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From the Horse's Mouth: Voices of the Nonhuman in Classic Children's Literature

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A departmental senior thesis submitted to the Department of Environmental Studies at Trinity University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with departmental honors.

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Animals communicate. It is our responsibility to figure out how to understand them. With understanding, we can build greater interspecies relationships and establish avenues for living better together, in both individual lives and concentrated efforts to validate the voices of animals in the political field (von Essen). We can live lives informed by the knowledge and needs of nonhuman animals, if only we keep our eyes and ears open and pay attention to nonhuman communication. The lives developed in this practice have the potential to resemble Donna Haraway's conception of "kin-making," developed as a way to cultivate interspecies relationships in a constantly changing world, nurturing both ecosystems and individuals (Haraway 138). The barriers between species and faults in communication do not originate on the nonhuman side. Rather, humans, constantly preoccupied with and unable to think without abstract language, are often blind to other forms of thought and communication. We are creatures of language, and we must expand our conceptions of communication through language. We can look to "ordinary stories, ordinary becoming 'involved in each other's lives,' [which] propose ways to stay with the trouble in order to nurture well-being on a damaged planet" to develop our ability to communicate between species (Haraway 76). Literary animals with clear and distinct voices, hereafter referred to as talking animals, explore possible animal perspectives through language that is accessible to humans. The voices of talking animals can remove the negative preconceptions about the abilities of nonhuman animals to think or communicate. Engaging with these voices redirects our focus and primes us to pay attention to the nonhuman voices around us every day.

The personalities of individual talking animals as expressed in these stories are discovered through the content of their speech. While spoken abstract language is a human

construct, “the anthropomorphic approach to animals in these fantasies, especially in their being granted the power of language to live as self-defining agents, has not *denatured* animals, ... but *re-natured* them,” giving them the ability to express emotions and opinions in a clearly understood form (Elick 8). The speech of talking animals is not all the same, nor should they be viewed the same. Direct animal speech falls upon a tripartite spectrum of qualities that each serves different literary purposes and adds or detracts from the character’s depiction as an animal agent. The first point of the spectrum is depiction of animal emotions and viewpoints. This extreme is characterized by supposedly pure portrayals of the experience of the animal’s life, without ulterior motives. The second is moralizing. This extreme refers to efforts to impart moral lessons or impact the behavior of the reader. The third is world building and advancement of the plot of the story. In this extreme, the speech of the animal is used to explain the context of the world or to move the action of the narrative forward. Most sentences spoken and ideas expressed by talking animals do not lie in any of the three extremes, but somewhere between them. Furthermore, it is important to note that none of the positions on the spectrum are inherently beneficial or harmful to the agency of the animal or to the quality of the exploration of human-nonhuman relationships. Rather, positive and negative examples can be found throughout the spectrum. This framework aims to clarify the underlying human structures present in the voices of animals and illuminate the worldviews and relationships beneath for analysis, while maintaining awareness of the anthropomorphising presence of the human.

Through the representations of animals in literature, we are able to explore human conceptions of human-animal relations and animal existence. Despite its potential to expand conceptions of communication, anthropomorphized animals are one of the most contentious and

disputed depictions of animals in literature. Critics argue that anthropomorphized animals, which display distinctly human traits and characteristics, threaten to overshadow or eliminate the actual experiences of animals with self-approving human-centric opinions and experiences. In this view, “animal[s] in general have been wholly *invisibilized* from the work and imagination of humans” (Chejfec 137). In more scientific perspectives, the goal of objective observation and data collection often fuels efforts to reject anthropomorphism in order to retain the accuracy of the data collected. While the analysis and use of anthropomorphism needs to be understood in the context of these concerns, and anthropomorphism is not suitable in all areas of study, efforts to portray animals completely objectively and therefore prevent anthropocentric ideas are also flawed, particularly in literature. Not only does this approach tend to objectify animals (Archer-Lean 4), it does not escape the anthropocentrism that can permeate anthropomorphism. The animals are still being depicted based upon human perceptions and are denied the possibility of inner lives and communication beyond what can be directly witnessed and proven. Efforts to depict non-anthropocentric relationships with animals “entails decentering our companion species as well,” revealing the inherently anthropocentric nature of focus on non-human species that interact with or are studied by humans (Cole et al 97). We are unable to escape the ‘anthro-’. We are unable to escape ourselves in the narratives we write.

Instead of attempting to distance ourselves from the human in our understanding of nonhuman animals, we can use anthropomorphism and the analysis of anthropomorphism as an exploratory tool to deliberate the possibilities of animal minds, emotions, relationships and lives. In imaginative explorations of animal living, we can create new understandings of animal lives and use these understandings to inform our real-world relationships with animals. In this

practice, “imaginative visions of the lives of non-human animals need not be completely rejected as facile. Rather, we can understand a continuum between human and non-human animals through the empathy-building involved in animal mediations” (Archer-Lean 1). Some of the most blatantly and unashamedly anthropomorphic animals are found in children’s literature, in which animals are frequently given literal voices for expressing their own thoughts and feelings. Often the characters of this blatant anthropomorphism are accused of only being “used to entertain and astonish human beings” (Balci 20); however, the topics they explore and the problems they address reach deeper than the mere entertainment. As children learn to make sense of the world they live in, children’s fiction explores possibilities for the structure of the world and how animal agents, both human and nonhuman, are situated within the world. Indeed in the tradition that views children as only partially civilized and cultured, “animal-like children meet human-like animals in nineteenth-century children’s talking animal stories, frequently blurring the animal/human distinction” (Cosslett 182). Talking animal stories both create an opportunity for children to explore the possibilities of more-than-human relationships, and independently experiment with the nature of animal lives and personalities.

In this essay, I will be addressing three well-known children’s stories that feature talking animals: Anna Sewell’s *Black Beauty*, selected titles from Hugh Lofting’s *Doctor Dolittle*, and selected titles from C. S. Lewis’s *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Each of these stories grapples with the voices of animals during pivotal moments of environmental history. *Black Beauty* was published in 1877, the landscape of the industrial revolution, as the everyday lives of horses and other animals were shaped by the steam engine and other developing technology. Lofting began drafting *Doctor Dolittle* in the trenches of World War One, as the technology of violence

devastates Europe, impacting humans, animals, and ecosystems alike. In the 1950s, the publication of *The Chronicles of Narnia* coexisted with the dawn of the atomic age, which shaped perceptions of both the place of animals in the globalizing world and the impact of humans on all life. In each of these times of change and turmoil, all of these stories look to the lives and speech of animals. Using these children's novels, this essay aims to explore new ways of analyzing the use of anthropomorphism in literature, with awareness of the ever prevalent anthro- pointing the way toward literary expeditions of animal lives and human-animal relationships.

Black Beauty: His Grooms and Companions: The Autobiography of a Horse is ultimately concerned with exploring more-than-human relationships and the perspective of the horses within these relationships. While today the novel is known as only *Black Beauty* and Anna Sewell is listed as the author, the original title page from 1877 listed Anna Sewell only as a translator, traversing the space between the human and the equine, and leaving authorship to the horses she interacted with in her life. *Black Beauty* tells the lifelong story of a horse named Black Beauty in Victorian England, detailing his experiences and relationships with his many owners, from aristocracy to rental cabbies and hard labourers, culminating with his eventual retirement and return to the rural setting of his youth. Unlike the other pieces I will discuss in this essay, which feature animals that speak to humans and other animals using a common language, the entirety of *Black Beauty* is narrated by a horse who is unable to speak linguistically to the humans with whom he interacts. Instead of a human narration interspersed with dialogue from animals, *Black Beauty* contains an animal narrator with both humans and other animals represented through dialogue. The voice of Black Beauty as the narrator and the dialogue of the

other horses with whom he interacts both primarily fall upon my spectrum of analysis between moralizing and animal emotions and viewpoints.

Language intended to evoke a change in action and moral judgements is prevalent throughout the novel and is often considered one of its most notable qualities. The moralizing aspects of *Black Beauty* “helped in the abolition of the bearing-rein, a fashionable device that forced horses to hold their heads up unnaturally high” (Cosslett 74). Through the detailed and personal descriptions of the physical experience of horses, the everyday treatment of horses is brought into question. Despite Black Beauty describing his master as kind, the description of his breaking in and training process still includes visceral scenes of discomfort: “a great piece of cold hard steel as thick as a man’s finger to be pushed into one’s mouth, between the teeth and over one’s tongue, with the ends coming out at the corner of your mouth and held fast there by straps over your head, under your throat, round your nose and under your chin” (Sewell 10). In this passage and others like it, the physical experiences of a horse, imagined and translated by Sewell, are vividly portrayed in order to shape the perspective of readers upon the treatment of horses. Furthermore, the personalized physical experiences act as a way of confirming the individuality and subjectivity of the horses through their experiences. The physical experiences, particularly those that are conveyed in second person, further adhering them to the reader, are in direct opposition with the view of animals as a part of mechanisation. Sewell directly pushes back against the idea of animals, particularly work animals, as machines and chastises the people who “think a horse or pony is like a steam engine” (Sewell 31). The horse’s experience of the world is shaped by the industrial revolution both in the conditions of their work in cities and by the evolving views toward animals. As industrialization and mechanisation spread throughout the

lives of humans and railroads create expectations of immediacy and regularity in transportation, horses are frequently viewed merely as tools and are expected to behave as machines. Calling attention to the non-mechanized lives and subjectivity of the horses, Sewell gives priority to the emotions and perspectives of the horses over societal pressures and establishes them as a baseline for morally just action.

The moralizing language in *Black Beauty* does not stop at the treatment and rights of animals, but rather extends into a more overarching critique of the relationships between people and horses. The vast majority of the novel focuses on events that occur at the intersection of humans and horses and each event either depicts a successful communication between species or reveals a breakdown in communication between the humans and the horses. When communication is successful, it is shown to be beneficial to both parties. However, frequently communications break down due to negligence or lack of effort on the part of the human characters, often with devastating effects. One clear example of contrasting attempts at communication occurs during a barn fire. When the fire was discovered, one man attempted to bring out all of the horses, “but he seemed in such a hurry, and so frightened himself that he frightened [the horses] still more” and was unable to save any of the horses, many of whom were personally unfamiliar with the man (Sewell 54). On the other hand, James, Black Beauty’s groom and driver, was able to use his pre-existing relationship with the horses and knowledge of their personalities to lead Black Beauty and Ginger, a mare owned by the same family as Black Beauty, from the stable, “patting and coaxing” them to safety (Sewell 54). Tragically, all of the other horses in the stable who were not brought out by someone engaging in individual communication with them perished in the fire. This instance, among many, conveys one simple

moral instruction (no pipes should be allowed in a stable) and a more complex commentary on the nature and importance of individual interspecies relationships.

Successful communication in interspecies relationships does not only impact the health and safety of the animals in *Black Beauty*, but can also have dire consequences for the humans that are part of the relationships. Both the human and nonhuman animals have to use interspecies communication and build personal relationships to be benefitted by the relationship. The Lady Anne, one of Black Beauty's owners and "a perfect horsewoman", built a strong relationship with Black Beauty through frequent rides and interactions (Sewell 84). However, her relationship with Black Beauty is not an indication of her relationship with all horses. On one outing, Lady Anne chooses to ride Lizzie, a "rather nervous" mare who is favored by some of the gentlemen (Sewell 84). While out, Lizzie is spooked by a whip and several other horses and "gave a violent kick, and dashed off into a headlong gallop," ultimately resulting in Lizzie galloping out of control into the common, falling after a failed jump and leaving Lady Anne motionless on the ground (Sewell 86). Concerned, Black Beauty "was as eager as [his] rider; [his rider] saw it, and giving [him] a free rein, and leaning a little forward, [they] dashed after them" (Sewell 86). Following the incident, Black Beauty is praised for his concern for Lady Anne, which was apparent even to the humans who own him. Neither Lady Anne nor Lizzie are blamed for the accident; rather, the failures to communicate are a product of the lack of relationship between the two. Successful communication does not arise merely because an individual is experienced with horses and a horse is experienced with humans, but relies upon the individuals within the relationship. In this way, the horses are treated as individuals in their relationships with others, not merely as representatives of their species. Horses are also treated as morally responsible

individuals, possessing true subjecthood. While most of the horses in *Black Beauty* exhibit positive social behaviors, horses are also shown to behave in morally irreverent ways, reaping the consequences of their actions. One such horse is Ginger, a chestnut mare that Black Beauty meets at his first owner's estate. Unlike Black Beauty's relatively gentle breaking in process, Ginger's first introduction to working with humans was "all force; they did not give me a chance to know what they wanted" (Sewell 23). Throughout the novel, Ginger is displayed as high-strung and short-tempered. While "the modern reader is quick to excuse" Ginger's misbehavior due to her mistreatment, "Victorian Quakers did not excuse it" (Hollindale 106). Eventually, Ginger dies on the street as an overworked cab horse. Ginger serves a dual purpose in the text, acting both as "the defeated rebellious horse" and "a tragic defeat" (Cosslett 79). Then men who mistreated Ginger are condemned and she is pitied for her lot in life, but ultimately, Ginger is held morally responsible for her behavior.

Later in Black Beauty's life, he is both a horse for hire and cab horse, resulting in a wider exposure both to the communication capacities of individual human beings and the impacts of the economic market. As a horse and buggy for rent, Black Beauty has interactions with many people without the knowledge or understanding to communicate with him or treat him well. Ignorance, in *Black Beauty*, is not an acceptable excuse for poor actions. Early in the book, Black Beauty's mother explains, "there are a great many foolish men, vain, ignorant, and careless, who never trouble themselves to think; these spoil more horses than all, just for want of sense; they don't mean it, but they do it for all that" (Sewell 12). Black Beauty often encounters these sorts of drivers and riders as a job horse: those that are unable to participate in any bilateral communication due to lack of attention and knowledge. These men either drive with far too tight

of a rein, constantly pulling on the horse's mouth, or drive with far too loose a rein and a careless attitude, without paying any attention to the horse at all (Sewell 100). In one particular encounter, a careless driver continues driving Black Beauty for half a mile with a stone stuck in his foot, wedging the stone further in and causing Black Beauty substantial pain. While an experienced driver would have recognized the problem and removed the stone quickly, the driver merely expresses disappointment that he was "sent out with a lame horse" and tells Black Beauty that there is "no use turning lame and lazy" (Sewell 102). Fortunately, a farmer drives by, recognizes the source of Black Beauty's lameness and removes the stone. The farmer explains the issue, and the driver reveals his ignorance, saying that he didn't know that it was possible for a horse's hoof to pick up a stone. Regardless of the efforts that Black Beauty makes to communicate with the people he encounters, it is not possible for him to effectively convey a message to such an ignorant and unknowledgeable recipient. Unfortunately, from this point forward, Black Beauty is subjected to many more encounters with ignorant people because his value has degraded and he has entered a more general society than that in which he was raised.

Following his sale from the aristocracy to become a cab horse and a rental horse, Black Beauty is no longer a beauty in appearance. In particular, Black Beauty's knees are scarred from a tragic accident caused by the poor riding decisions of a drunk man while in the ownership of the aristocracy. Although Black Beauty is cleared of all blame for the accident, he is sold because his owner "could not have knees like [those] in [his] stables" (Sewell 98). The appearance of his knees will continue to impact Black Beauty throughout his life. Due to Black Beauty's inability to verbally communicate with humans, potential buyers are unable to know the circumstances of the accident and use his scarring from a fall as a signal that the horse may have

behavioral or coordination issues, resulting in the accident, assuming that they do not reject Black Beauty purely due to dislike of the appearance of the scars. At a horse fair, “the gentlemen always turned from [him] when they saw [his] broken knees; though the man who had [him] swore it was only a slip in the stall” (Sewell 120). By this point, Black Beauty has no one to tell the story of his accident, and is only supported by the lies that a salesman tells to support his character. In order to establish his character, Black Beauty must utilize nonverbal interspecies communication toward a person with enough attention and experience to recognize and understand his efforts toward communication. At the horse fair, people are present to judge the horses for sale, but Black Beauty remarks that he is also judging the humans that examine him by their mannerisms, treatment of him in inspecting him, and their overall demeanor. The judgement of the humans at a horse fair acts as an example of the overall role reversal integral to the animal autobiography: “instead of horses as seen by men, we are shown humankind as seen by horses” (Hollindale 96). In his sale to the cab owner and driver Jeremiah Barker, Black Beauty is not a passive object that is sold, but rather acts to select his owner from those that he has judged. Black Beauty liked Barker from his first impression and established a thread of communication with him. When Barker returns to bargain, Black Beauty “could not help but reach out [his] head toward him. He stroked [Black Beauty’s] face kindly” (Sewell 121). Barker was encouraged by this encounter and motivated to offer a higher price than another buyer. Black Beauty is able to utilize communication to effectively become an agent in the economic system, exerting influence upon his sale.

As a cab horse, Black Beauty develops a far more detailed perspective on the power structures, both economic and social, that control his life. Following his purchase by Barker,

Black Beauty encounters Captain, an old war horse who was part of the cavalry in the Crimean War. While sharing his experiences of the war, the Captain describes a brutal battle that appears to be a reference to the Charge of the Light Brigade, a tragic and heroic battle resulting from an inaccurate order that was famously detailed in a poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson. As Hollindale points out, “Tennyson famously said of the brave cavalry, "Theirs not to reason why," but Sewell's horses do reason why” (Hollindale 107). The horse’s act of reasoning also extends to their engagements in the economic system. While Black Beauty is merely expected to perform the work that is asked of him without resistance, he does express opinions and reasoning about the best ways for work to be done. In this section, most of the explanations about the reasoning and structures of the economic system are relegated through the dialogue of the human cab drivers, however, Black Beauty still expresses some personal convictions about best practices for his work. For him, “the best thing that [they] had here [were their] Sundays for rest; [they] worked so hard in the week, that [he does] not think [they] could have kept up to it, but for that day” (Sewell 126). This statement is framed not only as an appreciation of rest, but also as a moral statement about the importance of a day of rest for workers. The ethical message of a day of rest definitely follows with Sewell’s Quaker values, but also acts as a push for workers rights and welfare. While definitions of workers often only include humans, the behaviors and activities of the horses in *Black Beauty* fit into more expansive depictions of work. Under these definitions, “animal work, just like our work, depends on organization and institutions. It is the result of a balance of power” (Porcher 316). Black Beauty is intimately aware of the balances of power within which he is situated and displays a relationship to his work much like that described by Porcher: “built on education, rules, communication, cooperation and affection”

(Porcher 315). Black Beauty clearly engages in communication with the humans with whom he works, was educated and given rules in his breaking-in narrative, and is shown affection by several of his owners. Furthermore, Black Beauty's personal attitudes toward work highlight his cooperative traits. Even when he is required to work with a bearing rein, he was still "determined to make the best of it and do [his] duty" (Sewell 80). Although Black Beauty is often in situations in which he does not have a choice of whether or not to work, he performs his work with willingness and great effort. Black Beauty's attitude toward his work is displayed as a choice. Even after he is overworked and weakened from mistreatment, he waits to be sold yet again and notices buyers "that [he] would have willingly used the last of [his] strength in serving" due to their kind demeanors and voices (Sewell 187). The structures of power throughout the system of equine labor are obvious, but Black Beauty controls his attitudes and reactions to the work that he is given.

The economic systems of power do not only act upon Black Beauty and the other horses harshly, but have tremendous impacts upon the human actors as well. Through the stories of other cabbies and workers, the complex inner workings of systems of power are revealed. One cabbie in particular, Seedy Sam, exposes the cab system as the source of many overworked horses, instead of the individual cabbies. Cab drivers that do not own their own horses and instead rent horses must earn back the price of the horse before they are able to make any sort of profit, often taking around twenty miles to cover the cost of the horse due to fare restrictions (Sewell 152). Even the forthright Jeremiah Barker admits that "it is hard lines for man, and it is hard lines for beast, and who's to mend it I don't know" (Sewell 153). Overall, the only action available for many people is a kind word. From his many sales to the conditions of his labor,

“Beauty's story suggests the extent to which the vagaries of economic relations, not individual character, determine one's fate” (Guest 10). The structures of the system depicted objectify both the human and animal actors. The system treats both the humans and the animals as mere cogs in the economic machine, attempting to remove any subjectivity the individuals have. However, Black Beauty's and other characters' knowledge and detailed depictions of the systems of power affirm their subjectivity within these systems. They are capable of understanding their experiences in the context of larger systems. From this understanding, the acknowledgement of, acceptance of and determination to persevere through the complex systems of power with the aid of personal relationships is an act of subjectivity affirmation.

All of the acts of speech discussed so far have been situated between moralizing statements and animal emotions and viewpoints. These instances use the emotions and viewpoints of animals to support moral perspectives. However, *Black Beauty* also contains a few instances of depictions of animal emotions and viewpoints without the human input. For example, Jeremiah Barker picks up one Sunday fare in order to bring a friend to see her sick mother. This fare brings Barker and Black Beauty out of the city and into the rural countryside, where, for the first time in years, Black Beauty is turned out freely in a meadow. At this time, he is able to act truly as an unburdened horse “to eat the grass, or roll over on [his] back, or lie down and rest, or have a gallop across the meadow out of sheer spirits at being free” (Sewell 145). Presumably, instances of animal emotions and viewpoints undirected toward human concerns of moral behavior and plot expansion would be the most desirable depiction of animals because they avoid contamination with more anthropomorphized topics of morality and world/plot building. However, the implementation of these moments within the text seems to fall

flat. In the approximately five times that this type of situation happens, each moment rarely lasts more than a few lines of description. Overall, these moments seem disconnected from the reality of the horses' lives and tend to avoid any associations or relationships with humans. While it is valuable to imagine the perspectives of animals unburdened by the systems of power that ruled so much of *Black Beauty's* life, without human interventions in the text, the depiction is ignoring the large influence of the source of the writing. The human is ever present in the stories we write. By ignoring the human, we only separate our imagined animals further from reality.

Counterintuitively, the voices of animals that stray closer to anthropomorphized ideas have the potential to be more evocative in reimagining the roles of human and nonhuman animals.

Overall, *Black Beauty's* use of moralizing language informed by animal emotions and viewpoints affirms the subjecthood of its horses and highlights the importance of interspecies communication and attention.

Unlike the realistic and detailed depiction of horse and animal life that shine through in *Black Beauty*, the *Doctor Dolittle* series reveals fantastical events and adventures that leave the everyday world behind and utilize interspecies communication to reshape the world and its treatment toward animals. While *Doctor Dolittle* shows extreme care to treat animals with dignity, other human cultures are not granted the same concern. At the same time that the Doctor seeks to grant animals human-like social consideration and status, the text's stereotypically racist portrayals of other cultures displays "extreme blindness to the humanity of African and Native American peoples" (Elick 71). The themes of racism and imperialism echo in the background, even as the Doctor calls for revolutionary changes to animal treatment. Originally drafted in letters from the trenches of the first World War, Hugh Lofting's *Doctor Dolittle* is a direct

reaction to and escape from the violence of the battlefield, particularly the “violence visited upon animals” and the inequity between medical treatment given to humans and animals (Elick 68).

While on the battlefield injured humans would be given surgery and medical treatment, an injured horse would often be shot. Both an autobiographical note from Lofting’s *The Junior Book of Authors* and the events of the *Doctor Dolittle* series place the origin of this inequality in treatment upon the lack of common language between humans and animals. Doctor Dolittle, who has learned the languages of animals, can bridge this gap. In contrast to the horses of wartime which were given little to no medical treatment, Doctor Dolittle’s first animal patient who expresses, quite clearly, “What I need is *spectacles*,” a treatment never even considered by the other veterinarians (Lofting, *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* 3). Dolittle’s ability to interpret the speech of animals is used as a mechanism to improve animal welfare. Therefore, nearly all animal speech in the *Doctor Dolittle* series has a relationship to the moralizing section of my analysis. Regardless of what the animals are actually saying, the act of speech itself is treated as a force to make the desires and needs of animals known in the world and improve their livelihoods.

Doctor Dolittle’s ability to communicate with and understand the speech of different animals is not the result of fantastical or magical abilities on either the part of Doctor Dolittle or the animals. Rather, it is the product of collaboration, study and observation. Polynesia, the parrot, is the first exposure that the Doctor receives to the communication abilities of the animals around him. Unlike most of the other animals, Polynesia can speak to the Doctor using English through her study of the language over her lifetime. Like many of the instances of animal speech in this series, Polynesia’s words on this subject clearly serve to advance the plot of the story for

the moralistic purposes of improving the lives of animals treated by the Doctor. She explains to the Doctor “that animals had a language of their own and could talk to one another” (Lofting 1920, 2). The animals’ languages are present whether the humans are aware and capable of understanding them or not. In this way, “the concept of autonomous selfhood that we reserve for humans, largely because of our self-expression through language, must according to Lofting’s worldview be extended to other species. Animals have linguistic ability all along, the Dolittle books imply; it’s just that humans have been too obtuse and too jealous of their power to acknowledge it” (Elick 77). The linguistic criteria for selfhood and agency, which is based in ideas of human exceptionalism, has already been met by the animals within the *Doctor Dolittle* books. Even if the Doctor had never learned the language of the animals, the animals themselves retain the same inherent abilities and the rights that their abilities grant.

Doctor Dolittle’s language learning efforts are complicated by the fact that animal languages often present themselves in forms that are difficult for humans to notice and grasp. As Polynesia explains, “animals don’t always speak with their mouths ... They talk with their ears, with their feet, with their tails - with everything” (Lofting 1920, 2). While the Doctor appears to pick up animal languages very quickly in the relatively short novel *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*, the language learning is shown to be much more difficult and involved in the much longer second novel of the series, *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle*. *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* introduces the narrator of the series, Stubbins, who was raised as a cobbler’s son and becomes the Doctor’s apprentice and assistant, traveling with him and learning from the animals. Stubbins depicts the process of learning the language of a different species as long and arduous, even saying that “at first [he] thought [he] would never be able to learn at all -- it seemed so difficult”

(Lofting 1922, 65). Similarly, the Doctor spends the majority of *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* struggling to learn shellfish language. These efforts seem suited to the complex and difficult task of cross-species language learning and highlight the complexity and richness of many of the individual animal languages. Beyond her role as a translator and language teacher, Polynesia is directly involved in telling the story of Doctor Dolittle. While Stubbins is the narrator and apparent author of the story, “it is she who encourages him to begin, and it is she who promises to correct his errors” (Schmidt 21). Polynesia acts as a sounding board and editor for the written tales, highlighting her linguistic abilities and implying that her voices may be present through more parts of the novel than only her dialogue. Having an animal voice active in the writing of the story changes the nature of the tale told, suggesting that the story is not merely about animals, but deliberately shaped by them as well.

Similar to events in *Black Beauty*, the contrasting impacts of successful and unsuccessful communication are clearly expressed. While traveling through the ocean in search of a floating island, the Doctor and Stubbins catch a fish called the Fidgit. Unlike most of the other animals that Doctor Dolittle encounter, the Fidgit speaks a few phrases of English. Once held in an aquarium, the Fidgit picked up phrases and tunes that he heard near the tank. Although the Fidgit learned to speak some English phrases, his speech was never noticed by the crowds or the aquarium staff, and the dull life caused his “[heart] to grow heavy within [his] prison-walls of glass” (Lofting 1922, 210). Despite his many efforts to communicate and express his desires, no humans were observant enough to engage with the Fidgit at this time. Eventually, he pretends to be dead so that the workers will throw him into the harbor, and escapes back to the ocean. The Fidgit’s interaction with Doctor Dolittle strikes a severe contrast to his time in the aquarium. The

Doctor quickly notices his speech capabilities and takes the time to further decipher the original Fidget language. He listens to and records the Fidget's story, asks him a few questions about the ocean, and shellfish languages, and releases the Fidget back into the ocean, as he requests. The entire interaction is based upon mutual communication and respect. The Fidget even says that it was "a real pleasure to be of assistance to the great John Dolittle" (Lofting 1922, 219). This interaction reveals a common theme in stories about the relationships between animals and humans: breakdowns in communication often occur due to the action of the humans, and therefore, humans must be actively seeking to establish communication with animals. The Fidget's speech is primarily characterized by his description of the emotional perspective of aquarium fish and the moral implications of communication, but the plot driven concern with the shellfish languages still manages to make an appearance.

Animal speech and voices in *Doctor Dolittle* are not isolated to the moralistic goal of animal welfare improvement. Animal voices are represented as the key to historical knowledge and truthful accounts of the world. Communication with animals is valuable both because of the inherent value of the relationships it facilitates between animals and humans and for the knowledge that it can add to everyday life. The possibility of expanding human knowledge of history is partially why Doctor Dolittle is so obsessed with learning shellfish languages in *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle*, both to learn from the long-living shellfish about natural history and to learn about the current state and ecology of the deep ocean. Other than scholastic and scientific knowledge, animal voices can also illuminate facts about daily life. Before their voyage in *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* begins, the Doctor and Stubbins become involved in the trial of one of their friends, Luke the Hermit, as he is accused of murder. In order to clear his

name, the Doctor calls to the stand the only witness to the events, a bulldog named Bob. Bob is able to give the complete account of the events that caused the death and clear Luke the Hermit's name, "[swearing] it is the truth, every word" (Lofting 1922, 119). Bob's words in the section are almost entirely focused on advancing the plot of the story and do not include much other nuances. He does express some aspects of the animal viewpoint of life through his frustration in being unable to communicate with Luke the Hermit to prevent the unfortunate events from occurring. However, he does not convey any other emotions or personal information. Ultimately, Bob is portrayed as a way to access the truth of the situation. Interestingly, although Bob is shown to be loyal to Luke the Hermit and is certainly biased toward Luke, the Prosecutor's concerns that "the dog would not tell the truth against his own master" are dismissed by the judge and the rest of the court (Lofting 1922, 119). While truthfulness is a positive quality to possess, by rejecting the possibility that the bulldog would behave in an immoral way Doctor Dolittle undermines Bob's moral agency. Consistently, animals are portrayed as reasonable and moral characters, but without the option for acting otherwise, these actions are meaningless. While human characters can be antagonists to the Doctor and the animals (and often are), animal characters are persuaded by the Doctor's effort to communicate with them. "It is the relationship between animals and humans that creates the most strife and yet also constitutes an inescapable reality within Dolittle's utopian schemes", not competing values or perspectives, which seem likely to arise between different species (Pike 867). The animals in *Doctor Dolittle* are pleased to participate in Dolittle's utopian worldbuilding and do not present any real challenges to the utopian vision.

Part of the worldbuilding that Doctor Dolittle facilitates occurs through expanding considerations of how individuals interact with the world. One good example of this type of world expansion is the dog Jip's description of his experience of smelling. In his words, "hot water smells quite different from cold water. It is warm water -- or ice -- that has the really difficult smell" (Lofting 1920, 38). Jip's abilities to track scents help a young boy find his uncle, moving the plot of the story forward, but they also reveal his experience of the world in a way that causes other characters and readers to consider the world differently. On a northern breeze, Jip smells "old yellow bricks, crumbling with age in a garden-wall; the sweet breath of young cows standing in a mountain-stream; the lead roof of a dove-cote -- or perhaps a granary -- with the mid-day sun on it..." (Lofting 1920, 39). The detailed description words that Jip uses to express what he smells branch into other senses. In particular, how does one smell yellow? Jip uses these words to express an experience of smelling that is not accessible to non-dogs. This example drives home the point that animal experiences of the world are not only different because of structural and societal differences, but because of biological differences in perception. Individuals' different worldviews are valuable because "it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with ... It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories (Haraway 12). While the plot would remain the same, the story is different because it is made by Jip's experience of the world. Jip's input into the story creates a new dimension of complexity to our understanding of the world.

In the culmination of a plot line that permeates *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle*, the Doctor finally finds the Great Snail and is able to speak to a shellfish. While he set out to learn the language of the shellfish, the Doctor's first conversation with the Great Snail does not occur

entirely in shellfish. Shellfish is too different of an animal language for the Doctor to learn without the aid of translators. In lieu of fluent communication, the Doctor establishes a chain of communication through different animals. To communicate with the Great Snail, “the starfish would ask the snail something; and whatever answer the snail gave, the starfish would tell the sea-urchin, the urchin would tell the porpoises and the porpoises would tell it to the Doctor” (Lofting 1922, 341). Through observing this process and combining his observations with his other knowledge of fish languages, the Doctor is able to passably speak shellfish. However, I find the translation chain of species to be more insightful than actually learning the language of the shellfish. For every species, “nobody lives everywhere; everybody lives somewhere. Nothing is connected to everything; everything is connected to something” (Haraway 31). The relationships that particular species have with their locations and other species constitutes part of their identities. Despite this fact, Doctor Dolittle appears to be determined to be directly connected to everything. The intermediate members of connection may disrupt purely factually accurate translation, but they still add depth and complexity to the world that is co-created in these communications. While the Doctor moves beyond the need for translators as intermediaries in communication, these animals are not disregarded. Communication is not just a means to gain knowledge, but is a worthy pursuit in and of itself. Most of the *Doctor Dolittle* books end with a return to home and domesticity, a location which still includes animal voices, from dogs, ducks and pigs to shellfish, antelopes, and migratory birds. “Taking tea together, sharing stories, and engaging in lively discussion around the family hearth are the greatest pleasures. By listening to the varied voices of animals and creating a new cross-species conception of family in his home,” Doctor Dolittle emulates the goals of making-kin Haraway outlines in *Staying with the Trouble*,

creating “unexpected collaborations and combinations ... [to] become-with each other” (Haraway 4). Ultimately, Doctor Dolittle’s greatest strength lies in reimagining animal’s places in everyday life. Utilizing plot progression and world building language informed by the language of moral treatment and animal perspectives and emotions, *Doctor Dolittle* calls for liberation of animals and learning from animals in order to expand the human vision of the world to include the unique experiences of animals.

Unlike the linguistic barriers that underlie the communication between human and nonhuman animals in *Black Beauty* and *Doctor Dolittle*, the talking animals in *The Chronicles of Narnia* inexplicably speak English and have no linguistic barriers with the humans they encounter. However, the human main characters and the talking animals come from entirely different worlds. Most of the series occurs within Narnia, a fantasy country and realm populated primarily by animals and mythical creatures. The worlds are separated and governed by different natural (or magical) laws, but within the text neither is considered to be more real than the other. For both worlds, “what appears as fantasy of one world is the reality of the other: here, our world is the fairy tale world or Narnia” (Riga 26). The English school children who visit Narnia are viewed by the residents as a fantastical novelty, echoing their perception of the talking animals. The talking animals and mythical creatures are placed on equal grounds as creatures of legend, evidenced by the titles of books found in the faun Tumnus’s house: “*Men, Monks and Gamekeepers: a Study in Popular Legend* or *Is Man a Myth?*” (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 15). The co-mythical relationship between the humans and inhabitants of Narnia is clearly established in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which was the first book of the series to be published but the second in chronological order. In this book, no other humans are

present and the talking animals are mythical beings within Narnia are in turn shocked and delighted to encounter them. However, as *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Horse and His Boy* show, humans have been to Narnia before and still live with that world, outside of the country of Narnia. I will address the depictions of talking animals in first three novels in this series: first, *The Magician's Nephew* which describes the creation of the world and all of the beings within it; second, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the famous story of the Pevensie children who fall into Narnia, encounter talking animals and mythical creatures and battle against evil forces to become queens and kings until they return to England; and third, *The Horse and His Boy*, which describes a horse's developing friendship with his human as they escape from captivity in a foreign land to return to Narnia.

Although the fantasy world of Narnia is separated from our own, Narnia and its inhabitants remain cognizant of the presence of war on Earth. Shortly after the world is created in *The Magician's Nephew*, Aslan, the creator of Narnia, warns the children of other worlds that have developed magic (the Deplorable Word) that destroys all life and spells their end. He warns the late 19th century children in *The Magician's Nephew* that "it is not certain that some wicked one of your race will not find out a secret as evil as the Deplorable Word and use it to destroy all living things," presenting a clear indictment of atomic warfare (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 212). In response to the horrors of war, Lewis's children retreat to an idealized world of just rulers and good magic. Lewis depicts the country of Narnia with an ecology much like the English countryside, an appropriate place for the children, who are fleeing London during World War II and are sent to the actual English countryside before they stumble into Narnia. Establishing Narnia as a country within a larger world that remains separate from ours creates

internal hierarchical dynamics within the fantasy realm. Narnia is not just in a fantasy relationship with our world, but also has relationships with other countries that are not treated as myth. Rather, Narnia is depicted as ethically and environmentally superior to other countries, frequently displaying racist views and stereotypes that fall in line with English imperialist views.. In this depiction, “the characters see [Narnia] as a place of plenty and hope with a finer race of people who know and love Asian. In contrast, the environments that Lewis depicts as dangerous and undesirable in the text are those linked with the so-called Orient and Africa: desert landscapes, coastal fishing towns, and the dirty, anti-pastoral city of Tashbaan” (Echterling 108). In the non-Narnian environments, talking animals are not as prevalent and the advanced animal rights ethics that exist in Narnia are not present. Beneficial environmental and animal relationships are only present within certain ecologies, landscapes and cultures.

Beyond its problematic depictions of other countries, Narnia is distinguished by the voices of its animals, which are present from the beginning. *The Magician's Nephew* describes the circumstances of Narnia's creation and establishes the hierarchical dynamics present in the world. In true Christian tradition, Narnia is spoken and sung into being by its deity, a lion named Aslan. In order to create the world, “the Lion [paced] to and fro about the empty land and [sang] his new song” (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 123). As he sings, natural features, plants and animals all spring into creation. From the beginning, voices are directly connected to the ability to create, highlighting their importance in this text. While Aslan is an animal, many of the things he says and the manner in which he says them do not connect with any recognizable animal perspective. Most of his speech lies firmly in the moralizing section of my analysis. Unlike the moralizing statements we have seen thus far, Aslan does not draw upon depictions of animal life

and experiences in order to evoke sympathetic emotions and ethical action. Rather, Aslan's moralizing comments come in the form of ethical mandates, evoking the form of religious edicts. Aslan's first words in the text clearly follow this form, calling "Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters" (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 138). Not all of Aslan's words and actions appear in a moralizing form, however. Along with ethical mandates, Aslan also asserts his status as a lion and an animal, reveling in animal emotions and experiences. Overcome with energy and excitement, "round and round he led them, now hopelessly out of their reach, now letting them almost catch his tail, now diving between them, now tossing them in the air with his huge and beautiful velvety paws and catching them again" (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 179). Full of emotion and expression, this encounter is more like the behavior of a lion playing with cubs than the abstract actions of a deity. Even among talking animals, there is some resistance to the idea of a deity that is animal natured. Bree, the main equine character of *The Horse and His Boy* explains that "it would be quite absurd to suppose he is a *real* lion. Indeed it would be disrespectful. If he was a lion he'd have to be a Beast just like the rest of us" (Lewis, *The Horse and His Boy* 214). However, Aslan corrects him and affirms his animalistic nature, saying "I am a true Beast" (Lewis, *The Horse and His Boy* 215). In this statement, Aslan suggests that he does not merely appear to be a lion, nor are lions a separate being that are made to be like him, but that he is a true animal.

Placing an animal in the position of deity reveals the underlying differences between Narnia and our world. Narnia was created for and by animals. The depiction of a world being created calls to mind Judeo-Christian religions, and this interpretation of the structure of a world

is not surprising, given that C. S. Lewis was a Christian theologian. Christian influence can be seen throughout the series, from the creation narrative, the sacrifice and resurrection of Aslan, depictions of end times, and the struggle between good and evil, as well as fundamental assumptions about the nature of animals. Aslan lays out the structure of the world when he first speaks to the talking animals, saying “the Dumb beast whom I have not chosen are yours also. Treat them gently and cherish them but do not go back to their ways lest you cease to be Talking Beasts. For out of them you were taken and into them you can return” (Lewis, *The Magician’s Nephew* 141). From this statement, it is clear that not all Narnian animals are regarded equally. Rather, talking animals are elevated above and given stewardship over non-talking animals. “For Aslan, and for his subjects in Narnia, the talking beasts have the same rights for moral consideration as humans, as do fauns, dryads, and other nonhuman but humanlike magical beings,” however these rights do not extend to non-talking animals (Morris 351). For Lewis, talking animals have been granted increased levels of cognition and intelligence. These mental qualities and capacities make them eligible for moral consideration. Although originally certain animals were chosen to be speaking animals, the gulf between talking animals and non-talking animals can still be bridged. After Aslan is sacrificed, the field mice (a non-talking group) “gnawed through” the ropes that bound him (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 175). For this deed, they were granted the ability to speak. Though they are not held responsible in the same way, non-talking animals must have some moral weight to their actions. Through good deeds, they are able to transcend their positions, which is only possible with some degree of moral consideration. However, until this point, non-talking animals are viewed under a different lens than the talking animals. Unlike the other texts which we have considered, everyday

animals are not viewed to have the inherent capacity of abstract communication and language. “Lewis frequently indicated the limits of our knowledge in trying to speak of animals, so to speak, from the inside, but not in such a way as to allow our unknowing to count decisively against them,” revealing the emotions and lives of talking animals, while maintaining consciousness of the speculative nature of the endeavour (Linzey 78). The depth of animals' inner lives is undetermined.

The lives that we glimpse and envision through talking animals are characterized by each animal's concerns and characteristics. The first talking animal that the children in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* encounter is Mr. Beaver. The majority of Mr. and Mrs. Beaver's dialogue is entirely concerned with illuminating the world and the plot into which the children have stepped, explaining the political situation in Narnia and reciting prophecies. While they presumably have a personal interest in freeing Narnia from a tyrannical witch, they don't display many motivations beyond it being the right thing to do. In contrast, a much shorter and more emotionally engaged passage deals with their dam. When complimented on his dam, Mr. Beaver becomes very pleased and politely protests, “Merely a trifle! Merely a trifle! And it isn't really finished!” (Lewis *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 76). Mr. Beaver is clearly proud of his dam and concerned with the things that actually impact his animal life. While the emotions that a beaver would have about their home is clearly a facet of inner life that is unreachable to us, the emotions shown by Mr. Beaver display a concern about and sensitivity toward the everyday life and experiences of a beaver.

Similarly, the activities and characteristics of the talking animals are linked to their physical and biological experiences of the world. Animals fall into roles that compliment their

biological experience. When readying troops to go to battle, “it was the big sheepdog who actually helped Aslan most in getting them all sorted into their proper order” and a “great hound [who] picked up the scent” of the fight (Lewis *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 192). The roles that the animals pick up are those in which their biological experience of the world would most benefit them. Particularly in animals bred for specific behaviors, the way they interact with the world is unique and reflected in their depictions as talking animals. The behavioral depictions extend beyond active duties and roles into the ways that the talking animals act and socially arrange themselves on a regular basis. When Shasta, the boy in *The Horse and His Boy*, attempts to warn the Narnians of an impending invasion, he is met by a community of woodland creatures who, while excited, seem entirely unmotivated to action by the news. Each animal “agreed that this was very remarkable news and that somebody ought to tell someone about it with a view to doing something. And so it went on. Every few minutes they were joined by other creatures, some from the branches overhead and some from little underground houses at their feet” (Lewis *The Horse and His Boy* 182). Ultimately, it took the arrival of a stag who was ready to run and spread the message to finally spur the community into action. The woodland animals were more concerned with continuing their everyday community rituals and schedules than with the larger issues of the country. That early morning when Shasta brought the news, the squirrels, rabbits, birds and hedgehogs were perfectly willing to chatter and gossip with one another. Even in only these brief interactions, the imagined lives of these brief unnamed characters are vibrant and rich with genuine personality and animal emotion.

In addition to the talking animals, the non-talking animals show knowledge and engagement with their situations. While Shasta learned to ride from Bree, a talking horse, he

soon found himself interacting with other horses, to varied outcomes. Trying to keep up with a group of rides, Shasta rode “an ordinary horse, not a Talking Horse; but it had quite wits enough to realize that the strange boy on its back had no wip and no spurs and was not really master of the situation. That was why Shasta soon found himself at the tail end of the procession” (Lewis *The Horse and His Boy* 167). The horse is credited with having the intelligence and drive to assess his ride and know when he can do as he pleases. The distinction in cognitive abilities between the talking and non-talking horse arises in the consideration of why something would be valuable or important to another. The non-talking horse has no care or concept of why it is important to Shasta to stay with the group and does not change his behavior to help Shasta the way a talking horse might. The talking animal’s ability to more fully understand and express its relationship with others leads to a changed interpretation of ownership. In the Narnian perspective, a talking horse “isn’t *your* horse any longer. One might as well say you’re *her* human” (Lewis *The Horse and His Boy* 33). The ownership relation is undermined and reversed, leading to the title of the book: *The Horse and His Boy*. Humans and talking animals share equal stations and the typically hierarchical relationships between them must be reevaluated.

The individual voices of animals navigating these changing relationships reveal more nuanced depths to our understanding of talking animals in general. Bree, the most present and vocal talking animal in the book, utilizes speech that varies from deep-set concerns about his viewpoint and emotions to a conveyor of plot and worldbuilding information. He is the first talking horse whom Shasta meets in Tashbaan and tells him of Narnia. While he does give valuable information about the new locations revealed in this book and introduces Shasta to the vision of Narnia, it is clear that he does so with his own agenda in mind. After straying too far as

a foal, he was taken from Narnia and has been “hiding [his] true nature and pretending to be dumb and witless” ever since (Lewis *The Horse and His Boy* 10). He wants to return to his homeland where he can live as a free individual, but he cannot get far alone. Without a rider, he merely looks like a stray horse and will be caught quickly. Therefore, he convinces Shasta to come with him as his rider and devises their escape. While many of his words in this initial section of the book serve to expand the plot and illuminate the world, they are so clearly driven by his own motives that they reveal his personal agency. Once Narnia becomes a more attainable goal, Bree becomes extremely concerned with whether “the real, free horses -- the talking kind... roll” and if he will fit in among the talking horses (Lewis *The Horse and His Boy* 23). Having lived so long as a non-talking horse, Bree is no longer confident that he knows what it is that a horse does. He is uncertain what behaviors and actions are appropriate or natural for a talking horse.

Bree’s concerns echo some of the larger concerns found in this series. As Lewis establishes talking animals and non-talking animals on different moral hierarchies, with different cognitive abilities, the concern arises that perhaps the activity of talking fundamentally changes the nature of the individual animal. Are the non-talking and the talking animals so different that they experience life and emotions incompatibly? The nature of animals and talking animals is particularly urgent in Narnia due to the world’s strictly defined ideologically based hierarchies. In this world, all beings are hierarchically ranked and granted different responsibilities and values based upon their rankings. While Lewis promotes the beneficial care of animals and the environment, this assertion is underlined by the assumption that the non-talking animals are lesser than talking-animals. The lower status of non-talking animals implies that, while animals

of our world should be treated well, they do not possess the same personal agency as their Narnian talking counterparts and should not be afforded the same levels of respect. Ultimately, *The Chronicles of Narnia* utilize variants of all three types of animal speech (moralizing, world building and plot progression, and animal emotions and viewpoints) to confront the place of thinking and talking animals with hierarchical world views while attempting to show the agency and subjectivity of individual animals.

The concerns about the nature of animals and talking animals clearly relate to the larger issues of humans' ability to lend voices to animals. As we seek to use literature and anthropomorphism to illuminate the voices of animals, we must question to what extent the 'anthro-' morphs the animal depicted. The framework of animal voices presented in this essay seeks to illuminate the anthropomorphic sources and impacts of animal voices told through human writing. It seeks to clarify our grappling with the necessary problem of anthropomorphism. Considering every depiction of animal voices is unique in its form and impact, each must be individually assessed and evaluated. That task is partially what this essay has endeavoured to do. Along with evaluations of individual depictions of animal voices, several themes about the nature of interspecies communication have emerged. Firstly, animals possess valuable knowledge which can only be encountered through communication. Whether this knowledge is a dog's understanding of the sensory world, a horse's experience of rough-footed ground, or the existence of a country governed by a different way of living in the world, full understanding of and engagement with the world is not available to people without interspecies communication. Furthermore, communication between human and nonhuman animals requires individual engagement and attention to be successful, mirroring many of the tenets of "entangled

empathy” as described by Lori Gruen. In this method of understanding animals “one must understand the individuals species-typical behaviors as well as her individual personality, and that is not easy to do without observation, over a period of time” (Gruen 229). Just as Doctor Dolittle must spend long hours in observation of and engagement with animals in order to learn their languages, we must utilize similar efforts toward interspecies communication. Engaging in interspecies communication requires evaluating unwritten animal voices, parsing out the ‘anthro-’ that seeps in from our perception and uncovering the animal voice and experience. Ultimately, engaging in communication with animals calls us to treat them as fellow thinkers, with kindness, respect, and good-regard.

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