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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references at the end of each chapters.
Nota di contenuto	Opening Pandora's Boxes in Sexual Selection Research; Thierry Hoquet -- Section 1. In Darwin's footsteps: historical issues -- Chapter 1. Sexual Selection: Why does it Play such a Large Role in the Descent of Man?; Michael Ruse -- Chapter 2. Utility vs Beauty: The Darwin/Wallace Debate as a Structuring Pattern in the History of Sexual Selection?; Thierry Hoquet and Michael Levandowsky -- Chapter 3. Darwin on the proportion of the sexes and general fertility: discovery and rejection of sex-ratio evolution and density-dependent selection; Michel Veuille -- Chapter 4. Sexual selection in the French school of population genetics: Claudine Petit (1920-2007); Jean Gayon -- Section 2. Current challenges -- Chapter 5. Sexual selection: is anything left?; Joan Roughgarden -- Chapter 6. Standing on Darwin's shoulders: the nature of selection hypotheses; Patricia Adair Gowaty -- Chapter 7. Sexual selection: the logical imperative; Tommaso Pizzari and Geoff. Parker -- Chapter 8. Selfish genetic elements and sexual selection; Nina Wedell and Tom A.R. Price -- Chapter 9. Preference, rationality and interindividual variation: the persisting debate about female choice; Frank Cézilly -- Chapter 10. Reaction norms of sex and adaptive

individual flexibility in reproductive decisions; Malin Ah-King and Patricia Adair Gowaty -- Section 3. Prospects: Animal aesthetics? -- Chapter 11. The role of sexual autonomy in evolution by mate choice; Richard O. Prum -- Chapter 12. The riddle of attractiveness: looking for an 'Aesthetic sense' within the hedonic mind of the beholders; Michel Kreutzer and Verena Aebischer -- Chapter 13. Aesthetics and reinforcement: A behavioural approach to aesthetics; Shigeru Watanabe.

Sommario/riassunto

This root-and-branch reevaluation of Darwin's concept of sexual selection tackles the subject from historical, epistemological and theoretical perspectives. Contributions from a wealth of disciplines have been marshaled for this volume, with key figures in behavioural ecology, philosophy, and the history of science adding to its wide-ranging relevance. Updating the reader on the debate currently live in behavioural ecology itself on the centrality of sexual selection, and with coverage of developments in the field of animal aesthetics, the book details the current state of play, while other chapters trace the history of sexual selection from Darwin to today and inquire into the neurobiological bases for partner choices and the comparisons between the hedonic brain in human and non-human animals. Welcome space is given to the social aspects of sexual selection, particularly where Darwin drew distinctions between eager males and coy females and rationalized this as evolutionary strategy. Also explored are the current definition of sexual selection (as opposed to natural selection) and its importance in today's biological research, and the impending critique of the theory from the nascent field of animal aesthetics. As a comprehensive assessment of the current health, or otherwise, of Darwin's theory, 140 years after the publication of his *Descent of Man*, the book offers a uniquely rounded view that asks whether 'sexual selection' is in itself a progressive or reactionary notion, even as it explores its theoretical relevance in the technical biological study of the twenty-first century.
