

INTERRELATING WITH ANIMALS: NONHUMAN SELVES IN THE LITERARY IMAGINATION

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Children's literature is full of animal characters widely understood to be symbolic humans. They are believed to provide the reader with a combination of delight and the neutrality and emotional distance considered necessary for navigating various stages of maturation or complex and charged social issues. In this paper, I ask whether animal characters may sometimes be understood as animal selves, and not as symbolic humans. Interest in the selfhood of non-human animals has been gaining ground in academic debates in the fields of animal and cognitive science, philosophy of mind, and anthropology, resulting in theoretical work that paints an intriguing picture of what animal selves might consist of and how we may already know those selves. As the foundation for this study of contemporary children's books with animal characters, selected current theory is reviewed, beginning with an introduction of basic concepts and including Leslie Irvine's Core Self elements and Nurit Bird-David's Relational Epistemology. Current thinking on the function and role of animals in children's literature is briefly discussed. The study itself is designed to distinguish patterns in animal characterization in order to build on John Andrew Fisher's framework for the disambiguation of anthropomorphism, a term referring to the common practice, often considered a categorical fallacy, of attributing 'human-like' characteristics (including selfhood) to non-humans. Fisher recognizes two broad types of anthropomorphic attribution that he calls Interpretive and Imaginative, the latter found in works of the imagination. The present study consisted of a survey and analysis of 46 contemporary

children's books with domestic animal characters, developed using criteria from the theoretical concepts presented on animal selfhood. Significant differences were found in those characters portrayed as clothed and/or bipedal and those presented more naturalistically, in the activities engaged in, and in the characters' voices, suggesting at least two broad approaches by authors and illustrators to animal characters, here labeled 'symbolic human' and 'animal self.'

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INTRODUCTION

Nonhuman animals fascinate us. They have appeared in art and stories throughout time and across most human cultures (Boyd, 2007; Daston and Mitman, 2005). In our stories and art, particularly in children's literature, fantasy, and folktales, we ourselves transform into other animals, we communicate with them; we even marry them, live with them, and learn from them. There is a sense of a larger community of beings of which we are one part and in which we take delight.

But there is another side to our relationship with nonhuman animals, especially in the modern Western world. Over the last 150 years, in response to Euro-American industrialization practices and some aspects of empirical laboratory investigation, a steadily growing concern for animal welfare and animal rights has arisen (Irvine, 2004; Wynne, 2004). Increasingly we are coming to understand that our actions in pursuit of perceived human goals have resulted in the devastation of our natural environment, including wild animal habitats and populations. Animals we have domesticated often fare no better.

In his influential 1967 article for *Science* magazine "The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis," historian Lynn White, Jr. traces the fusion of western science and technology and discusses the profound influence of Christian axioms on the scientists, in particular the axiom that "no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes." (1205) These trends combined, according to White, to create our modern ecologic crisis. He concludes that applying more technology will not solve

current ecological problems or avoid future backlashes. We must trace root causes by rethinking our old religion and ideas about our relationship with the natural world.

In this paper, I hope to contribute to the effort to rethink our human relationship with nonhuman creatures by outlining relevant scholarship in the science of mind, philosophy, literature, and in anthropology that point to a way of engaging with our environment and with the nonhuman animals who share it with us. This way is one of relationship; it has ancient roots, affords knowledge and understanding, and may be found in the West in works of the imagination including literature and art as well as in everyday common sense.

I am beginning from the premise that animals are selves in many of the ways that we are; that capacities such as emotional expression and cognitive processing are present in nonhuman animals in ways both similar to and distinct from our own, and that we can understand and relate with individual animal selves in ways that are not dependent on language. As part of my analysis, I will present findings from a survey of animal characters in a small sample of modern children's fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. As I will show, animal characters are presented in two broad ways, which I am calling 'symbolic human' and 'animal self'. They are distinguished by physical presentation, character voice, and by the activities engaged in. The imaginative development of naturalistic animal protagonists may itself be informed by the direct experience and knowledge of animal selves.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT ARE ANIMAL SELVES AND HOW DO WE KNOW THEM?

Two theories of animal selfhood existing in the real world are introduced in this chapter after a brief contextual discussion of evolutionary continuity. The first, sociologist Leslie Irvine's Core Self elements, stems from her work with domestic pet animals, especially cats and dogs. The second has been developed from scholarship in animism, an anthropological descriptor for "a way of being that is alive and open to a world in continuous birth." (Ingold 2006, 9)

CONTINUITY

Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection implies cross-species continuity; that is, the differences between humans and other animals, and among animal species, are of degree and not kind. Darwin wrote in 1871 of 'numberless gradations' separating all animals.¹ The animals of the earth are understood to be kin due to shared evolutionary ancestry. Indeed, biological, physiological, and genetic continuity is widely assumed. Current understanding of animal taxonomy and the application of experimental results from animals to people rely on this assumption.

¹ See *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*. New York: The Modern Library, [1936].

The assumption of mental or psychological continuity between humans and other animals, although similarly implied by natural selection, is controversial, just as biological continuity was (and still is, for some). Uncomfortable feelings about species ambiguity and the 'demotion' of human beings are provoked. Because mental and psychological capacities are difficult to measure empirically even in verbal humans, attempts to do so in nonverbal animals appears absurd and impossible to many.

Despite these obstacles, Darwin himself practiced, in part, what has come to be called anecdotal cognitivism; he described many instances of the expression of mental and emotional capacities in the animals he observed. For example, Daston quotes from *The Descent of Man* Darwin's observation that a dog has imagination "as shewn by his dreams" (45) Though more critical than Darwin of anecdotal cognitivism, disciple George Romanes collected, classified, and published anecdotes (Allen and Bekoff, 1997) in which he includes, for example, observations of maternal and mischievous feelings in monkeys.

The idea of continuity between humans and other animals has generated an ongoing interest and debate about boundaries between species, about kinship, and particularly about what it is that makes us human. Many of the twentieth century's findings of animal studies scientists in behavior, language acquisition and use, and genetics have challenged species classifications and assumptions about the capacities of nonhuman animals. Chimpanzees make and use tools, elephants return repeatedly to sites where close relatives have died, and dolphins coordinate hunting activity and communicate with each other using complex systems of sound. It is becoming more

apparent that understanding the similarities and differences among humans and other animals is complicated, depending on the animal in question and the capacity under investigation.

Psychologist Clive D. L. Wynne has proposed what he calls the Similarity Sandwich in order to frame the issue of cross-species continuity in a helpful way. Like a sandwich, there are three layers. The bottom, or bread, layer asks the question, what is different? Wynne observes that all species are distinguishable, that specific sensory abilities (bat sonar, dog's sense of smell, eagle's fovea) vary widely across species affecting perception and experience.

"Above all this wonderful diversity, the whirring, humming, perceiving, reacting multiplicity of animal nature, is another more peaceful layer." (228—229) The middle layer, the peanut butter and jelly, describes what is shared. Wynne lists cognitive capacities which seem to be "common to a wide range of species and to operate in similar ways." (6) These include a sense of time, number, same-different, navigation, learning, some kinds of memory, and problem solving.

The top layer identifies what is nearly unique in humans. Here Wynne includes sophisticated language abilities and a sense of independent self-awareness as those capacities that distinguish us most clearly from other animals.

ANIMAL CORE SELF AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

According to sociologist Leslie Irvine, who has worked extensively with domestic companion dogs and cats, animals have the capacity for the elements of a core self that

enables them to participate in relationships with us. Interactions within all of our relationships consist of two simultaneous processes. First, the self of the other is revealed to us through their actions and responses and second, we receive confirmation of our own self. Although human development adds a strong verbal dimension to selfhood, the core self that we share with other animals, which does not depend on language, allows this process to occur in relationships with them. So, for example, when potential adopters come to an animal shelter, they often decide on a particular animal, which may not be the animal the adopter was originally looking for, based on a 'connection' that Irvine concludes is a compatibility of core selves.

Irvine borrows William James' four aspects of 'I' and refined by studies with preverbal infants.² They are agency, or a sense of control, coherence, or individual integrity, affectivity, or the capacity for emotion, and self-history or memory. Irvine describes this last element as connecting the self together into an individual subjectivity. The core self has a functional aspect based on goals and actions and an experiential aspect allowing us to know and to feel. These coexisting aspects inform each other and are part of the development of the specific core self elements in individuals.

Evidence for agency in dogs, according to Irvine, can be found, for example, in behavior training in which dogs are being taught to exercise *self*-control. The implication of the ability to control one's behavior is that one must have a measure of volition or

² In particular, Irvine lists these sources: James, William. *The Principles of Psychology*. [1890] New York: Dover, 1950; Myers, Gene. *Children and Animals: Social Development and Our Connections to Other Species*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998; Stern, Daniel N. *The Interpersonal World of the Infant: A View From Psychoanalysis and Developmental Psychology*. New York: Basic Books, 1985.

will. Cats initiate interactions with people to achieve goals such as food, companionship, or play, often by interfering in human activities. Indicators of a sense of nonverbal coherence include actions that protect bodily integrity such as hiding. Affectivity can be understood to mean both individual feelings, like happiness or grief, and bodily 'vitality affects', through which we often recognize the individual feelings of others. Self-history turns interactions into relationships.

Sharing thoughts, intentions, and feelings with animals does not depend on language; that is, although the ability to talk about the relationship does rely on language, the ability to have it doesn't. With animals, 'thoughts' can be understood as the focus of attention through vocalizing or eye contact, as when a dog checks in or glances at the door or the leash or the food dish. The best examples of shared intentions between guardians and animals come from play activities with dogs and cats (especially kittens) because communicating intention creates the necessary context for the behavior. According to Allen and Bekoff:

To solve the problems that might be caused by, for example confusing play for mating or fighting, many species have evolved signals that function to establish and maintain a 'mood' or context for play. In most species in which play has been described, play-soliciting signals appear to foster some sort of cooperation between players so that each responds to the other in a way consistent with play and different from the responses the same actions would elicit in other contexts. (98—99)

Most people who spend time with animals believe them to be sensitive to emotional states. Irvine relates the famous example of Clever Hans, the celebrated counting horse:

Clever Hans lived in Berlin in the early twentieth century. He became a celebrity for his purported ability to solve mathematical problems. His owner would ask him for the sum of two numbers, and Hans would give the answers by stroking his hoof on the ground. Many people suspected fraud and accused Hans' owner of giving the horse cues for when to stop stomping his hoof . . . (A rigorous investigation discovered) that Hans was indeed responding to cues, but of a sort different from what anyone expected . . . Hans was picking up subtle, unintentional cues from the people around him, who imperceptibly relaxed or quietly exhaled when he reached the correct answer. (158)

Irvine argues that the understanding of emotional states observed in animals has both an instinctive 'affect contagion' aspect and is a social necessity. The interplay of these aspects across species that are more or less social may help to explain differences, for example in communication styles and modes, between dogs and cats.

Why do we have active relationships with animals? Irvine reviews various answers to this such as the will to dominance or that animals are surrogate people standing in for deficient human relationships. Because they refer to single causes, she finds them 'lacking.' Animals, according to Irvine, help to construct and maintain who we are. Our identities are 'fluid' and 'interactive.' We develop and ultimately thrive through intersubjective interactions with other sentient beings.

ANIMIST PERSONHOOD AND RELATIONAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Edward Tylor, considered the father of anthropology, coined the term ‘animism’ in the late nineteenth century from seventeenth-century alchemist Georg E. Stahl’s ‘anima,’ used to refer to the vitalizing element of life. According to Tylor, animism is a ubiquitous and primitive delusion, definitive of religion, and a category error that could still be found in the modern spiritualism of his day. Tylor was interested in the origins of religion and, using second-hand accounts from newly colonized indigenous lands, developed his ideas that religion and religious perspectives are mythopoetic and learned mistakes about the world.³

Definitions of animism changed very little through much of the twentieth century, despite richer and broader datasets. Scholars continued to attribute animistic beliefs and practices to childish error, fanciful intermingling of correct representations of things with mystical tales, projections of internal processes, or as a reasonable but mistaken perceptual survival strategy (Bird-David, 1999; Harvey, 2006).

However, animist practices and conceptions of the world are increasingly being reexamined by western scholars influenced by changes in the sovereignty and subsequent self-definition of indigenous people and by “a new academic tendency towards dialogue and a growing respect for diversity . . . met with a degree of uncertainty about modernity’s preference for objectivity over subjectivity (which has)

³ See Tylor, Edward B. *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Customs*. New York: H. Holt and Co., 1874.

resulted in a host of new conversations between academics and others.” (Harvey, 205)
Among the ‘fruitful’ areas of investigation are personhood concepts (Irvine, Bird-David)
and ecological perception (Bird-David, Ingold).

In 1960, noted anthropologist A. Irving Hallowell published “Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View” in which he begins to describe what has come to be known as the ‘new animism.’⁴ The concept of personhood is central to this understanding.

According to the Ojibwe, the world is full of people, only some of whom are human. However, it is a mistake to see this as a projection or attribution of human-likeness or life-likeness onto ‘inanimate’ objects.

While they do distinguish between persons and objects, the Ojibwe also challenge European notions of what a person is. To be a person does not require human-likeness, but rather humans are like other persons.

Persons is the wider category, beneath which there may be listed sub-groups such as ‘human persons’, ‘rock persons’, ‘bear persons’, and others. Persons are related beings constituted by their many and various interactions with others. Persons are willful beings who gain meaning and power from their interactions. Persons are sociable beings who communicate with others.” (Harvey, 17—18)

Hallowell coined the term ‘other-than-human-persons’ to describe non-human members of this larger personhood category.

⁴ See Diamond, Stanley. *Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960, pp. 19—52.

The animism that informs this view of personhood is found more often in the elders of a group than in the children. This is because it must be taught and learned as it involves “developing the skills of being-in-the-world with other things, making one’s awareness of one’s environment and one’s self finer, broader, deeper, richer.” (Bird-David, 577—78) Attention, openness, interaction, communication, (Bird-David, Harvey, Ingold, Brown, 1992) and humility (Brown) are some of the skills that must be developed over a lifetime.

Israeli anthropologist Nurit Bird-David made a more recent contribution to the concept of ‘new’ animism with the publication, in 1999, of “ ‘Animism’ Revisited: Personhood, Environment, and Relational Epistemology.” After reviewing the major anthropological literature on animism, Bird-David introduces *Devaru*, a concept, “enigmatic to positivist thought,” used by South Indian Nayaka people to describe beings/persons with whom they regularly relate. *Devaru* is a specific example, according to Bird-David, of Hallowell’s ‘other-than-human-persons.’ They are neither spirit beings nor supernatural (above or outside nature), but are understood by the Nayaka to really exist in the world.

Bird-David borrows the term ‘dividual’⁵ to coin the verb ‘to dividuate.’ A dividual is one who is a composite of relationships and is not a separate entity set against other bounded entities. Nonhuman persons are simply other dividuals defined and described through their relationships.

⁵ See Strathern, M. *The Gender of the Gift: Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

When I individuate a human being I am conscious of her 'in herself' [as a single, separate entity], when I dividualate her I am conscious of how she relates with me. This is not to say that I am conscious of the relationship with her 'in itself,' as a thing. Rather I am conscious of the *relatedness with my interlocutor as I engage with her*, attentive to what she does in relation to what I do, to how she talks and listens to me as I talk and listen to her, to what happens simultaneously and mutually to me, to her, to us." (S72, emphasis in the original)

As noted earlier, Bird-David considers ecological perception to be an important avenue to investigate for scholars interested in animism. The animists' perception of the world relies on the "traffic of interactions with their surroundings" (Ingold, 11) from which modern life protects us with cars, large indoor spaces, and other controlled environments. The worldly environment is considered a 'domain of entanglement' experienced more or less directly and not as an interior schematic with outward manifestations.

Bird-David considers Gibson's ecological approach to visual perception⁶ as central to understanding the claim made by the Nayaka that *devaru* exist in the world. For Gibson, ecological perception sees the world in ecological terms, as existing on a scale of change to permanence in its multiple respects. Some things change relatively quickly and others, like mountains, persist for a very long time. Animist perception

⁶ See Gibson, J. J. *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979.

affords the perceiver information about change, communication, and relationship based, in part, on what the perceiver brings to the situation.

Relational affordances are understood to mutually affect the actors involved. Bird-David gives these examples of mutual effects: “an animal-avoiding-me in relation to me-upsetting-the-animal, a stone-coming-towards-me in relation to me-reaching-for-the-stone, a rock-securing-me in relation to me-seeking-a-shelter.” Bird-David calls this type of interaction ‘two-way responsive relatedness’ so, for instance, an elephant who makes eye contact with me is considered Devaru, but the elephant that doesn’t interact is simply an elephant. For the Nayaka, beings are regarded as persons, or Devaru, as, when, and because they interact.

The examples given by Bird-David are from her fieldwork experience in South India; however she makes it clear that she considers relational epistemology to be a universal human tendency. Bird-David further theorizes that relational epistemology enjoys ‘authority’ as a way of knowing in some culture groups, primarily hunter-gatherers, and is secondary in others, such as the modern Euro-American culture. The chapter that follows builds on the theory that knowing the world is a direct result of openly engaging with it.

CHAPTER 2

ANTHROPOMORPHISM AND THE LITERARY IMAGINATION

INTRODUCTION

Anthropomorphism, generally speaking, can be understood as the attribution of human characteristics to nonhuman others and, although banned in the sciences, it is ubiquitous in world mythology, folklore, art, and literature. (Boyd, Daston and Mitman, Bird-David, Harvey) Particularly in literature for children, anthropomorphic tendencies are practiced uncritically in the creation of animal characters and stories with animals. Both anthropomorphism and the closely related folk psychology may be expressions of a relational epistemology in the West, a common sense knowing that develops from being in relationship with others and that may inform the literary imagination of authors and readers.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM

The exact meaning of anthropomorphism is currently a matter of some debate. It's meaning has changed over time from it's original religious one of attributing human characteristics to God, something that was considered a sin. (Daston and Mitman, Fisher, 1996) Many variations of anthropomorphism are described in the literature. For example, Lorraine Daston describes sociomorphism as analogies are made at the level of society, generally human and insect. Game theory applied to animal behavior is called cold anthropomorphism and empathy brought to bear on analogies is called hot

anthropomorphism. Gordon Burghardt (in Ristau, 1991) posits a 'critical anthropomorphism' that may be useful for generating scientific ideas and predicting outcomes. Despite being widely practiced, it's meaning among many animal scientists is the false attribution of humanlike characteristics to animals and to things like cars or computers. Changing meanings imply that they are historically and culturally bound. As further evidence for this, Fisher states that, "Japanese primatologists are singularly unconcerned about issues of anthropomorphism in their studies of primates. Cultural history cannot be ignored in explaining this fact." (3)

Because the practice of anthropomorphic attribution is understood (in the West) as a universal, yet ultimately false, tendency, it is therefore considered an entrenched problem in western science, a dangerously unempirical return to mysterious causes and unfounded superstition, and "an embarrassment to be avoided." (3) Any charge of anthropomorphism in the scientific study of animals leads to assumptions of laziness, sloppy thinking, or childishness in the sense of naïve innocence and also in the sense of simple or primitive. (Irvine, Fisher, Daston and Mitman, Allen and Bekoff)

Philosopher John Fisher has developed a basic framework to help clarify what may be meant by anthropomorphism, and whether attributions are false in all cases. He begins with two broad categories, which he labels Interpretive and Imaginative Anthropomorphism. Interpretive, which is meant to be explanatory, describes inferences of mentalistic predicates (M-predicates) such as loyal, brave, or sneaky from observed animal behavior. Fisher argues that Hard Anthropocentric critics, who support a sharp division between humans and other animals, have not made a convincing case

that anthropomorphic attributions are categorically fallacious because the accuracy of the attributions depends on the specific predicate, situation, and species in question. Fisher has concentrated his analysis on Interpretive Anthropomorphism, leaving the Imaginative half of the framework undeveloped. He concludes in part that, due to the hardwired nature of our perceptions of others, innate understanding across species is plausible and that common sense “persistently refuses to draw a sharp line between humans and other animals, and persists in retaining sympathetic feelings for animals and in understanding them along human lines” (11—12).

Fisher agrees with Irvine that people do not attribute *indiscriminately* but instead respond differently to different animals. When we spend time with animals, we perceive their individuality and relate to their selves with our selves. This common sense approach is sometimes called folk psychology and is described as the use of insight or self-knowledge combined with outward attention to describe and predict the behavior of others. Emotional intelligence and the accurate interpretation of body language, including ‘vitality affects,’ may comprise some of the nonverbal skills we use to understand animal selves. Allen and Bekoff suggest that folk psychology is a prototheory that may prove valuable in developing more rigorous theories of animal mind. Ristau argues for a similar approach; cognitive ethologists should borrow what is needed from folk psychology and leave the rest.

An author, in order to create a believable literary character, must practice perspectivity; that is he or she must imagine a way, using insights and knowledge gained through relationships, into the subjective experience of another personality with whom

readers will respond. It is likely, given evolutionary continuity, some form of shared core self among Earth's animals, and an attitude of open, humble attention, to understand nonhuman animals enough to create believable animal characters, not as symbolic humans, but *as animal selves*.

REALISTIC ANIMALS IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Associations between children and animals run deep in Euro-American culture. As we have seen, origins of anthropomorphic tendencies and animist attributions are sometimes said to exist in childhood or in childish understandings of the world. (Irvine, Allen and Bekoff, Harvey, Bird-David, Boyd, Morgenstern, 2000) Animals and children are often portrayed together in visual images, especially those appealing to nostalgia and innocence. Animals are central in children's literature too, providing simplicity (Morgenstern), neutrality (Burke and Copenhaver, 2004), and challenge (Marchant, 2005).

Animals in children's stories who walk and talk like people are considered to be symbolic humans delighting us with their simultaneous similarities to and differences from us (Morgenstern). Symbolic human characters provide the needed emotional distance that allows children to safely try on roles and wrestle with difficult life situations (Burke and Copenhaver). Very little has been discussed, however, about the realistic portrayals of animals as characters, although they have been with us since the British children's book publishing industry began to flourish in the mid-eighteenth century.

Animal protagonist narrators may be considered animal selves telling the story from their own perspective, just as human narrators are. Early stories of this type were often general life histories, commentary on human behavior, or anti-cruelty tales. An early example is Dorothy Kilner's *The Life and Perambulation of a Mouse*, published in 1783. Anna Sewell combined these elements into her classic *Black Beauty* (1877).

Toward the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, a style both dramatic and realistic was being developed in North America. Examples of this new style include *Wild Animals I Have Known* by Canadian E. T. Seton (1899) and stories such as *Call of the Wild* (1903) and *White Fang* (1906) by American Jack London. Many books were being written that featured animal relationships (both with and without humans), dramatic and dangerous plots, and naturalistic settings. *The Yearling* (Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, 1938), *My Friend Flicka* (Mary O'Hara, 1941), and *Incredible Journey* (Sheila Burnford, 1961) are classic examples. Englishman Richard Adams wrote *Watership Down* (1972), a recent modern classic that appeals equally to children and adults.

In addition to their naturalistic character portrayals and settings, these books feature relationships among the animals or between animals and humans that are rich, important, and recognizable from the perspective of the reader. The animal or animals are the center, however, and the concerns of the animal characters are animal concerns. As such they are quite distinct from stories in which animals walk and talk like people we have known.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY: ANIMAL SELVES IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

SURVEY DESCRIPTION

Burke and Copenhaver discuss functions of written texts in literate culture including that of mirroring the world as we have perceived it. How do authors of recent children's literature perceive animals? What are some of the characteristics of realistic portrayals and of the interactions between human and animal characters? The following study was conducted to explore animal characterization in modern children's literature. I am interested in understanding whether the imagination may be informed by accurate perceptions of animals in the world and how those perceptions are manifested in natural and recognizable characterizations of nonhuman animals.

A descriptive exploratory survey questionnaire was developed to assess the animal characters in a small sample of recently published children's literature. Three bibliographies of children's books with domestic animal (usually pet) characters published between 2000 and 2007 provided the initial sample of 51 books for the case study. The briefly annotated bibliographies are published on the website of University of Illinois' Center for Children's Books; all the books have been favorably reviewed in the prestigious *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*. Duplicate titles and one young adult novel that featured an animal only in the title were removed from the final sample of 46. (See APPENDIX 1) The wide-ranging sample includes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry for preschoolers through high school teenagers.

Each book was read and then surveyed on a separate form. Descriptive information about the characters, and about specific interactions and communication modes between human and animal characters, evidence of Irvine's selfhood elements, and any cognitive skills attributed to or demonstrated by the animals were recorded. A spreadsheet was then created to collect together demographic data on each title and the descriptive data gathered initially. The specific details emerging from the general survey were used to create some granularity in the spreadsheet. Patterns in characterization, activities, species, target reader age, were assessed. Much more rigorous analysis with larger samples are needed before conclusions can be drawn with confidence. However, a few interesting results emerged, as shown in the tables and discussion in the next section.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 compares two main types of animal characters, bipedal/clothed and natural, in terms of voice and activity. Talking voice is defined as speaking out loud in human words and sentences. No voice is silence or simply the kinds of sounds normally made by the species involved such as barks, meows, chirps, and so on. In narrated stories, the animal protagonist talks directly to the reader; the animal does not talk within the story itself. As shown in the table, animal characters that are portrayed naturally are overwhelmingly narrators or have no voice and those who are bipedal, clothed, or both speak out loud over 50 percent of the time. Activities engaged in by the

natural characters are recognizably those we see in animals around us in contrast to the very human activities of the clothed characters.

Both fiction and nonfiction books are narrated by animals. For example, Murphy the dog narrates the fictional *A Day in the Life of Murphy* (2003) in which he tells the reader about his day with John the hound dog and Tom Fool the cat. The barn animals are “dumb” and the human family is “they.” Harry, a longhaired dachshund, introduces to the reader the proper way to greet dogs in the nonfiction book *May I Pet Your Dog?* (2007).

Table 1. Comparing the voice and activities of bipedal/clothed and natural animal characters.

Type	N	Talking	Narration	No Voice	Human Activities	Naturalistic Activities
Bipedal/clothes	9	5	1	3	Cooking, dress-up, going to school, using carpenter’s tools and paintbrushes, superhero adventuring	Being held in lap, climbing a tree
Natural	37	6	13	18	Singing	Getting into stuff, eating, playing, going to the vet, greeting, working, training, hunting, barking, running away, riding in car

The two broad characterizations shown in Table 1 can be labeled Symbolic Human and Animal Self. Animal characters who are symbolic humans tend to speak out loud using human language. They are bipedal and often wear clothing. These characters engage overwhelmingly in human activities like cooking, using carpenter’s tools, and superhero adventuring. Animal Self characters often narrate stories directly to the reader, but do not speak within them. They move with a natural gait, don’t wear clothing, and their activities are recognizable as natural to their species.

Table 2. Animal narration in all books and in picture books.

Book Sample	<i>N</i>	Animal narration	Percent of books
All Books	46	14	30%
Picture Books	24	10	42%

Animal narrators appear demographically across the sample, although, as shown in Table 2, most (70%) are found in picture books for younger children, including the two examples described above. One very interesting example of animal narration is *I, Jack* (2000), a fictional juvenile chapter book in which a heroic yellow Labrador retriever tells a complex story. In an “Interpreter’s Note” at the back, Patricia Finney acknowledges the influence of both Rudyard Kipling’s *Thy Servant, A Dog* (1930) and books on dog psychology in creating Jack’s voice. Finney uses variation in text font to effectively relay nonverbal communication between Jack and his Apedog pack (italic

style) and Jack's strength of feeling (font size). The communication itself is usually, but not always successful; however, it is recognizable as that between a dog and a human. For instance, after Jack is caught raiding the refrigerator for his pregnant 'Pack Lady' Petra, the dogs run away to find a nearby safe place for Petra to have her puppies. On the way home, Jack meets his human 'Packleader':

Hi there, Packleader! Are you better? Why are you out of your nest and walking along the path, going 'Phhheeweet!' between your teeth . . . You should be resting in you nest, getting better from your nasty cold.

Oh. That's nice, you were looking for me. Shall we go see Petra? She is very unfriendly, though. Can you smell her? There is Specialness happening in her tummy. It's all very strange . . .

Packleader puts my leash on. He is barking lots now, very quickly. He is saying Bad Bad. He is calling me strange names. What is 'vandal? What is 'fiend'?" (84—85)

In Joyce Sidman's *The World According to Dog: Poems and Teen Voices* (2003), poetic attempts are made to describe the interior world and dog-ness of dogs. For example, in "Dog Lore" Sidman writes, "Patience and intensity/open the most doors." (56) She also includes short prose narratives written by teens about dogs they have known. Many of these pieces describe very important relationships between themselves or their family and an individual dog. Sarah Miller (age 13) honors the memory of Bandy, an abandoned puppy found by Sarah's unhappy teenaged mother. Bandy "helped my

mother understand the importance of life and affection. She guided my mother to appreciating everything and everyone as much as possible.” (13)

In our relationships over time with other selves, whether those selves are human or animal, we grow and develop, and in the process come to understand the other self better as well. The knowledge gained about others and ourselves is used by writers in imaginatively creating characters and situations for them to act in.

CONCLUSION

Recent scholarship in sociology, anthropology, and cognitive ethology converge to point to direct relationship as a way to apprehend to the largest degree the subjective self of nonhuman others, particularly nonhuman animals.

Anthropomorphism, common sense, and folk psychology may all be, more or less, expressions of this relational way of knowing which, in Western civilization, enjoys the greatest authority in works of the imagination.

Historically, animals have been portrayed in two broad ways in children’s literature. As symbolic humans, animals are neutral stand-ins who help young readers navigate life issues. As realistic animal characters, animal selves, they provide glimpses into a more-than-human world. Authors may, in imaginatively developing realistic animal characters, just as they do when creating human characters, employ the insights and knowledge gained through relationship and, in the process, mirror the world as we perceive it.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CORE SOURCES

Allen, Colin, and Mark Bekoff. *Species of Mind: The Philosophy and Biology of Cognitive Ethology*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997.

Allen and Bekoff begin by describing this volume as a synthesis of theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of nonhuman animal minds. They describe cognitive ethology as the systematic study of the information processing, beliefs, and consciousness of animals from comparative, evolutionary, and ecological perspectives. Charles Darwin's mental continuity concept is central; answers to questions about shared cognitive and emotional characteristics across species will shed light on the nature and evolutionary development of mental and psychological capacities.

Animal behavior research through most of the twentieth century has been guided by the philosophy of empiricism and positivism in which meaning is dependent on reducing observable, verifiable experiences to logical constructions. The goal of psychological behaviorism is to control behavior and explain behavior patterns in a one-to-one correspondence with physiological processes. As an overview of the development of cognitive ethology, Allen and Bekoff broadly describe the philosophy of naturalism, modern neo-behaviorists, and classical ethologists, particularly Konrad Lorenz and Nikolaas Tinbergen, who shared the 1973 Nobel Prize.

Donald Griffin, whose 1976 book *The Question of Animal Awareness* helped to establish the current field of cognitive ethology, was mainly concerned with animal consciousness and with creative and versatile behavior in animals as evidence for cognitive processing. According to Griffin, consciousness logically confers an enormous

adaptive advantage of behavioral choice to individuals. Most cognitive ethologists have concentrated their research on finding evidence of animal intentionality reasoning that behavior which implies intentionality and goals, for instance play or injury-feinting, also implies some form of memory or planning.

Criticisms in general directed at cognitive ethology include the accusation of falling back on causation by invisible agents (the 'religion card'), the belief that animal minds are permanently closed to us, and the denial of evidence for stimulus-free behavior (which implies internal motivation). In response, cognitive ethologists justify mental attributions because they are often the most parsimonious explanation for observations. They point to laboratory evidence of stimulus-free behavior, especially in observational learning experiments. Allen and Bekoff claim that behaviorists often privilege the general over the specific as a consequence of the pressure for statistical averaging, thus ignoring significant behavioral variations. The material emphasis of empirical science is considered problematic as well because natural selection acts on functional, not material, properties.

Although generally very controversial, the concept of folk psychology can be defined in a manner that is uncontroversial. "Folk psychology consists of loose generalizations about mind and behavior that are reflected in what people say about mental states and actions." (65) Recognizing that the mentalistic terminology used in folk psychological explanations is often not clearly defined and that no adequate framework for mental attribution exists, Allen and Bekoff propose re-conceptualizing folk psychology. They see it as a 'prototheory' that addresses consciousness and the

semantic properties of its content with an evolutionary emphasis. Folk psychology shares with all cognitive approaches the idea that mental states have propositional content.

Case studies in canid social play behavior and the anti-predatory behavior of birds are discussed in which emphasis is placed the importance of communication, change over time, and the correct interpretation of the intentions of others.

In Chapter 8, Allen and Bekoff discuss animal consciousness. The authors advise fellow cognitive ethologists to move away from Thomas Nagel's question, "What is it like to be . . .?" and focus instead on which species possesses conscious capacities by targeting behaviors that indicate consciousness.

Bird-David, Nurit. " 'Animism' Revisited: Personhood, Environment, and Relational Epistemology." *Current Anthropology* 4 (1999): S67—S91.

Bird-David revisits the anthropological concept of animism, noting that basic assumptions have changed very little since the introduction of the concept in the nineteenth century by Edward Tylor. Tracing the idea from its inception, Bird-David discusses Tylor and his interest in the origins of religion, and subsequent treatments of animism by Emile Durkheim, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and S. Guthrie. As part of her reevaluation, Bird-David focuses on the concept of personhood and on ecological perception, presenting evidence from her fieldwork with the South Indian Nayaka people, in particular their description of 'devaru' as nonhuman people who interact with the Nayaka in daily life and during social events.

In order to describe what devaru are, Bird-David builds on anthropologist A. Irving Hallowell's other-than-human-persons (using instead her term 'superpersons') and M. Strathern's 'dividual'. Other-than-human-persons are persons who are not human beings; they are considered persons as and because they are social and willful beings, not because they look or talk like humans. A dividual is a person made up of relationships, and is not a bounded singularity set against others. During regularly held festivals or social events, local devaru appear through Nayaka performers to talk and interact with the others there. Devaru are also understood to be specific animals, plants, and other environmental features who interact with the Nayaka. Devaru are understood to exist in the world.

In order to make this more comprehensible, Bird-David draws on J. J. Gibson's ecological approach to visual perception in which things "are perceived in terms of what they *afford the actor-perceiver because of what they are for him.*" (Gibson, S74) For the Nayaka, the environment is constantly changing as a result of interactions. What happens to animals, or other devaru characters "(or how they change) can affect or be affected by what happens to people (or how they change)." (S77) These changes confirm the existence of devaru. The skill of attention must be developed; in this way, the environment affords information that can be "more and more subtle, elaborate, and precise. Knowing is developing this skill." (Gibson, S78) Bird-David calls communication of this kind 'two-way responsive relatedness.'

She goes on to theorize that relational ways of knowing (knowing connected with being) is a universal human capacity that enjoys primary authority in most hunter-

gatherer societies and often secondary authority elsewhere. As a way of knowing, relational epistemology is complementary with objectivist; Bird-David considers both to be real and valid and both to have limits.

Comments from seven scholars in anthropology appear at the end of the article proper, most in agreement in general or on major specific points. Tim Ingold offers an alternative explanation to that of Bird-David's on the origins of relational ways of knowing. Theories of the evolution of social intelligence offered by Bird-David, according to Ingold, "rest fair and square on a modernist conception of mind and behavior" (Ingold, S82) that functions to undermine animistic perception by dividing the world into natural and social and by assuming that life and mind are interior properties of individuals. "Human beings everywhere perceive their environments in the responsive mode not because of innate cognitive predisposition but because to perceive at all they must already be situated in a world and committed to the relationships this entails." (Ingold, S82)

Boyd, Brian. "Tails Within Tales." In *Knowing Animals*, edited by Laurence Simmons and Philip Armstrong, 217—43. Boston: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007.

Boyd asks why we are so fascinated by 'tails within tales.' After listing wide-ranging examples of animals in art through time and currently popular non-human literary others, Boyd tells the story of George Herriman's celebrated comic *Krazy Kat*. Originally occupying just the bottom strips in the panels of a 'plodding' human story, *The Dingbats*, *Krazy*, *Ignatz the Mouse*, and *Offissa Pupp*, broke away three years later to become "a wildly surreal and poetic series of scratchy non-sequiturs . . . a story of

animals liberating the imagination.” (219) Boyd then compares the two Genesis accounts in the Old Testament calling the first “a rationalist’s account” that reflects the Great Chain of Being and the second “a much more earthy world” emphasizing companionship with animals all around the human couple.

Employing an evolutionary psychological explanation for this fascination, Boyd notes that animals (including humans) must be able to recognize and interpret other animals and further, that motion is immediately or initially interpreted as agency, thus considered the basic model of causality. In support, Boyd describes a classic 1944 psychological study in which students were shown a short silent film with moving geometric shapes and asked to describe what they had seen. Researchers Fritz Heider and Marianne Simmel reported that only one respondent spoke of geometric shapes; all the other respondents ‘anthropomorphized’ the moving figures. Significantly, this took the form of story in which “aims and moods” were assigned as well as genders and voices.

Because children are often considered to be growing through earlier stages of human development when, it is supposed, humans were closer to other animals, they are especially drawn to animals. They understand animals as fictitiously standing in for them and for other people. “Yet when a menagerie of absurdly different species speak to one another, in Dr. Seuss or Dr. Doolittle, children also accept that as in one sense perfectly natural, since they can see that animals *do* have to take account of the purposes of other creatures around them.” (225)

Animals continue to appear significantly in serious adult fiction as well. Boyd describes several reasons for this: They are similar to and different from us and also different from each other, stimulating the imagination; they play many roles in our lives with them; and they evoke many strong feelings. Because for us they are mute “unable to explain themselves . . . we have attributed to them a whole range of properties.” (227)

In the Western tradition, animals have been understood as ‘*sub-souls*’ since Heraclitus, Plato, and Descartes. “Living under a monotheistic and anthropocentric religion and in cities where we rely on mechanical rather than biological power, Westerners have tended more and more to stress the *distinction* between human and animal, to define ‘humane’ as opposed to ‘bestial’ . . . and even—and in the twentieth century, too! —to despise ‘savages’ for their reverence toward animals.” (228)

In the last several pages of this article, Boyd discusses many examples of serious adult literature including *The Tempest*, Joyce’s *Ulysses*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Moby Dick*; authors like Jonathan Swift, H. G. Wells, Franz Kafka, Julio Cortázar, Angela Carter, and Will Self; and even the comic strips *Far Side* and *Calvin and Hobbes* to illustrate how pervasively in literature animals are used to help us define who we are and to wrestle with the ambiguous borderland between ourselves and other animals.

Brown, Joseph Epes. *Animals of the Soul: Sacred Animals of the Oglala Sioux*. Rockport, MA: Element, Inc., 1992.

Brown focuses on the importance of animals for the Lakota in his description of traditional Lakota “metaphysics of nature.” Brown writes that the ‘metaphysics’ are

defined separately by each group in great detail and are specific to the local geographical features and species. Responsibilities and interrelationships are spelled out clearly. Relationships with the 'vast web of being' are established and strengthened through specific rites and prayers, through the form and materials of the built lodge, and through the use of the pipe. Any manifestation of the spirit, especially animals, can teach or otherwise communicate with people; they *want* to communicate, but human beings "must do the greater part to ensure an understanding." (22)

Communication often comes during dreams and visions, when a different level of cognition is accessed, considered more real than that of regular waking consciousness. Both sleeping dreams and waking visions, such as those received during the Vision Quest (Hanblecheyapi) are considered equally powerful. Most dreams and visions include encounters with a range of animal representatives and tutelary spirits. These are understood as 'hypothetical' animals or the spirit of the animal that lives behind the manifested world and is part of the Great Spirit of creation. Once one has received a vision, the subjective experience of that vision must then be relayed to a holy person or healer who interprets it and prescribes action. The recipient is obliged to share the experience, generally through performance, with the rest of the people in order to activate any power transmitted.

With the proper attitude of humility, one can request specific powers or ask for guidance on a specific problem during a quest. Individual dreamers may receive songs, rituals, or other teachings; personal names; or powers to heal, among other gifts. Much depends on the "persistence, receptivity, or capabilities of the individual." (56) The

animal spirits are not understood as controlling human destiny, but more as witnesses to it.

Brown discusses Lakota animal categories and traditional systems of association that link certain animals and other powers or forces together, often based on behavior or effect. For example, Whirlwind is associated with the power to confuse or disorient and, being two-leggeds, birds and humans are closely associated.

Traditionally animals are observed closely in daily life, their powers and behaviors sometimes becoming models for ideal human behavior. For example, bison are observed to take great care of the young, and so provide a model for human parenting. Due to this animist approach shaping their worldview over many centuries, many Lakota people have a profound understanding of their natural environment as a physical as well as spirit reality.

Burke, Carolyn A., and Joby G. Copenhaver. "Animals as People in Children's Literature." *Language Arts* 81, no. 3 (January 2004): 205—13.

Burke and Copenhaver argue that childhood stories, especially those "personally significant" favorites that touched emotional chords and were read over and over, addressed needs that may not have been clearly understood. The authors are concerned with children's literature as a 'thinking device,' helping children to make sense, understand values, and generate questions about life. 'Thinking device' functions in children's literature are a modern trend, reflecting modern conceptions of the meaning of childhood as a time to "adapt, contribute to change, and critically explore issues and options." (211)

The high frequency of animal characters in these stories function to provide some distance, a 'buffered engagement' that allows children "to critically explore that which (they) would not be comfortable exploring directly." (207)

As a highly literary culture, we make use of texts regularly to organize our thoughts, relay values, and dialogue with each other. In many cases, for adults as well as for children, animal characters are there to help us wrestle with complex and emotionally difficult situations. The authors urge teachers and parents to consider this function of children's literature and to use the appealing 'anthropomorphic device' of animal characters in developing curriculum and opening dialogue with children about issues of cultural significance.

Burton, Lloyd. *Worship and Wilderness: Culture, Religion, and Law in Public Lands Management*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.

Burton examines the larger issue of religious use of U. S. public lands by examining and comparing religious practices of Native Americans and Euro-Americans and how the practices and beliefs affect activism, law, and intercultural conflict. Throughout, Burton focuses on wild animals, particularly Bison, connecting these animals to law, spirituality, and cultural conflict for both Native people and Euro-Americans. In describing current conflicts over control of buffalo herds on public lands, Burton states that, "Environmental conservation groups and western ranching interests experience political and legal conflict in part because they are proceeding from profoundly different understandings of what the appropriate relationship between humankind and other living creatures ought to be." (183) Euro-American conservation

groups, according to Burton, often have more in common with Native worldviews than with ranching, fishing, logging or any other industrial-scale harvesting interests.

In attempting to constructively address conflict, in which one perspective must win out, Burton discusses the possibility of more than one correct perspective. Burton argues for “simultaneously occurring ‘realms of knowing’ “ (9) and states further that two metaphors “may combine to form a perspective broad enough to meet the needs of both groups.” (27)

Burton links historical and modern religious movements in this country to a new re-discovery of the sacred. During the westward expansion era, explorers into vast pristine wilderness areas experienced awe and reverence. The influence of nineteenth-century transcendentalism, authentic twentieth-century transmission teachings of Asian traditions, and a growing appreciation and respect for traditional indigenous ways has set the stage for a serious reevaluation and “greening” of mainstream Christian and Jewish policy and interpretation. Sparked by concerns for environmental integrity and by Lynn White’s 1967 article (see below), many denominations and coalitions have issued policy statements “produced as a result of theological inquiry . . . (in which) the stewardship interpretation . . . seems to have carried the day.” (259)

Daston, Lorraine, and Gregg Mitman, ed. *Thinking With Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

In this edited volume, anthropologists, philosophers, ethologists, historians, and artists examine how and why we think with animals and how humans and animals are transformed by these relationships. In the introduction, the editors describe the title as

a having a 'double meaning.' Humans both "assume a community of thought and feelings" with a wide variety of animals and "recruit animals to symbolize, dramatize, and illuminate" experiences and fantasies.

Citing the widely acknowledged link between the "rise of modern science with the waning of anthropomorphic attitudes toward the natural world" (3), the editors list the types of reasons often given for avoiding anthropomorphic attributions including methodological (How can we know?), historical (attributions unsubstantiated in the lab), and even moral (narcissistic projections or laziness). Why do we continue to universally anthropomorphize? Because, say Daston and Mitman, it is useful for literary symbolism, for selling products, for wondering what being an animal is like.

In her chapter, "Intelligences, Angelic, Animal, Human," Lorraine Daston compares thirteenth-century rational theologians' attempts to understand the minds of nonhuman angels with that of animal behaviorists' nineteenth century attempts to understand nonhuman animal minds. In both cases anthropomorphism is considered a problem, as the scholars necessarily relied on analogy. The term 'anthropomorphism' began as a designation for false attribution of human characteristics to God and was considered a sin, which may help to explain some of the moral condemnation that still exists in the charge. Both traditions were primarily interested in the thoughts and feelings of nonhuman others and both attempts, Daston states, arguably stretched the understanding of "the nature and limits of the human mind." (39)

According to Paul White, in his contributing chapter "The Experimental Animal in Victorian Britain," the nineteenth century saw a dramatic rise in both middle class pet

keeping and in laboratory-based investigation of comparative physiology using live animal subjects. White discusses some of the tensions this combination produced. For example, although the use of frogs in such experiments went unremarked, the use of domestic animals such as dogs, then present in many households, 'triggered protests' and claims that it was "treacherous and insensitive to commit such animals, who had been bred and trained up so as to place their confidence in humans to scientific use (and whose ways were) more winning . . . more really and intensely human . . . than the artificial, cold and selfish characters one meets too often in the guise of ladies and gentlemen." (68)

Many of the opponents of vivisection and other painful experiments worried about the brutalizing effects on the scientists themselves who designed and carried out procedures that caused "repeated and prolonged infliction of pain on helpless creatures (70). . . (with a) disciplined disregard for the feelings or perspective of the animal under study." (75)

Charles Darwin, Darwin's disciple George Romanes, and others were, at this same time, collecting and classifying anecdotal evidence for mental and emotional continuity across species. This evidence, although dismissed by experimental scientists as sentimental nonsense, was effectively used to gather support by early animal rights and anticruelty activists.

In "People in Disguise: Anthropomorphism and the Human-Pet Relationship," James A. Serpell compares the effects on people and on animals of the human-pet relationship. For people, the benefits are well documented; they include increased

physical health and feelings of being loved and of belonging. Some of the effects on animals are not so clearly beneficial. Populations of domestic animals have boomed (as their wild counterparts' populations have dwindled) and dogs, cats, and other common pets now occupy a novel ecological niche. Perhaps more disturbing are "anthropomorphic breeding selection" practices that attempt to create animals to cater to human whims and expectations. The English bulldog, for example, has been bred to have such a flat face that breathing problems occur, often resulting in premature death. Other examples include docking and declawing procedures, overdependence on humans to solve problems, anxiety and distress on being left alone, and human rejection of the animal for behavior that may be natural, but not in line with expectations. Serpell comments that anthropomorphism may be easy, but that appreciating 'dog-ness' or 'cat-ness' are special skills that need to be learned.

Fisher, John Andrew. "The Myth of Anthropomorphism." In *Readings in Animal Cognition*, edited by Marc Bekoff and Dale Jamieson, 3–16. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996.

The charge of anthropomorphism, with its implication of laziness, sloppiness, and sentimentality, is generally regarded as an embarrassment and an obstacle in the study of animal consciousness. Fisher argues that the fallacy of anthropomorphism "is neither well-defined nor clearly fallacious." (3) For example, Fisher asks, what are the uniquely human characteristics that are mistakenly attributed to non-humans? There are indications the concept itself may be historically and culturally bound. The original theological meaning of attributing human characteristics to God has come to mean

attributing human characteristics to nonhuman animals and objects. There is evidence that Japanese primatologists are unconcerned about anthropomorphic attributions.

Fisher claims that theorists have different conceptions of anthropomorphism without being aware of it. As an attempt to disambiguate anthropomorphism, Fisher outlines a theoretical framework with two broad categories he labels Interpretive and Imaginative Anthropomorphism. Interpretive is meant to be explanatory, inferring that an animal is brave or sweet natured, for instance, from observing behavior. This category is subdivided into Categorical (inference is categorically inapplicable) and Situational (inference is inapplicable in this situation). A further subdivision of Categorical designates an inference anthropomorphic depending on species or on predicate (quality).

A range of positions critical to anthropomorphism may be taken from that of disallowing any inferences at all to disallowing certain species from consideration or certain predicates. Most critics view the universal human tendency to anthropomorphize as childish and overly imaginative, even dangerous, a return to unfounded superstition and invisible, immeasurable causes.

Fisher replies that people do make distinctions among various species and that even children recognize the fictitious nature of humanized portrayals. “Common sense persistently refuses to draw a sharp line between humans and other animals, and persists in retaining sympathetic feelings for animals and in understanding them along human lines.” (11–12) It is entirely plausible, according to Fisher, that understanding

one another using hardwired perceptions is an innate ability providing accurate information about other humans and nonhuman animals at least some of the time.

Harvey, Graham. *Animism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

As Harvey states, the main purpose of his book is to take seriously “intimations that the term ‘person’ applies not only to humans . . . but to a far wider community” (xii) which may enrich debates about the environment and about consciousness. Harvey outlines and discusses ‘old’ animism, covering at some length “Tylor’s spirits,” “Durkheim’s totems,” and “Guthrie’s anthropomorphism,” before introducing ‘new’ animist concepts. “The ‘new animism,’ “ according to Harvey, “is less about attributing life and/or human-likeness, than it is about seeking better forms of personhood in relationships.” (16) The ‘new animism’ begins with A. Irving Hallowell’s influential 1960 article “Ojibwe Ontology, Behavior, and World View.”

Hallowell’s ‘other-than-human-persons,’ a concept based on his fieldwork with the Ojibwa people, are those nonhumans defined by their interactions, their willfulness, and their sociability, rather than their physical or verbal likeness to human beings. The skills one needs in order to act as a person, that is respectfully, are learned over time and are seen more often in grown and elderly humans than in children. For a specific example of this type of category, Hallowell uses the Ojibwa designation ‘grandfather,’ which is reserved for those, human and otherwise, who *act like* the grandfather ideal. “Grandfathers are those who are listened to, who communicate matters of significance, who inculcate respectful living, and teach skills. Grandfathers are persons with power

and gifts to bestow.” (18) The categories of personhood described by Hallowell challenge modern, Western notions of what constitutes a person.

Harvey presents four case studies that illustrate the diversity of animist-type beliefs and practices, looking in turn at Ojibwe language, Maori arts, Aboriginal law and land, and Eco-Pagan activism. Animist issues regarding life events, ceremonial events, and ethics are covered next. Of particular interest are the chapters on personhood and consciousness.

As already mentioned, animists consider persons to be so based on communication and relationship. They are also significant in their particularity. It is with *particular* beings, whether a single deer, badger, rock, or tree, that engagement happens. Animist beliefs and practices are particular as well from one society to the next.

Harvey argues for the development of new terms to express new and newly discovered ideas. For example “knowing bodies” can be used to indicate the embodied nature of brains, selves, and consciousness. Many of these animist ideas are currently reflected by modern Western society in art and other works of the imagination. The authors and readers of modern literary movements such as magical realism and animist realism, emanating from recently colonized parts of the world, “resist dis-enchantment and continue to enjoy living in a world that is not reduced to being a human artefact.”

(207)

Ingold, Tim. "Rethinking the Animate, Re-Animating Thought." *Ethnos* 71, no. 1 (2006): 9—20.

"Animism (is) traditionally understood as 'the imputation of life to inert objects' that describes a typically western habit, though usually applied to indigenous peoples. Ingold argues that the conventional understanding is 'misleading' because animism is a condition of being and not a system of beliefs and that, due to the fluid nature of reality, 'animacy' is also a *condition* with roots prior to any material differentiation. Animistic ontology can be more accurately understood as "a way of being that is alive and open to a world in continuous birth." (9)

Ingold discusses evidence that Western artists such as Paul Klee and Merleau-Ponty in their journals sometimes describe a similar openness.

The painter's relation to the world, Merleau-Ponty writes, is not a simple, 'physical-optical' one. That is, he does not gaze upon a world that is finite and complete, and proceed to fashion a representation of it. Rather, the relation is one of 'continued birth'—these are Merleau-Ponty's very words—as though at every moment the painter opened his eyes to the world for the first time. His vision is not of things in a world, but of things becoming things, and of the world becoming a world. (12)

Ingold goes on to describe animic relations as occurring on "trail *along* which life is lived" and not as something that occurs "between the organism 'here' and the environment 'there'." (13) Movement in this case is primary. Knowing is related to being, embedded in the very experience of being alive. By way of contrast, Ingold states that empirical science as a way of knowing "rests upon an impossible foundation

(because its methods attempt to place inquiry) above and beyond the very world it claims to understand.” (19)

Irvine, Leslie. *If You Tame Me: Understanding Our Connection With Animals*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004.

Irvine’s book begins with the premise that animals are emotional and feeling beings and makes the argument that animals help shape our identities in relationship because they have selves with which our selves relate. The dimensions of this selfhood are mutually apprehended and strengthened during intersubjective interaction that exercises and challenges our relationship and emotional skills. Irvine argues that animals are conscious individuals; they are not interchangeable and they are self-aware in a different way than we are.

Irvine borrows the specific elements of a core self that we share with other animals from William James’ four features of ‘I,’ refined with preverbal infant studies. The elements are agency (self control), coherence (integrity), affectivity (emotional capacity), and continuity (self history). The last element, continuity, connects, through memory, the other three into an individual subjectivity or individual self that intersubjectively interacts with other selves. Notice that none of this relies on spoken language; our ability to *talk about it* does, but not our ability to *have* the interactive relationships, sharing intentions, feelings, and thoughts with nonhuman others.

According to Irvine, intentions can be individual or shared, feelings are emotional states, and thoughts in this context can be understood as the focus of attention.

Irvine discusses examples of these shared experiences. Play behavior, for instance, is a highly complex and coordinated activity in which communicating intentions and interpreting the intentions of others is crucial. A mood or context must be established that creates a protective 'frame,' often with signals such as the canine play bow. The famous 'counting' horse Clever Hans was discovered to be accurately reading the emotional signals from the people who came to see him perform. In this way, he 'knew' when the correct answer was reached. We share the focus of attention with dogs when we make eye contact in order to check in. Dogs guide the focus of human attention to the door or a food dish, indicating clearly what is on the dog's mind or what the dog hopes will happen.

Other topics discussed by Irvine include animal domestication, the twentieth-century transition from 'pet' to 'companion' animal, animal relationships as resources for human self-construction, and some of the deep implications for society in considering animals as other selves.

Marchant, Jennifer. " 'An Advocate, a Defender, an Intimate': Kristeva's Imaginary Father in Fictional Girl-Animal Relationships." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 30.1 (2005): 3—15.

In this article, Marchant discusses fictional bonds between adolescent girl protagonists and animals as a vital part of the psychic development for the human protagonist, providing a model for the adolescent reader navigating the same currents. During this period of adolescent development, called 'abjection,' boundaries are

redefined, as the young girl is moving from the period of unity with her mother to greater autonomy and integration in the adult social order.

According to Marchant, the animals (dogs, horses, and a dragon) appearing in her sample books are Kristevan Imaginary Father figures, father-mother conglomerates with whom a direct and immediate identification is made, who provide a deeply satisfying love with boundaries, and who reflect and support ego ideals and adult standards. Although addressing a real need in the young reader's life, it "seems likely that, for some readers, at least, much of the attraction is in the protagonist-animal bond itself." (14)

Morgenstern, John. "Children and Other Talking Animals." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 24 (2000): 110—127.

Children's literature is widely considered to be simple. In order to understand what constitutes this simplicity, Morgenstern compares C. S. Lewis' use of talking animals in his children's books (*Chronicles of Narnia*, 1950--1956) and his adult science fiction Space Trilogy including *Out of the Silent Planet* (1938). He concludes from the texts and from Lewis' own statements in interviews, that Lewis deliberately removed uncomfortable ambiguities about talking animals from his children's books, and that this itself simplifies the story. The ambiguous feelings themselves are described as disgust about embodiment and uneasiness about the unclear boundaries between humans and animals.

Morgenstern distinguishes between an animal that talks, a flat characterization that evokes delight, and an alien talker, whom one is 'tempted' to think of as a man, and

who therefore 'becomes abominable'. The differences are subtle. "What is being asserted here is a difference that is not really a difference in the animal that talks but, as Lewis points out, a difference in 'the point of view' of the observer." (112) Lewis makes another, related point: if one is " 'accustomed to more than one rational species' " (112) then there is no problem.

Nagel, Thomas. "What is it like to be a bat?" *The Philosophical Review*, LXXXIII, 4 (October 1974): 435—450.

Nagel describes conscious experience as a 'widespread phenomenon', attributing it to 'many levels of animal life' and yet, as he acknowledges, it is hard to know what evidence to capture or measure objectively in support of its existence. Certainly a waking conscious experience through an organism's sense perceptions means that it is "something it is like to *be* that organism." Nagel uses the example of a bat; they are mammals and yet their experience is very different from a human one due to its sensory apparatus and daily activities. This problem of accurately apprehending another's experience appears intractable; that is, we cannot capture the experience of another with current methods of objective science.

The problem is not just species to species, but individual to individual. Because we are unable to separate ourselves from our own subjectivity, we cannot objectively approach another's. Every "subjective phenomenon is essentially connected with a single point of view, and it seems inevitable that an objective, physical theory will abandon that point of view." (38) Nagel concludes his influential article by predicting that we may never be satisfied that we know another organism's point of view fully, and

that, since we are 'restricted to the resources of our own mind', we must rely on our imagination at present to describe another's subjective point of view.

Ristau, Carolyn A. ed. *Cognitive Ethology: The Minds of Other Animals: essays in honor of Donald R. Griffin*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1991.

Part of a series called Comparative Cognition and Neuroscience; the papers collected here are from a 1987 symposium in animal cognition, authored by researchers and philosophers in cognitive ethology. Colin G. Beer addresses folk psychological terms and concepts, pointing out that the philosophical definition of *intentionality* is broader than that used by cognitive ethologists. He wonders if language-based criteria are anthropocentric and whether they can be translated into nonlinguistic terms. Jonathan Bennett also discusses the intentional analysis of behavior, advocating multiple approaches as a way of developing a richer picture. Georg F. Michel covers many of the concerns about the 'overrichness' of folk psychological terminology and its failure to predict human behavior. Echoing Thomas Nagel, Sonja I. Yoerg and Alan C. Kamil remind us that one cannot have direct evidence of another's consciousness. The authors draw a line of influence from Charles Darwin to Donald Griffin; both argue for the likelihood of mental continuity across animal species given the evolutionary continuity of so many other processes and structures.

Other contributors discuss specific studies of conscious chimpanzee behavior (Allison Jolly), artificial language acquisition in parrots (Irene Pepperberg), and false signaling behavior (Dorothy L. Cheney and Robert M. Seyfarth; Peter Marler, Stephen Karakashian, and Marcel Gyger; W. John Smith). Carolyn A. Ristau and Gordon M.

Burghardt each apply the folk psychological term 'intentional stance' to the anti-predator feinting behavior of shorebirds (Ristau) and hognose snakes (Burghardt), pointing out the purposeful or functional quality of the behavior and arguing that successful outcomes lead to reinforcement that, over evolutionary time, may support more voluntary control.

Donald Griffin surveys the primary criticisms of cognitive ethology, including fluid term definitions and uneven critical standards, the belief that conscious thinking has no effect on behavior, the common dismissal of any evidence of conscious thinking in nonhuman animals, and the a priori assumption that subjectivity can never be known. These discouraging positions should be ignored, argues Griffin. Instead, cognitive ethologists should work to clarify elementary definitions of consciousness applied to animals by working on simple cases and asking what functions are served by behaviors. In particular, findings of cognitive creativity and enterprise support the view that animals have at least an elementary consciousness.

White Jr., Lynn. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203—1207.

In four succinct pages, historian Lynn White discusses the tremendous impact humans have had on the natural environment through time, particularly in Northern and Western Europe. According to White, Christian axioms, such as that of 'dominion,' created an attitude of indifference to the destruction of the natural world, and combined with the Industrial Age fusion of science and technology, accelerated that destruction, producing the current environmental crisis.

From the medieval invention of heavier and more destructive plows that resulted in changing land distribution systems to the technical superiority that made possible the plundering of the known world by the “small, mutually hostile nations” of Europe, Western skills “in the development of power machinery, labor-saving devices, and automation” remained consistent, continuing into the present day.

For these deeply entrenched reasons, White argues, the application of more science and technology will not avert further crises; root causes for our beliefs and actions must be understood. White declares that the triumph of Christianity over paganism was “the greatest psychic revolution in the history of our culture” and Christian beliefs, profoundly conditioning our views on human nature and destiny, must be reexamined.

Wynne, Clive D. L. *Do Animals Think?* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Wynne’s book contains chapters detailing animal studies in a variety of areas, including primate learning, language experiments, and problem solving; sensory perceptions of bats; insect communication; the symbolic meanings and roles of pigeons in various cultures; artificial language acquisition in birds; and dolphin perception and intelligence. He uses many examples throughout to support his contention that nonhuman animals are not intelligent or conscious in the unique way that humans are, but that much can be objectively understood about the nature and reality of animals and that much is shared between humans and other animals.

Many of the disagreements about animal awareness, cognition, and intelligence revolve around which qualities and capacities are shared and which distinct from species to species, and in particular, what characteristics are unique to human beings. To help in clarifying this important question, Wynne introduces what he calls the Similarity Sandwich, a three-layer framework for understanding similarities and differences. The bottom (bread) layer asks the question, what is different? All species are different, generally based on variety in anatomy and sense perceptions. The middle, or fixins, layer asks, what is shared? Some instincts and certain cognitive capacities like basic memory and concept formation seem to be similar across a wide spectrum of animal life. The top (bread) asks, what is nearly unique in humans? Here, Wynne suggests, can be placed the use of complex language and an independent self-awareness.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY SAMPLE

The following is a chronological list of the 46 titles surveyed. They were taken from three bibliographies of recommended books about pets published on the website of the University of Illinois' Center for Children's Books. The original bibliographies were accessed in February 2010 at <http://ccb.lis.illinois.edu/bibliographies.html>.

George, Jean Craighead. *How to Talk to Your Cat*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000.

George, Jean Craighead. *How to Talk to Your Dog*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000.

Adoff, Arnold. *Daring Dog and Captain Cat*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2001.

Cowley, Joy. *Agapanthus Hum and Major Bark*. New York: Philomel Books, 2001.

Graham, Bob. *"Let's Get a Pup!" Said Kate*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2001.

Holub, Joan. *Why Do Cats Meow?* New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2001.

Holub, Joan. *Why Do Dogs Bark?* New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2001.

Simont, Marc. *The Stray Dog*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.

Harvey, Amanda. *Dog Eared*. New York: Doubleday Book for Young Readers, 2002.

Collicott, Sharleen. *Toestomper and the Bad Butterflies*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

Cullen, Lynn. *Little Scraggly Hair: A Dog on Noah's Ark*. New York: Holiday House, 2003.

Farish, Terry. *The Cat Who Liked Potato Soup*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2003.

Florian, Douglas. *Bow Wow Meow Meow: It's Rhyming Cats and Dogs*. San Diego: Harcourt, 2003.

Lee, Ho Baek. *While We Were Out*. La Jolla, Calif.: Kane/Miller, 2003.

Little, Jean. *Emma's Strange Pet*. New York: HarperCollins, 2003.

Luthardt, Kevin. *Peep!* Atlanta: Peachtree, 2003.

Palatini, Margie. *The Perfect Pet*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.

Provensen, Alice. *A Day in the Life of Murphy*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2003.

Sidman, Joyce. *The World according to Dog: Poems and Teen Voices*. Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

Finney, Patricia. *I, Jack*. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

Horowitz, Ruth. *Big Surprise in the Bug Tank*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2004.

Joose, Barbara M. *Bad Dog School*. New York: Clarion Books, 2004.

Nolan, Lucy. *Down Girl and Sit: Smarter Than Squirrels*. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2004.

So, Meilo. *Gobble, Gobble, Slip, Slop: A Tale of a Very Greedy Cat*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004.

Turner, Pamela S. *Hachiko: The True Story of a Loyal Dog*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.

Gretz, Susanna. *Riley and Rose in the Picture*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2005.

Kuskin, Karla. *So, What's It Like to be a Cat?* New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2005.

Nolan, Lucy. *Down Girl and Sit: On the Road*. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2005.

Rodowsky, Colby. *The Next-Door Dog*. New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2005.

Shyer, Marlene Fanta. *Fleabiscuit Sings!* New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2005.

Fine, Anne. *The Diary of a Killer Cat*. New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2006.

Howe, James. *Houndsley and Catina and the Birthday Surprise*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2006.

Kelleher, Victor. *Dogboy*. Asheville, N.C.: Front Street, 2006.

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Once I Ate a Pie*. New York: Cotler/HarperCollins, 2006.

Sidman, Joyce. *Meow Ruff: A Story in Concrete Poetry*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.

Smith, D. James. *Probably the World's Best Story about a Dog and the Girl Who Loved Me*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2006.

Calmenson, Stephanie. *May I Pet Your Dog? The How-to-Guide for Kids Meeting Dogs (and Dogs Meeting Kids)*. New York: Clarion Books, 2007.

Friend, Catherine. *The Perfect Nest*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2007.

Harper, Charise Mericle. *Fashion Kitty versus the Fashion Queen*. New York: Hyperion Paperbacks for Children, 2007.

Hicks, Barbara Jean. *The Secret Life of Walter Kitty*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007.

Jenkins, Steve. *Dogs and Cats*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2007.

O'Connor, Barbara. *How to Steal a Dog*. New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2007.

Straight, Susan. *The Friskative Dog*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007.

Umansky, Kaye. *I Don't Like Gloria!* Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2007.

Van Fleet, Matthew. *Dog*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2007.

Ward, Helen. *Little Moon Dog*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2007.