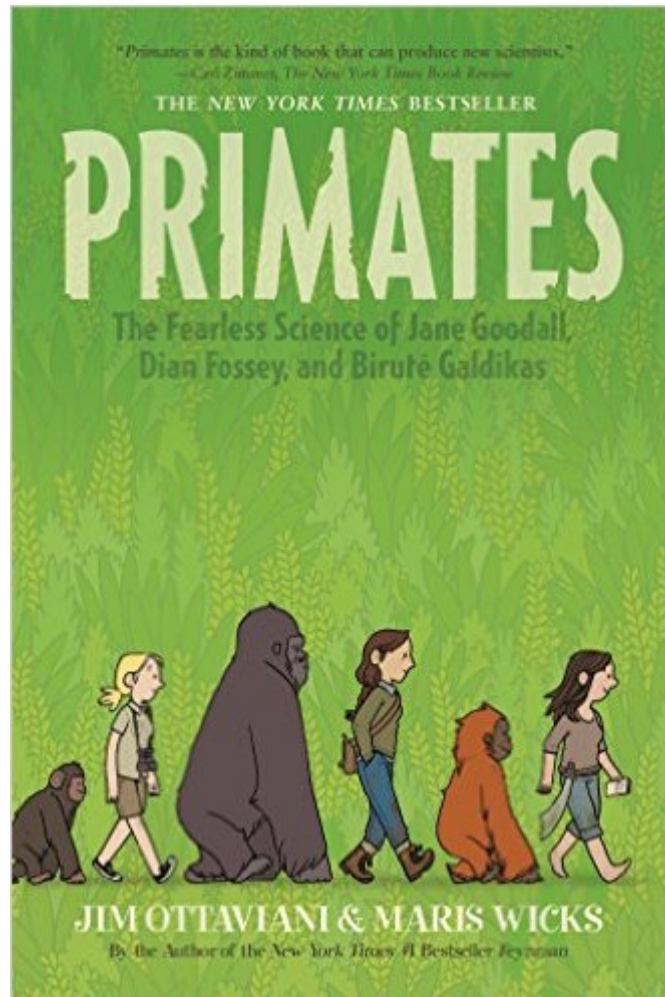


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# Primates: The Fearless Science Of Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, And Birutė Galdikas



## Synopsis

Jim Ottaviani returns with an action-packed account of the three greatest primatologists of the last century: Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Birutė 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.

## Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (August 4, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250062934

ISBN-13: 978-1250062932

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.3 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (37 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Having just read *Endangered* by Eliot Schrefer, it seemed fortuitous that I would wander into a local bookstore to find this little gem facing out at me from a shelf in the children's department. *Primates: The Fearless Science of Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Birute Galdikas* is a graphic, slightly fictionalized history of the three women who started with Louis Leakey and transformed the world's knowledge of the great apes. Jane Goodall is probably the most well known of these three women, and she was the first woman Leakey was successful in sending to study the great apes. When his former secretary wasn't successful with the chimpanzees (or terribly interested), Goodall, a woman with no formal degree or experience in conducting such a study, was sent. It was there that she

conducted some of the most groundbreaking research ever done on the chimpanzees. Dian Fossey didn't wait for Leakey to discover her, she hunted him down and demanded to be sent to study the mountain gorillas. Leakey, still convinced women are better at this kind of research, put her study together and sent her. It was there that the gorillas became the life and death of Dian Fossey. Her refusal to back down from dangerous people's protection of the poaching of the gorillas was her undoing, but even in death, she is a champion for these beautiful animals. Birute Galdikas is the least known of these three women. Having come to Leakey after Fossey and Goodall, she was most interested in the illusive orangutans. Lucky for these creatures, their ability to fade into the mist also made them difficult to hunt, which was a protection in and of itself. Galdikas herself was as illusive as her orangutans, but the research she gathered is still unmatched.

Although called "Primates", this is really about the (other) great apes\*, and three women who were inspired by Louis Leakey to study them: Jane Goodall (chimpanzees), Dian Fossey (gorillas), and Birute Galdikas (orangutans). Having read books by each of these women, this overview rings largely true, although it is obviously not a very deep look at its subjects. Reading this book you will get an introduction to Louis Leakey, the famed fossil hunter of east Africa. Unconventional and an outsider to the anthropological community, he was long disregarded and looked down on from their ivory towers. Between some spectacular discoveries, his flair as a showman, and the world stage offered him by the National Geographic Society, he became the public face of paleoanthropology. This led to great public interest in the topic, but probably also led to Leakey being overvalued by the public as the key figure in the area. Leakey understood that to understand people and our ancestry we also needed to understand our closest relatives. Thus he recruited or sponsored Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas. Each made breakthroughs in our understanding of their respective apes, but this book is more about their stories than their discoveries. Some key discoveries are mentioned, but I would have liked this book to offer a little larger window into our relatives. These women's stories are interesting and inspiring. Until I read them juxtaposed in this book it hadn't occurred to me how the personality of each somewhat mirrored the ape she studied. Goodall seems the best able to move from the field into the public eye, and she studied the very social chimpanzees.

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