyant or rambunctious as Feynman was for Feynman, but they are different people and Primates use of their voices is comfortable and warm perhaps in Fossey s case, warmer than the woman herself Ottaviani does a good job balancing between the three women and prevents the work from being about any single one of them to the diminishment of the others I expect the work will age well and will be especially useful in giving younger readers a foothold into the study of primate ethnology.5 I think most readers will really really like6 Primates and most of those will even learn a thing or eight.Footnotes1 This shouldn t need clarification, but I m here talking about Wicks art Like how we might say that Monet is blotchy or Van Gogh is swirly or Pollack is drippy or Warhol is boring I mean, we probably wouldn t but hopefully that gives you the idea of what twist of language we re working with here Wicks, the human person, might be beautiful and gorgeous and vibrant and verdant verdant and all these things, but I can t know that because I ve never met or even seen her So we ll stick to describing her luscious art.2 Sorry, man If you want all the glory, you should choose to work with a lesser light next time.33 Don t worry I m kidding I know you re not a glory hog.4

I'm not certain how much direction he actually gave, but the book makes it seem minimal. More logistics and networking within the home theater than anything.⁵ That the focus of the work is on three women and not just arbitrarily on three women but justly may be of help provoking interest in the sciences in young girls, a demographic to whom the sciences sadly seem rather opaque and uninteresting.⁶ This was my wife's actual evaluation; she really, really liked the book. Review courtesy of Good Ok Bad.

