

# Illicit Crossings

## The Other at the Human/Animal Boundary

H. Peter Steeves  
Associate Professor of Philosophy  
DePaul University

But man, proud man,  
Dressed in a little brief authority,  
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,  
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep.

*Measure for Measure*

### 1. Introduction: An Easy Job

In September 1920, Reverend J. A. L. Singh set out into the Indian night to kill the *Manush-Bagha*, the man-ghost of the jungle.<sup>1</sup> The creature, it was said, had the body and limbs of a human, the face of a ghost. The villagers warned the Reverend that it was a hideous beast—possibly not of this world—and that no one was safe in the jungle. Part human, part animal, part who-knows-what, but supernatural—to be sure—they assured him that it was a reason to travel in groups, to be sure to be home before dusk turned into night and the beast awakened, hungry.

Reverend Singh, more curious than frightened, suggested constructing a platform in a tree in order to have a vantage point from which to shoot the beast, but the villagers wanted no part of it. By early October, though, he had finally found someone to lead him to a place where there had been several sightings—to a white-ant mound near Godamuri, to a site where the locals told stories of a creature that raced through the night, haunting the countryside. Singh and his party set up camp near the ant mound and began their vigil.

The short wait was soon rewarded. The first evening, three wolves tentatively made their way out of the ground, squeezing through the large holes in the mound. They were followed by

two wolf cubs and, finally, two white creatures—the man-ghosts—which Reverend Singh immediately recognized to be two female human children.

Singh persuaded the group to hold their fire as the wolf family disappeared into the jungle. Visibly shaken, the party disbanded and headed back to the village in spite of the Reverend's assurance that he had solved the mystery and his pleas to remain and help excavate the mound. After the close encounter with the creatures no one, in fact, would stay with Reverend Singh, and he was forced to search for a new party of men from a tribe far away and unacquainted with the ghost story. One week later, he returned with his new group and began the dig, hoping to capture what he now believed to be the two feral children—human girls raised and cared for by the wolf-family in the middle of the Indian wilderness.

With the first few strokes of the shovel, two male wolves emerged from the mound, ran past the diggers, and were enveloped by the jungle. Next, a female wolf appeared, and Singh knew right away that she would be the greatest obstacle to securing the children. Even as the party shouted and threatened her, she remained on the mound, baring her teeth and growling at the diggers. It soon became clear to everyone that she was prepared to make a stand—she was not going to abandon her home and her family so easily.

In his diaries, Reverend Singh explains:

I had a great mind to capture it, because I guessed from its whole bearing on the spot that it must have been the mother wolf, whose nature was so ferocious and affection so sublime. It struck me with wonder. I was simply amazed to think that an animal had such a noble feeling surpassing even that of mankind—the highest form of creation—to bestow all the love and affection of a fond and ideal mother on these peculiar beings, which surely had once been brought in...as food for the cubs. To permit them to live and be nurtured by them (wolves) in this fashion is divine. I failed to realize the import of the circumstances and became dumb and inert. In the meantime, the men pierced her through with arrows, and she fell dead....After the mother wolf was killed, it was an easy job....I threw one of the sheets on [the] ball of children and cubs and separated one from the other....We gave the cubs to the diggers....They went away happy and sold [them] in the Hat for a good price [while]...I took charge of the two human children.

Reverend Singh named the girls Kamala and Amala. Kamala was approximately eight years old and Amala was eighteen months. After their capture, the girls went to live with the Reverend and his wife at their orphanage. But their time there was short. Amala lived less than a year; Kamala only nine. During her time with the Singhs, Kamala was studied and educated and civilized, though it seldom appeared that much of it stuck. She learned a few words, raced around on all-fours, preferred the company of dogs to humans, and frightened the other orphans by prowling at night, sniffing and growling near their beds in the moonlight. She was unappreciated, though the center of attention, and unhappy, though finally once again among her own kind.

It is without question that when we study feral children we inevitably learn more about ourselves than our subject. There are more than fifty cases on record of feral children—human children raised in the wild by everything from bears and leopards to monkeys and birds. Our treatment of the adoptive animal parents is notorious—most find the fate of Amala and Kamala’s mother and siblings. And the suffering and indignities that we inflict on the human children in the name of socializing and civilizing is equally embarrassing. The stories run from simple beatings and whippings (all in the name of “reinforcement training”), to the extreme cases such as the gazelle-boy, a human male raised by a family of gazelles, who, upon being captured, proved to possess the unnerving ability to leap great distances—jumping, nearly flying, through the air in the manner of his adoptive parents. His human benefactors, unable to persuade him to refrain from such activity and anxious to see him assimilated into human culture, considered their options and chose to cut the tendons in his legs thereby inducing less gazelle-like behavior.<sup>2</sup>

Each story is different, intriguing in its own right. And each represents a crisis, not only for the way in which the children in these cases seem inevitably to be mishandled and brutalized as they are introduced to civilization, but because their very existence is a threat to our understanding of what it is to be human. The existence of feral children calls into question the

firm boundary between human and animal, forcing us to reevaluate our understanding of ourselves and our world. A feral child is the human that is nearly an animal—the familiar that has nearly become the Other.

And the line of demarcation separating human from animal is eroded from another direction as well, as is evidenced by the myriad myths and stories of animals that are nearly human. Here the cases are not as well documented as feral children. It is possible that animals that are nearly human—the Bigfoot, the Sasquatch, the Yeti, etc.—do not exist at all. But the matter of their existence is not key here, for the fact that we acknowledge the possibility—even as myth—is telling. Indeed, even that which is clearly fiction (such as werewolves and vampires) helps paint a picture of who we are and how we understand our humanity and the living world of which we are a part. In this way these stories of familiar Others and feral Selves—of humans that are nearly animals and animals that are nearly humans—ultimately challenge the boundaries of our communities in many ways, forcing us to ask questions of our collective identity and the ways in which we experience ourselves in the world.

## 2. Defining “Human”: The Non-Physical Differences

Unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor,  
bare, forked animal as thou art.  
*King Lear.*

Without giving the matter much thought, it seems clear what we mean by “human.” Traditionally, the philosophical problem has been defining “person”—the moral individual. “Human” is usually considered to be easily defined, a matter of genetics or biology—at least a matter of science. “Person” is problematic because it both eludes a popularly accepted definition and because although there are things that are clearly people (e.g., you, the reader) and things that clearly are not (e.g., a hydrogen molecule), there are concrete examples of things about which our intuitions supposedly become murky (e.g., a fetus, a comatose patient).

Given this understanding of the problem, though, “human” must be similarly vague. A clear definition of “human” is not easily achieved, for here, too, there are creatures that are puzzling, existing in that netherregion of uncertainty. We will be looking at these “problem” cases below. For now, let us concentrate on why the traditional boundary between human and animal is threatened when we try to define “human.”

There are varieties of classical and ancient descriptions of humans that prove interesting. We know that Plato considered man the two-legged naked animal. Anaxagoras was entranced by human posture as well, and suggested that because we can stand upright on two legs we can better see our world and, more importantly, we can have free use of our hands, thus making us superior. Aristotle puts an interesting twist on Anaxagoras (see, e.g., *De Partibus Animalium*, 687a) and suggests that it is our mental superiority that allows us to use our hands in creative ways, not vice versa. But it is Aristotle’s notion of man as political and rational that has survived and remained most popular. A scholastic definition in this tradition is offered by Gunnar Broberg and proves an intriguing and worthwhile place to begin our inquiry in earnest:<sup>3</sup>

Man is a “substance.” But so are the angels. So substance must be divided into corporeal and incorporeal. Man has “body,” whereas the angels are incorporeal. But stone is also “body.” So “body” must be divided into “living” and dead, that is, with or without a soul. Man is a living bodily substance, stone a lifeless one. But a plant also lives. Hence corporeal living substances must be divided into sentient and insentient. Man can feel, but the plant cannot. But a horse can also feel. So living, corporeal, sentient substances must be divided into “rational” and irrational. Only man is *rationalis*...The series sets out the definition of man as *substantia corporea, vivens, sentiens, rationalis*—or, more concisely, *animal rationale*. It is a hierarchy with uncrossable boundaries.

Apart from the presence of angels (which is another investigation altogether), one of the problems, of course, is defining “rationality.” If it is to be equated with intelligence, awareness, or even problem-solving ability then it does little to separate human from animal. This problem—and the hierarchy created by the scholastic definition—is echoed in a thousand

variations of the above argument, even those of the post-Darwinian age. Consider, for example and for a closer analysis, Charles Winick's definition from *The Dictionary of Anthropology*:

*Man*...a hominid, namely Homo sapien, who [makes] tools....The word man is popularly used in a much more narrow manner than taxonomy would indicate, and its emotional connotations make it difficult to use in an objective manner. The major characteristics that distinguish man from monkeys, apes, and lemurs are the following: the nose's prominent bridge and well-developed tip, a median furrow in the upper lip, possession of the chin,...large brain (2 1/2-3 times the size of the gorillas)...outrolling of the lips and visibility of the mucous membrane as a continuous red line, long life span,...symbolic expression, educability, and advanced culture.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that "Man" is used interchangeably with "human" is intriguing. As feminist writers properly point out, this is not simply a quirk of language but rather a linguistic manifestation of social conditions. It speaks to the marginalization of women—as if humanity can be described by excluding women and making reference only to men. Indeed, some have even suggested that since the word "human" *contains* the word man "it must be replaced (or respelled) if women are to have any hope of changing their social condition."<sup>5</sup>

The point of this, though, is not just to suggest how language and reality are interrelated but to illustrate that the "emotional connotations" of such words as "human" run deep. We would like to think that a firm, scientific, *objective* definition exists. In fact, even if we admit that such a notion as scientific objectivity is a comfortable fiction and that all language actually reflects a socially constructed reality, we would like to think that a word such as "human" is, in the relative scheme of things, *more* objective than some others. "Person" and "happiness" and "liberty" might seem a little vague, a little culturally dependent, but surely we can agree on what constitutes "humanity." After all, the word *is* a scientific term or at least a derivative of one. It is more like "manganese sulfate" or "microprocessor" than it is like "person" or "happiness."

Or so it would seem. Winick's definition struggles to provide an "objective" set of characteristics to distinguish human from other creatures, but the set proves suspect. First, it is important to note that Winick defines "human" by distinguishing humans from other creatures

near the top of the assumed evolutionary ladder. Conjure up in your mind, he seems to be saying, that group of primate-monkey-ape-human-like creatures. Now, how can you tell the humans from the rest?

Already, it should be clear there is a problem. Before we even get to the set of characteristics peculiarly human, we see that this definition rests on a multitude of unarticulated assumptions. First, is it so obvious what characteristics constitute apes and monkeys and higher primates? These classifications must be clear before we can use them to define “human.” Second, we should be aware that this type of definition is one that will allow us to pick out the real human from a group of creatures that are “human-like,” but it does little to help us determine whether a creature in isolation is human. In the end we will presumably know how to tell a human from a gorilla, but such a relational definition will not help much in cases in which we are presented with a creature of unknown nature in isolation.

Let me be clearer on this problem because it is a fundamental one for the project at hand. Suppose we encounter a creature and we want to know if it is human.<sup>6</sup> Using the relational definition proposed by Winick, we would list its characteristics and then compare that list to a similar one of, for instance, gorilla characteristics. The argument goes that if we compare the nose, lip, chin, brain size, etc. of the creature, we should be close to determining whether it is human or not, but at the most what we are determining is whether it is not very gorilla-like (or at least not very much like the “ideal” gorilla-type). Is “human” properly defined as “anything-that-is-gorilla-like but has a larger brain, a more prominent nose, a longer life span, etc.”? Something seems lacking.

But perhaps these specific characteristics, if scrutinized, do more work than one might suppose. Perhaps they *can* define “human” and not simply separate humans from apes. Winick’s definition, which is characteristic in the literature, lists two different types of distinguishing features. Not wanting to give in to any naïve dualism, we can still note that the first type is purely physical, and includes such notions as brain size, nose shape, lip formation,

etc., while the second type is non-physical and includes educability, tool making know-how, symbolic expression, and cultural achievements.

Unfortunately, the non-physical characteristics are not very helpful, at least not without further explication. Educability is a large notion—large enough, surely, to include talking parrots, chimps who learn sign language, and even stupid-pet-trick performing dogs. Indeed, the gazelles who raised the gazelle-boy in the wild seemed to have learned to interpret the boy's facial expressions to the same degree that the boy had learned the gazelles' ear-twitching language. Tool making, once thought to be the proud domain of “humans,” is also an activity in which we now know other animals (that is, clearly *non-human* animals) indulge. Elephants have been known to use trees to scratch an itch. Some monkeys use stones to smash open nuts and seeds.<sup>7</sup> And other monkeys carefully choose tree limbs and methodically strip them of leaves and protruding stubs in order to fashion “dip sticks” to retrieve ants and other insects from holes in the ground and in stumps. This is not simply tool-use, but tool-making.

Also relevant to this question of tools is the fact that most creatures we now consider “human” are losing or have lost tool making abilities they might have had. Technology, often considered to be a tool, has clearly moved beyond the tool stage. It has become such that most civilized humans would have a hard time surviving for very long without their technological tools—thus causing us to question whether they serve us or, due to our dependence, we serve them. We have learned to push the right buttons on telephones and microwaves, but few of us could fashion tools that would help us survive if we were suddenly left without technology.<sup>8</sup>

The question of symbolic expression is similarly unhelpful in that although this is not a skill “humans” seem to be losing, it is clearly the case that a variety of animals use and understand symbols. From the monkey/sign-language example<sup>9</sup> to the case of the research pigeons who used such concepts as “tree,”<sup>10</sup> non-“human” animals seem capable of a wide variety of abstractions. In fact, if what is truly meant by “symbolic expression” is “language,” then it cannot be denied that animal languages abound, whether in the sub-sonic level of

elephants and whales, in the intricate language of birds,<sup>11</sup> or in the patterns of a dancing bee, information is constantly being transmitted around us. Sounds and movements represent objects and states of affairs, and to fail to call this “language” would be blind hubris.

Finally, there is the question of culture—once again, a difficult concept to pin down. Some wolves, we know, perform complex hunting ceremonies before they set out to the task. Ranking in chimp society is based neither on size nor strength but on the social status of one’s parents. And dolphins, with their intricate social structures, are believed by many to possess a culture and a set of traditions particular to each school. Discussing the possibility of animals as socio-cultural beings, Dutch philosopher Barbara Noske indicates that there is reason to believe that “culturally transmitted practices and ideas are part of a collective memory...[and] that dolphin traditions too are cultural in that they belong to the school as a whole, an entity which is greater than the sum of its individual parts.”<sup>12</sup>

As a result, it would seem that the traditional non-physical characteristics particular to humans do little to constitute a definition capable of distinguishing many species from each other. But what of the physical differences which supposedly define humanity?

### 3. Defining “Human”: The Physical Differences

He is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts.  
*Love’s Labour’s Lost*

Often, human bodies are distinguished from animal bodies in a linguistically ad hoc manner. In English, humans have “hair” but animals have “fur.” In Spanish, humans walk on “piernas” (legs) but animals walk on “patas.” French animals smell with a “museau,” but French humans use a “nez.”<sup>13</sup> Surely, these body parts have more commonalities than differences, but the words serve to separate artificially.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, the words themselves do little to help us *define* “human.” In Spanish, for instance, a leg might be a *pierna* if it is human and a *pata* if it is non-human, but defining a human as having *piernas* rather than *patas* accomplishes nothing. These parts are named *after* one knows the type of creature with which one is dealing. Standing alone, the Spanish sentence “¿Con qué corre el?” (“What does he use to run?”) cannot be answered unless one knows whether or not the subject is human. This testifies to the fact that the real difference is contrived. Legs are legs, but having a different word for a human leg separates humans (and serves to make us “special”). The word can only be used, then, after one has distinguished the human from the non-human.

The power of language to construct difference rather than mirror difference makes the task of determining particularly human physical traits difficult, but not necessarily impossible. Winick, recall, offered descriptions of a human nose, lip, chin, and brain based on shape, color, weight, etc. Are such differences the stuff of which a proper definition can be had?

The problem, once again, is the ad hoc nature of the list of qualities; and this problem, I maintain, is inevitable in any definition based on a list of characteristics.<sup>15</sup> The difficulty is in arguing for why *this particular set* of characteristics is key to being human. Curved lips and protruding chins are seen as important qualities, but why *these* qualities? The true problem becomes clear if we ask a distasteful yet enlightening question: why, someone might say, would we not include white skin as a particularly human trait? That is, humans, by definition, would have chins, furrowed lips, and fair skin, etc. The only possible response to such a question is that there are humans who aren’t white—indeed, humans come in many colors—and therefore it would be wrong to include skin color as a determining factor. But now the problem should be evident, for how do we know that humans are not all white unless we already know who counts as a human? And this is cheating. If we are trying to define “human” we cannot say beforehand who is human and who is not, and therefore know what qualities seem to be common only to humans. It is as if we first divide up the world into humans and non-humans, and then look to

see what qualities the humans possess as a group that are not common to the creatures in the other group. Skin color won't work because humans have variously colored skin. Big brains might work, though, because all humans seem to have brains (on the average) larger than the creatures in the non-human group. Using this method we could then construct a list of qualities shared by humans and humans alone, but the question would remain: how did we know how to initially divide up the world? On what criteria did we base this initial categorization? It would seem that we had to know already who we wanted to count and who we didn't want to count before we started. Any definition achieved after this categorization is thus hopelessly ad hoc.

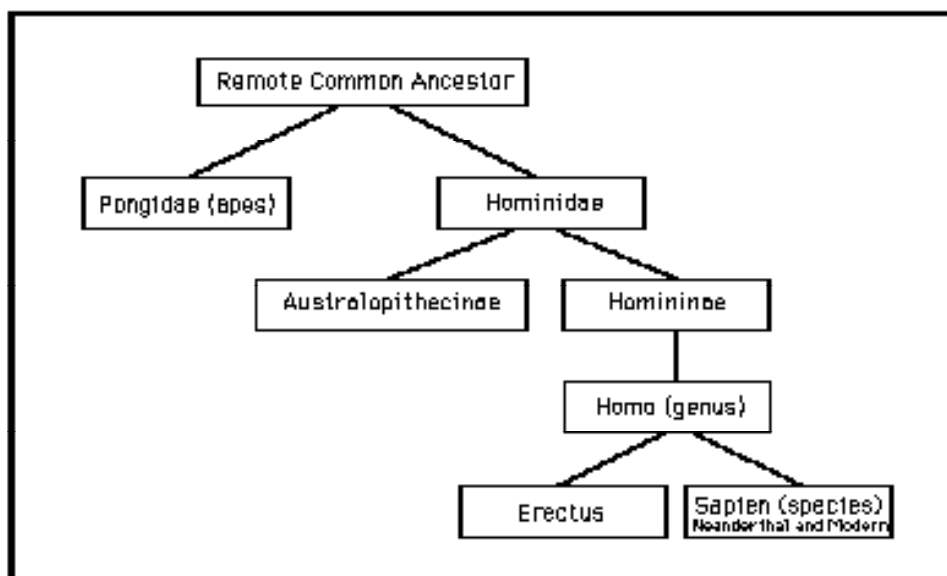
And there are other problems as well. Winick's insistence on *red* lips, for instance, seems curious. Surely this is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for being human and it is questionable, really, whether the majority of "humans" actually have red lips. The question of a "well-developed tip" to the nose is equally suspect. Certainly, these are cultural ideals for (though perhaps not even common among) Europeans,<sup>16</sup> but this does not describe, for instance, the typical African face.

Realizing the significance of all of this, I will not take any more time to continue to develop the thesis of a cultural and racial bias in Winick's definition, but it is important to see the possibility of such bias and the ease with which such a "scientific" definition both reflects and more firmly establishes racial power structures in society. African humans, and "recent" African descendants,<sup>17</sup> are, by this definition, a little less human, a little closer to being animal. If we accept such a definition, we also tend to accept more easily such things as Charles Murray's claim that African Americans are less intelligent than whites,<sup>18</sup> and to accept the behavior of one of the LAPD officers who was involved in the Rodney King beating and who referred to a domestic violence call involving an African American family as a case of "gorillas in the mist." This defining-business has serious implications for us all.

And what if Winick's definition were to be accepted? What if we ignored its ad hoc nature and the clear racial bias in this list of physical qualities needed to be truly human? *Is* this

what we mean by truly human? Is being human to be understood as having a chin? I do not mean to diminish the role of physical structure in being human—indeed, the experience of body is something that must concern us throughout this project—but something seems lacking in such a definition: to be human is to be chinned.

Other approaches are similarly flawed. Philip Bock stresses the tool-making abilities of humans, but also offers a more historical-anthropological definition of human as “the favorite child of evolution.”<sup>19</sup> It is in this spirit that the following family-tree might be offered:



Such a genus-species definition is interesting and has continuously grown in popularity since Darwin first suggested something similar in 1871.<sup>20</sup> According to this definition, apes and humans parted ways 20 to 40 million years ago and have been evolving separately ever since. And you can tell a human by tracing its “blood-line.”

Most scientists, it turns out, enjoy such a definition, and with increasing technology many feel that they can pinpoint the date at which humans first appeared with even greater accuracy. Physical anthropologist Chris Stringer uses advanced DNA analysis to supplement the standard tools of carbon dating and just plain digging in the dirt in order to suggest that early modern man appeared 30,000 years ago, probably in Africa.<sup>21</sup> A colleague of Stringer’s further proposes that

each branch of the genus *Homo* can claim a common mother—a single female who lived in Africa 200,000 years ago. All of this from DNA evidence.

The secular version of Eve is enticing. She pulls us all together—truly making us brothers and sisters. And she fits nicely into the scientific world-view as well, for even though it is hard to imagine that one real woman existed to whom we are all related, evolution seemingly demands that this must be the case. At a certain point some nonhuman animal fetus proved to be a random mutation, and Eve was born—the mother of all humanity.

One of the problems with such a story is that it is surely a crude telling of history. Evolution is a process, not an event, and modern humans probably “emerged” slowly—mutation by mutation. This is problematic because we are then left with a long period of time in which it is “clear” that the initial creatures are not human, it is “clear” that the end creatures are human, and it is completely *unclear* at what point humans actually appear and the nonhuman becomes the human.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps someone might say, though, that a certain “branch” of the tree is the human branch, and since all of the creatures except for “us” have died off from that branch, is this not enough to constitute a definition of humanity?

Separating humans from other animals by means of branching evolution or DNA does not solve the problem of securing a definition. First, we must wonder how to cut the branch—i.e., how far back do we go to determine the start of “humans.” Pruning the non-human from the human once again seems an inherently arbitrary task and assumes that we already know what a human is. Second, there is the further assumption that these limbs (or DNA patterns) are easily distinguished—that we can draw an accurate picture of our family tree with each branch neatly placed, each DNA sequence understood and labeled. The truth is that scientists themselves continue to fight over the appropriate design of the tree and some are even questioning the validity of evolution’s claim to be *the* one explanation as to how the living world operates.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, assuming unerring knowledge of the “tree of evolution” as a given fundamentally begs

several questions raised by the arguments presented here. As we will see, the problem that a Bigfoot creature raises is not just that his existence seems mysterious, almost the stuff of science fiction, but that he doesn't fit into our evolutionary schematism. Finally, the anthropological/genetic definition of "human" is lacking because it fails to reflect what we typically mean when we say "human." Defining "human" by means of distant hairy relatives or genetic tests capable of being run only by a few experts in our society is just as unfulfilling as defining "human" as a creature with a chin. There is nothing inherently wrong with such a definition, but there is a strong sense that it fails to convey the essence of what (we think) we mean by "human."

The power of the anthropological approach, though, is the way in which it pulls us together, relating us to each other and attempting to define us as a group. But the secular Eve—that 200,000 year old African woman—can, at most, relate our bodies. The religious Eve,<sup>24</sup> on the other hand, relates us in immaterial ways, *embodying* the "spirit" of our humanity. Perhaps what is needed is a mixture of these approaches. Can we give an account of a "fuller" humanity? Can we offer a history of the body and a history of the spirit capable of defining who we humans are?

Many communitarian theorists would maintain that they have accomplished just this. Authors such as MacIntyre, Sandel, Hauerwas, and Carr speak of narratives, stories, and traditions constituting our identity—constituting, even, our Selves. Although these arguments are often at the level of individual communities and cultures, could they not be expanded to account for the constitution of all human communities and of all humans? Could telling a story about who "we" humans are—in body and spirit—actually serve to constitute this "we"?

An interesting problem with this solution is that if we look at our stories and our histories and even at our common goods, we discover that they do not constitute a community of humans, but rather a community of living beings of many different types. I call this a Deep Community, and I have argued for it in some detail elsewhere.<sup>25</sup> The point is that the stories we tell do not

separate humans from animals, but rather tie the living world together as one. Our stories are all interconnected, as are our goods. If one attempts to unweave these strands, they cannot stand alone.<sup>26</sup> I cannot tell the story of who I am without telling the story of the animals<sup>27</sup> around me: I am constituted, in part, by them. And the same is true at the level of the story of humanity.

But perhaps being human is best understood as being a particular character in the intertwining stories of the living world. Human characters have a certain physical presence and they play certain roles. The relationships humans have to other characters constitute what it means to be human, and the act of defining “human” thus becomes not an act of separating and distinguishing, but an act of recognizing the appropriate player in the context of the scene.

Such a definition is not very scientific. It is loose and open and admits the possibility of a constantly changing identity. And it is, I think, about the best we can hope for. The fact that what it means to be human changes with time and even with context places the traditional hierarchy and the traditional boundary between human and animal at risk. The strict dichotomies of human/animal, human/non-human, and us/them do not make sense in such a story. Yet we continue to think, speak, and act as if they do. And this is curious. What accounts for this chasm between the way in which we experience the world and the way in which we act in the world, between the experienced truth of who we are and the constructed fiction of who we think ourselves to be, between, most basically, phenomenology and praxis? This question will stay with us throughout this project as we now move to investigate what happens when the hierarchies collapse and the boundaries fail—what happens when we are faced with a crisis in our experience such that the familiar becomes the Other.

#### 4. Feral Selves: The Human that is Nearly Animal

Come on, poor babe.  
Some powerful spirit instructs the kites and the ravens  
To be thy nurses! Wolves and bears, they say,  
Casting their savageness aside, have done / Like offices of pity.

*The Winter's Tale*

Feral children such as the wolf girls Kamala and Amala have formed part of our story for a long time. There are both mythical and factual cases, though the latter are becoming increasingly rare as “civilization” spreads across the land. The fact is, it is harder today for a child to remain hidden in the wilderness because there is, daily, less wilderness.

I begin by noting that although the feral children of myth play an important role in determining who we are, the factual cases are what I will focus on here. From Romulus and Remus, to Tarzan, Mowgli, and the various heroes populating the dimestore novels of the genre which flourished in this country for the first half of the twentieth century, fiction has used the feral child to help us better understand ourselves and our society. The non-fictional cases, I maintain, serve much the same function in a different way. Still, it is common and not unwise to begin with some skepticism. Even our moments of skeptical inquiry say much about us.

In one tale of skepticism that is perhaps as fictional as the feral child it involves, we are told that Aristotle could admit the possibility of animals rearing humans, but insisted that each individual case needed his personal investigation. One medieval story suggests that Alexander the Great met and fell in love with a snake girl—a human female who was said to have been “hatched” and cared for by snakes after being placed in a broken eggshell and abandoned by humans. Alexander lusted after the snake girl and wanted her as his mistress, but his teacher, Aristotle, advised caution. Placing a ring of snake venom around her, Aristotle sought to test the girl’s origins. In the end, we are told, the fumes of the venom strangled her and the snake girl died—a supposedly proud Aristotle nearby, thinking that he had proven the girl could not have lived in the company snakes.<sup>28</sup> Again, the fate of the feral child—real or mythical—is typically sealed upon his or her introduction into human society.

Our peculiar treatment of feral children is partially a direct result of our confusion over their, and more fundamentally our, nature. Surely there is a desire to see these children act in a

more familiar manner—hence, the cutting of the gazelle-boy’s tendons, the common desire to teach captured feral children to eat with utensils, the longing to coax them to speak, etc. In such cases there is an attempt to mold the habits, personality, and even the body of the child into something more recognizably human.

Indeed, the body plays an important role in our understanding here. Reverend Singh was especially bothered by the “corns on the knees and on the palm of the hand near the wrist which [Kamala and Amala] had developed from walking on all fours.”<sup>29</sup> After scrubbing and treating the corns with boric acid, Reverend Singh cut the girls’ hair and washed their bodies several times, struggling to remove layers and layers of “dirt.” A transformation of the body had begun, but Singh soon discovered that it was in appearance only. The bodies of the girls were inherently different. In the following passage one should note the references to animals and to animal bodies as the ideal non-human body:

They looked [like] human children again...[But for the jawbones]. The jaws...had undergone some sort of change in the chewing of bones....When they moved their jaws in chewing, the upper and lower jawbones appeared to part and close visibly, unlike human jaws....They could sit on the ground squatting down,...but could not stand up at all....Their eyes...had a peculiar blue glare, like that of a cat or dog, in the dark. At night...you saw only two blue lights sending forth rays in the dark. They could see better by night than by day....They could detect the existence of...any object in the darkest place when and where human sight fails completely....They had a powerful instinct and could smell meat or anything from a great distance like animals....Their hands and arms were long, almost reaching to the knees....The nails of the hand and foot were worn on the inside to a concave shape....They used to eat or drink like dogs...[and] could not walk like humans. They went on all fours [and] they used to sleep like pigs or dog pups, overlapping one another.<sup>30</sup>

Indeed, the girls preferred to keep their bodies close in this manner, sometimes even when not sleeping. When Amala died, Kamala touched her face and clung to her body in the coffin. She cried two tears, and for the next six days sat in a corner, moving only to smell all of the places Amala had frequented. Left alone, though, Kamala soon began a strict regime designed by the Singhs to “help [her] use her body in human ways.”<sup>31</sup>

The ease with which Reverend Singh separates animals traits from human traits in the girls should, at this point in our inquiry, stand out as clearly suspect. It is also important to note the degree to which the body is a social construct and the way in which this fact is evidenced by Singh's commentary. What accounts for the girls' bodies seeming so inhuman if, in fact, they were genetically human, the offspring of human parents? Singh, and most commentators, suggest a series of mutations—adaptations to the environment which erode the humanity of the body. In other words, what began as human has become animal. Chewing on bones, for instance, has warped the jaw, and walking on all fours has formed corns and calluses on the knees and wrists. Human wrists are smooth, and the assumption is that Kamala and Amala began with smooth wrists, and then adapted to walking like animals and were changed. *Restoring* their humanity involved reshaping the body.

The arms present a different problem. If, in fact, they were elongated, hanging to their knees, it is hard to explain how such a change—from “human” arms to more “simian” arms— took place. Would arms grow longer if we used them to walk? And what of the girls' eyes? Is a cat-like glare possible for human eyes in which the retina is typically thought to be incapable of reflecting light to any noticeable degree?<sup>32</sup> Mutations such as these cannot be accounted for by an appeal to simple adaptation without admitting that the body is neither *naturally* human nor animal but rather becomes whatever is most appropriate for the context. In a sense, this is what Darwinism is all about. The body, for Darwin, is an environmental construct, never stable, never finished. Evolution, though, is a slow process and will not admit the possibility of major change so quickly. Furthermore, evolutionary change is from generation to generation, not within one organism over a few years. An environmental construct is context relative, but this answer will not explain Reverend Singh's observations and worries.

Perhaps a solution can be seen in Singh's observation that the girls had a “powerful instinct” that led them to smell over great distances “like animals.” An instinct is curious because it strikes at the heart of Cartesian dualism—the way in which we supposedly exist as

both body and mind. An instinct is psychological in nature; it dictates behavior. Yet it is precariously incarnate in that it is “built in” to a body—to a species-specific body. How could Kamala and Amala have a non-human *instinct*?

Suggesting, in this manner, that the body is a social construct is nothing new. Many feminist authors have written convincingly on the subject, and the sensory evidence surrounds us. Bodies are objectified and fought, dissected into pieces and admired, technologically modified and reinvented. The breast is surely a social creation. Fat is a social creation. Hair is a social creation. And this is more than a critique of Wonderbras, Jenny Craig, and Rogaine. It is an admission that what the body is (and what the body *should* be) is communally defined.<sup>33</sup> Being human is being a certain size and shape and smell, etc. It is not a matter of the body adapting to its surroundings but rather of the body being constructed to fit the society. And the same is true of animal bodies, which are usually, though not always, defined by their non-human characteristics.<sup>34</sup>

Instinct, arms, and eyes are certainly no exception, and the wolf girls’ failure to meet the human standard represents a crisis for us. Science is little help. By ancestral-definitions, the girls are human. By characteristic-definitions, they are animal. Their bodies are unfamiliar, yet like our own. Noske has suggested that feral children “not only have met the Other, they have almost become the Other.”<sup>35</sup> Almost. Especially if we understand the animal Other to be a construct in the same sense as the human Self. But there is a crisis nonetheless. In fact, the great Swedish taxonomist Linnaeus (Carl von Linné)—of whom the Swedes still say “God created, and Linnaeus classified”—was so disturbed by feral children that he separated them on the pre-Darwinian biological tree as *Homo ferus*.

We are left to wonder if this is a legitimate distinction. Anthropological lineage was not enough to define humanity, for feral children surely are born from human parents. Perhaps Reverend Singh’s insistence on the animal bodies Kamala and Amala had acquired was an attempt to understand their Otherness, and to reaffirm his own humanity. Perhaps Linnaeus’

classification fulfills a similar need. What is clear is that the comfortable fiction of a human/animal dichotomy and the notion of a strict definition for “human” and “animal” are threatened by feral children.

At this point, though, we have only analyzed the body of the feral child and its implications for our notions of human and animal. Not wishing to degenerate into a full-blown dualism, we can still acknowledge that the crisis is not merely one of body. The behavior, psychology, and mental life of feral children also seem to call into question our concept of “human.”

It is easy enough to suggest that what keeps feral children from being (fully) human is their lack of human education and culture. They neither use human language to communicate nor do they understand how humans interact with each other: years of living outside civilization has stripped them of their humanity. Perhaps, though, humanity is something that is not *taken* from feral children, but rather something that is never bestowed upon them. There are a variety of ways to argue such a point. One might say that feral children do not cast themselves as humans in their stories and thus never achieve human status. This is an interesting approach, but allow me to suggest another more phenomenological explanation beginning with the question: what if a child needs to be treated and attended to as human in order to be human?

I will only offer a brief sketch of this proposal here. What I have in mind is the notion that the burgeoning consciousness of the infant will not necessarily “develop” into human intentionality on its own, but rather requires the presence of a Significant Other who is human. Typically, the human Significant Other (very often the mother) attends to the infant as if he or she were human. This “gracious act of attention”<sup>36</sup> is thus responsible for “creating” a human-person—a new member of the community. The infant, as a consequence, develops senses of Self and Other *simultaneously*. It is not the case that an infant first has a sense of Self and then wonders if there really are other minds out there. He is not aware of his own Ego and then begins to investigate the world, seeing which objects act and look similar to the way he acts and

looks, and thus which objects must be Others. Instead, the senses of Ego and Other arise as themes at the same time.

Now all of this is getting us involved in matters that are somewhat off-topic; but they are important, for it would seem that without the gracious act of attention coming from a human, the infant does not become human. Along the same line, James Hart suggests that “[i]f the first Other is not a human person, the Other to the Other which I (i.e., the infant) can be is not a human person.”<sup>37</sup> This would accomplish a great deal toward explaining the case of the feral child. Without a human Other to attend to the child *as human*, the child does not become human—which is not to say that feral children have no sense of Self or Other, but rather that such senses do not include “humanity.” Amala and Kamala clearly did not have the intentional life of human beings. It is not just that their social skills, psychologies, and attitudes were nonhuman. Something deeper in the psychic life of the girls was different. The structures of their experience were not “human structures”—such structures could not arise and take shape in their burgeoning streams of consciousness without the presence of the human Other to cause them to take shape. How powerful, this gracious act of attention.

Indeed, if we imagine attending to nonhuman individuals such as dogs *as if they were human*, would it not be possible to “create” humanity? Anecdotal evidence abounds: the story of the pet dog “who thinks he is a member of the family—thinks he is human” is common. Perhaps there is at least some partial truth in such a claim, as a dog who is treated and attended to as human might be said to develop something of a “human” Self. Surely, there are physical limitations to and preconditions for such development, but the line between human and animal cannot be maintained with rigidity in the light of such evidence.

What does all this mean for our investigation into the concept of humanity? Humans, we know, are not defined genetically or anthropologically. Neither, though, are humans simply created through education and inculturation or through their participation in narratives and traditions. Humanity is in some respect the result of specific treatment within one’s community.

To have human experiences, one must be attended to as a human. To develop human intentionality one must be treated *as if* he or she already possessed such intentional structures. Being human is being treated by humans as human. This is the lesson of feral children who live in the murky region between Self and Other, human and animal—a region which we are slowly discovering is not one marked by strict boundaries.

##### 5. Familiar Others: The Animal that is Nearly Human

A freckle whelp hag-born—not honored with  
A human shape...  
There would this monster make a man  
*The Tempest.*

Amala and Kamala—and dozens more like them—were real children. We have witnesses and photographs and documented accounts. Though feral children also live in myth and fiction, few dispute their reality.

Such is not the case with the creatures known as the Yeti, Sasquatch, Mono Grande, Bigfoot, etc. Although we have witnesses and photographs and documented accounts, few believe that such creatures are more than constructs of the imagination. This strong denial is interesting from a sociological perspective, but it also says much about our concepts of human and animal as well, for if such creatures exist, the boundary which we have been discussing would be even further eroded. However, it is not important—at least not for the particular task of this investigation—whether or not they do exist. Like most, I imagine that there are better explanations for the reported sightings than maintaining the existence of reclusive “monsters.” I, too, am a slave to the scientific paradigm of the world. But I see no reason not to allow for the possibility of such creatures.

Regardless, this is not the crucial matter, for it is merely our experience of the possibility of such Others that I want to investigate. How do we make sense of our given humanity in a

world where such creatures *might* exist? How do we know what is human and what is animal if we admit the possibility of a creature described as neither or as both? What do the stories of encounters—stories that are reported as truth—say about us and our understanding of the world? Let us begin with this last question, and, if the reader will indulge me, a story of one such encounter—a story chosen from thousand of others, mirroring, in many key respects, the archetypes and emotions found in similar stories told in nearly every culture and on every continent. Ours begins, romantically enough, with a European Count and an archeological quest.<sup>38</sup>

Count Pino Turolla is the stuff Indiana Jones' dreams are made of. Practicing archeology as an adventure rather than an academic discipline, the Italian Count began exploring the jungles of South America (and particularly the Upper Amazon) in the early 1960s in an attempt to find traces of a pre-Columbian culture—a culture dating back much more than the conservative estimation of 5,000 years—which he believes accounts for the common heritage of most indigenous peoples. Turolla has encountered puzzling artifacts—ancient stone figurines of elephants, camels, and other animals never thought to have walked the jungles and mountains of South America—but his most startling encounters have not been with objects but with animals. At least perhaps they were animals, for that is, after all, the whole question.

Known in various parts of the continent as *Los Monos Grandes* (the Giant Apes), Turolla speculates that the South American race of Bigfeet possesses a culture, uses tools, and perhaps provides the key to unlocking the mystery of the birth of South American civilization in general. He feels that the creatures are not human. Neither are they fully animal. And such a mysterious essence and lineage only adds to the intrigue—and the anxiety when they are near.

Late in 1970, Turolla had a particularly intriguing adventure—an encounter (there is no other word)—in the Guacamayo Range between Ecuador and Colombia. The land is the territory of the Aucas, an indigenous people who tell stories of beasts in the jungle and whose

tribal shaman told Turolla and his assistant Oswaldo of a cave that might help them in their quest.

They left early in the morning, following the directions of the shaman, passing through a low, dark canyon. With each hour the foliage grew deeper, and by early afternoon the rain came so heavily that any sign of a trail disappeared. The two men stopped with their horses in an area they hoped was near the cave. They ate sardines, rested, and then continued their search on foot. At 3:30pm they discovered the cave just as the shaman had described it. It was one hundred feet above them, and they began their ascent of the cliff wall with great anticipation.

When they finally reached the mouth they noticed something strange. The opening, it appeared, had been carved—constructed rather than naturally formed—in a trapezoidal shape with straight smooth lines. The opening was smaller at the top than at the bottom, but it was still large and at least twenty feet high. The light fell into the cave for about fifty feet but it was clear that it was much deeper. Luckily, the men had their flashlights and thus decided to enter.

Passing from the light to the dark, the cave was silent. Not even the sound of the rain filled the space, and it now became apparent that what they had thought to be a cave was actually a tunnel. One hundred and fifty feet deep into the mountain, the rock walls became smooth. The flashlights strained to illuminate more of the passageway, but their bulbs were nearly overcome by the darkness. Pushing a few feet ahead, things began to change. Dim tracks appeared in the dirt, heavy impressions along the ground. A thick scent filled the passageway, a smell of animals. And the tunnel forked, with a passage to the right leading off into shadows, taller and wider than the main tunnel straight ahead.

Oswaldo broke the silence and began muttering to himself. They could no longer see the sunlight or sense any trace of the outside world. Turolla took the lead, turning to the right, and with his hand touching the smooth wall he continued a slow walk deeper into the mountain.

They traveled another two hundred and fifty feet and the passageway forked again. This time the main tunnel continued only a few more steps and emptied into a large chamber while a

second tunnel split off to the left and again disappeared in the darkness. Turolla entered the chamber and Oswaldo followed. The ceiling was not visible—the flashlights could not illuminate the distant rock—and the men knew that they had reached a point to rest and collect their thoughts. Apprehensive, they smoked a cigarette and for the first time began talking about their experience. The anxiety slowly turned to calmness.

It was then that the screaming began. From high above them—and at the same instance from all around them—a shriek, a scream, a roar enveloped the men, bouncing off the walls of the cave and growing in intensity. They dropped their flashlights and cigarettes and backed toward the passageway through which they had entered a few minutes before. Oswaldo grabbed Turolla's arm just as a boulder fell from the ceiling smashing into the ground where their cigarettes lay. Now several boulders began falling, as if someone were throwing them from high up in the cavern. The men were frozen—statues of fear—when across the beams of the still shining flashlights a large figure crossed. A creature—perhaps several—rushed toward the men. Turolla jumped, falling into the passageway and grabbing loose stones, perhaps with instinctual hopes of protecting himself. Oswaldo was still in the chamber, but the shadowy image of the huge creature rushing toward him had brought him to life and he screamed and fired his rifle out and up into the cavern. The roaring echoed, punctuated by the sound of the boulders as they fell to the floor, close now to where the flashlights lay and where Oswaldo stood. Turolla struggled to his feet and began running out, wishing for daylight. Oswaldo followed, aimlessly firing the last of his rounds behind him as he rushed through the passageway. The screaming continued; the pursuit continued. The men could feel the presence of the creatures behind them in relentless chase. It was unclear whether their hearts had stopped beating or whether they were beating so hard and fast that there were no separate beats to be felt. Their hands stretched before them in the darkness as they stumbled and ran through the tunnel—whatever was behind them was closing in.

And then the men reached the entrance to the cave, emerged into the light, and as suddenly as it had begun, the sound of the boulders and roars subsided. The creatures did not continue their chase beyond the mouth of the cave. To be safe, Turolla and Oswaldo hurried down the cliff to their horses and raced away. Turolla glanced at his watch and noted that it had been fifty-five minutes since they had first discovered the tunnel.

Nearly three hours later the men slowed their horses and ended their retreat. Oswaldo's dark hair had streaked white and his eyes were scarred with fear. Turolla realized that he still had hold of one of the loose rocks that he had grabbed after falling to the cavern floor, and when they stopped, he unclenched his fist and discovered that what had felt like a rock was actually a carved stone—an amulet in the shape of an ornamental ax with a face formed in the center.<sup>39</sup>

Later, Oswaldo finally showed signs of calming down as all night long Turolla told him stories of similar encounters he had had throughout the continent and even up into the United States and Canada. Together, they wondered aloud about the nature of the carved stone. The men neither slept nor ate, and at daybreak Oswaldo announced that he would accompany the Count back to the cave if he so desired. The Count, still recovering from the intense mixture of his own fear and amazement, agreed that they would return—another day.

Count Pino Turolla has made it his business to confront the familiar Other, but there are thousands more with tales of equally disturbing and intriguing isolated encounters. The majority of American Indian cultures include stories of such creatures, and white settlers have been reporting sightings since they first arrived on the continent. Sasquatch, or Bigfoot as he has come to be known in the last few decades, is part of our story.

But how can we decide his nature? Is Bigfoot human, animal, or neither? What do such encounters tell us?

For some, the solution must be scientific, and many reputable (and irreputable) scientists have turned their attention to the subject in recent years. Indeed, when one begins to gather the

literature and compile Bigfoot's bibliography what is most striking is the amount of scientific discussion on the subject as opposed to wild ramblings or simple descriptions of encounters. True, most scientists are eager to disprove the existence of Bigfoot. Some, though, are open to the possibility but skeptical of the reality. Their methods are curious and often entertaining. They study photographs and film<sup>40</sup> in order to uncover bone structure and joint mechanics ("Could this be a human in a costume? Could a human knee bend in such a way at this point in mid-stride? What are the similarities with an ape's body and movements?"). They investigate audio recordings of screams and roars thought to be of Bigfoot origin ("Could a human throat produce such a noise? What must the larynx look like to make this vibration and is such a shape a human-like shape?").<sup>41</sup> They speculate on the Bigfoot diet and sleeping habits; they catalog and make casts of Bigfoot-prints; they even analyze hair and feces of "questionable" origin. The results are typically unsatisfactory and inconclusive—even given a sympathetic scientist.

In this spirit, anthropologist George W. Gill writes:

[T]he following alternate hypotheses must be listed as the two possible explanations for our results:

1. That the most complex and sophisticated hoax in the history of anthropology has continued for centuries without being exposed;
2. That the most manlike (and largest) non-human primate on earth...remains undiscovered by modern science.

Either conclusion appears totally preposterous in light of the problem-solving capability of modern science; yet, one of these two possible conclusions must be true.<sup>42</sup>

And investigators Kirilin and Hertel conclude:

Both typical human whistles and some abnormal types of whistles were found.... These whistles could either have been produced with some kind of a musical instrument or by the creature using only part of its vocal tract.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, publisher and Bigfoot enthusiast John Green sums up the scientific controversy thus:

In short, if upright posture is what makes an animal a human, then the reports describe a human, but if it is his brain that distinguishes *Homo sapien* from his animal relatives, then the Sasquatch is an animal,...nothing more.<sup>44</sup>

Inevitably, the scientific debate ends with such “wisdom”: either it exists or it does not exist, and if it exists it is either human or nonhuman. The problem, as should now be familiar, is the degree of question-begging built in to the experiments. What is a “man-like non-human primate”? What is a “typical human whistle” as opposed to an abnormal whistle? And do we define “human” in terms of posture or brain size or neither? Green’s use of the brain as the distinguishing factor is particularly intriguing, especially given that we have never had the opportunity to compare a human and a Bigfoot brain. We can only assume that Green is assuming that animal brains cause animals to live in the wild, while human brains are smarter, thus leading us to live in cities, surrounded by our technological cocoons. Since the Bigfoot is constantly “roughing-it,” he must possess an animal brain. How startling the unquestioned presuppositions and assumptions at work here; how much they tell us about our constructed distinction between human and animal.

Species identity is another constant focus of the scientific debate, and the Bigfoot has been thought to be everything from the missing link to a distant cousin of Asian apes (and thus humans). Ultimately, appeals to species membership solve nothing in terms of separating human from animal or in terms of finding a home for Bigfoot. As we have already seen in our analysis of feral children, the fact that species is a social construct and not a “natural” classification is something philosophical analysis bears out. R. I. M. Dunbar argues,

The biological reality is that all classifications are artificial. They force a certain order on to the rather chaotic mess of the natural world. Species, as we describe them, are matters of convenience rather than biological reality.<sup>45</sup>

On this point, however, there is not general agreement. The question of species simply will not go away. Let us return to it, then, one last time from the perspective of our investigations of the animal-that-is-nearly-human.

Stephen R. L. Clark argues that species is a real phenomenon and that it is best understood as a successful breeding group: gorillas, for instance, constitute a species because they are linked by birth and because they interbreed. (The concept is similar to Kant's notion of a *Realgattung*—also defined as an interbreeding population.) There are three key elements here: (1) group membership being partially constituted by heredity; (2) the importance of restricted and successful interbreeding; and (3) the unimportance of physical similarity or other related traits. It is difficult to analyze each element separately since they are so interconnected, and we have already discussed the (un)importance of physical characteristics in our analysis of feral children. Consider, though, Clark's use of the metaphor of *family* in his discussion and defense of species:

I am a member of the Clark family: but not because I resemble other Clarks, nor yet because there is a way that Clarks will naturally live that is unlike the way that others live. Even if Clarks were more inbred than they are (and so approximated the condition of a species) they need not always resemble each other. There might be atavisms, sports, changelings or disabled Clarks, but they would all be Clarks....<sup>46</sup>

The point that this misses is that such an argument only works if we already assume a biological definition of family—assume, in essence, what Clark is trying to prove. “Family” can mean different things for different reasons. Were Clark to discover that he was adopted, would he no longer consider himself a member of the family? In what sense is Clark's mother truly a Clark since she is not related to any Clark ancestor, but instead joined the family through marriage? How will modern technologies such as surrogate motherhood and cloning change the definition of family and possible future Clarks? And why should we believe that there is anything “natural” about this definition of family—especially since we have cultural anthropologists and

other scholars providing us with a history of the changing notion of family as well as various and differing cultural models in our own time? Indeed, family is as much about marriage, commitment, physical resemblance, and shared history as it is about heredity and genetics. Clark's proposed parallel with *species* thus serves to undermine his own position rather than support it. Like family, species is not just about who your genetic parents were.

It is interbreeding, though, that supposedly created this heredity. Leaving aside, for the moment, the question of whether or not sex with Bigfoot smacks of bestiality, is it possible that we are part of an interbreeding group?

Some argue that the Kantian *Realgattung* should be updated to mean a *Formenkreis* (typically translated as "ring species"). Richard Dawkins explains:<sup>47</sup>

The best-known case is herring gull versus lesser black-backed gull. In Britain these are clearly distinct species, quite different in colour. Anybody can tell them apart. But if you follow the population of herring gulls westward round the North Pole to North America, then via Alaska across Siberia and back to Europe again, you will notice a curious fact. The "herring gulls" gradually become less and less like herring gulls and more and more like lesser black-backed gulls until it turns out that our European lesser black-backed gulls actually are the other end of a ring that started out as herring gulls. At every stage around the ring, the birds are sufficiently similar to their neighbours to interbreed with them. Until, that is, the ends of the continuum are reached....

Dawkins suggests that chimps and humans might be part of the same ring, but they are deemed to be two different species today because the intermediary steps are extinct. If *Pan*, *Pongo*, *Gorilla*, *Homo*, and whatever a Bigfoot might be are each links in a ringed chain, then the importance of the so-called "missing link" is clear—not in the familiar linear sense of the term, but in the more circular-ringed sense.

Finding bones, though, might not be enough. It is the existence of the living intermediary gulls that makes the herring gulls of Britain joined in a species. This does not fit easily with common sense. Either humans and chimps are the same species or they are not; how could the living existence of a third type of creature fundamentally alter the nature of the first two? Something seems inappropriate. But it is just such a conclusion we are forced to draw.

Consequently, a lot is at stake for the notion of humanity in the search for Bigfoot. As Dawkins remarks:<sup>48</sup>

Remember the song, “I’ve danced with a man, who’s danced with a girl, who’s danced with the Prince of Wales”? We can’t (quite) interbreed with modern chimpanzees, but we’d need only a handful of intermediate types to be able to sing: “I’ve bred with a man, who’s bred with a girl, who’s bred with a chimpanzee.” It is sheer luck that this handful of intermediaries no longer exists....But for this chance, our laws and our morals would be very different. We need only discover a single survivor, say a relict *Australopithecus* in the Budongo Forest, and our precious system of norms and ethics would come crashing about our ears. The boundaries with which we segregate our world would be shot to pieces.

As a respected scientist, Dawkins does not comment on the role of Bigfoot, nor does he hold out hope of finding that missing-ring-link. But it should be clear that the notion of a ring species is something somewhat radical and anti-establishment itself, admitting to a greater interconnection among forms of life than most modern classification systems allow. Of course, as that interconnection is acknowledged, the concept of a species is widened, thus becoming less capable of picking out a *small* group of creatures. “We” gets bigger and more inclusive.

There is an inherent circularity in all of this ring business, however. Suppose we were to find a Bigfoot. To see if it might be part of our ring, we would need to establish its species identity. But of course, its species identity is just what is in question. In other words, to see if it belongs in our ring we would have to test the creature—no doubt resorting to analyzing its hair, screams, genes, etc. Either that, or we would have to try to mate with it to test our interbreeding abilities.

Regardless of the prurient possibilities, there is a more important point to be made here. All of this science is not the typical method for determining humanity. When a new family moves into the neighborhood we do not question their species. We do not attempt to breed with them in the name of science. We do not record and study the sounds emanating from their house, film and scrutinize them as they walk across their lawn, and analyze their various waste products to determine if they are human. We just know. The same goes for our encounters with

squirrels in the park, birds at the feeder, and dogs in the street. Supposedly, we just know that they are not human. Do the folks who have had encounters “just know” whether or not the Bigfoot is human?

One of the problems with relying on selected individual instincts is that those instincts could be quite wrong or at least not fit the instincts of the rest of the community. The other problem is that in the case of Bigfoot, no two instincts are quite the same.

The creature, explains Grover S. Krantz, “is not human, nor even semihuman, and its legal status would be that of an animal if and when a specimen is taken. The fact that it would be classified in the human family of Hominidae does not alter this....Most people who see these creatures have an immediate, gut-level reaction to identify them as animals.”<sup>49</sup> On the contrary, argues John A. Keel, several “armed hunters have declared that they could not bring themselves to fire their weapons...because [t]he creatures seem too human to kill. ‘It would be like killing a man in cold blood,’ many have said.”<sup>50</sup>

We should not be surprised by the conflicting instincts—feral children, after all, presented the same problem. This question of shooting a Bigfoot is interesting, though. The quasi-human form of Amala and Kamala caused Reverend Singh to hold his fire, but does the form of the Bigfoot provide a similar imperative?

Here, too, there is controversy. Some argue that killing a Bigfoot would be akin to murder. They argue that erring on the side of caution is the proper thing to do. Others suggest that killing a Bigfoot is the first best step to understanding him. In this latter vein, Krantz advocates and advises using a weapon of sufficient strength: “[it] should be more powerful than a deer rifle; something good enough to bring down a big grizzly bear or an elk should suffice.”<sup>51</sup> For Krantz, Bigfoot’s “semihuman appearance” constitutes merely an “effective built-in disguise” aiding the creature in his escape from the hunt.<sup>52</sup>

As can be seen, the body of the Bigfoot plays an important role in our definition of its nature. When does looking human make a creature human, and when does it constitute only a

“built-in disguise”? How do we know that our neighbor across the street is human and is not merely using a disguise to aid in his search for affordable housing?

The answer to the latter question is simple. Indeed, the question itself is silly. We need not make such judgments about Others because they simply appear to us *as human*. Such a question has echoes of the problem of Other minds and the search for a proof that everyone else is a person and not actually a robot—questions philosophy should have moved beyond long ago. Our experiences of feral children and Bigfoot creatures are intriguing precisely because these individuals are not experienced as human. If not, why not? That is the question.

I can be wrong in my experience of other humans. I can see a form across a room which I take (without judgment) to be a human; but upon closer inspection I realize it was a mannequin. In phenomenological terms, I emptily intended the Other and my expectations were not filled. (A *position-taking* stands out against the *passive synthesis* responsible for my experience of the mannequin as a human, and I judge the form to be a mannequin.) The “gut-level” reaction of which Krantz speaks is a result of the passive synthesis, but the synthesis was not always passive. In the burgeoning consciousness of the infant, “human” is an achievement. Furthermore, we learn something about the being of mannequins. Their being is such that they can appear to be human.

When I experience a house I do not experience merely the side appearing to me now. Rather, I experience the whole house as given to me from this angle. This is how things are known; this is how consciousness works. Things are given in profiles—one profile is perceived while the others are apperceived. What makes science worthwhile is that there are always more profiles to be uncovered. To think that a mannequin is a human is to learn that one of the profiles of a mannequin—part of the Being of the mannequin—is that it can appear to be a human. What, then, does it mean for the being of humans and animals that the Bigfoot can appear as both?

Recall that I have argued that the concept of human arises as a result of the simultaneous coming to sense of the (human) Ego, the (human) Other, and the complex community of which we are a part. Whether the Bigfoot is experienced “gut-level” as animal or human in an adult encounter must depend on the context. Perhaps if the outline of the distant form and the movement of the body are most prominent, he appears as human, but if the mass of fur or the roar first calls one’s attention, he appears as animal. The important point is that the passively constructed identity is always called into question and a judgment must occur: True, X is taken *as* Y, but *is* X a Y?

For those of us who have never had personal encounters, the experience is still parallel. Listening to the story of Count Turolla we first take the creatures as animals and then, most probably, question whether they *are* animals. Thinking back on the precise architecture of the cave, the controlled and even strategic nature of the defensive attack, and of course the jadeite amulet (as the stylized ax has come to be known), we are not content to let our original experience stand unchecked—we are forced to take a position, make a judgment.

Now, someone might argue that all of this says nothing about our concepts of human and animal and that we have accomplished little with such phenomenological analysis. If we overturn the passively constructed identity of the Bigfoot with a judgment, on what grounds did we base that judgment? Does a beaver become a human when we note her architectural skills? Does a pack of wolves become a human clan when we admire the cunning and group precision of the hunt? Is the song bird’s song ever a work of art and if so would this make her human?

It is true that we have not uncovered a set of criteria for being human, but important work has been done. *Bigfoot requires a judgment*, and he represents a crisis in our categorization of the world. This is because our normal conscious engagement with the world relies very little on acts of judgment. Once identities are set and categories are instilled, the scissors (to take a favorite example of Edmund Husserl’s) are perceived *as* scissors—we need not make a judgment as to their being a tool or being for cutting; i.e., their being scissors. The same holds true for our

neighbors in the campground, our fellow backpackers, the birds in the trees, and the deer up ahead in the clearing. They are taken as humans and as animals. But that shadowy figure behind the grove of Redwoods? That set of eyes we realize has been fixed on us for the last several minutes since we stopped on this rock to rest? That sound, that smell, those monstrously large tracks in the mud? Who made them? What do we take *him* as?

Claude Lévi-Strauss has argued that monsters serve as boundaries for human society—defining who we are by saying who we are not.<sup>53</sup> Archaeologist Grant R. Keddie similarly maintains that “[o]ne device for [defining humanity]...is to create a clearly nonhuman foil which seems at first glance to be an image of a person but lacks the essential element which make [sic] one human.”<sup>54</sup> And Jay Miller, an American Indian culture scholar, speaks of monsters actually threatening “the *American* definition of humanness”<sup>55</sup> and consequently offering a picture of the ideal modern human as the anti-monster. Such arguments seem to be dealing with the proper issues, but drawing the wrong conclusions. It is not the case that the Bigfoot ultimately defines who we are in a negative way. He does not draw a circle around us by constructing a perimeter in which to live. On the contrary, Bigfoot serves only to erode such boundaries and call such definitions into question. By forcing a judgment, he directs us to realize that the senses of human and animal have been constructed *without any clear criteria*. He does not define who we are, but rather calls into question who we assume ourselves to be. His monstrous, furry body pairs with our body and a transfer of sense occurs. The size is threatening (note how we never fear or are forced to question our own nature by a *small* creature of unknown origin)—this Other looms above us, capable of crushing our body and our uniqueness. He is familiar, yet enigmatic. And standing beside him we see the familiarity of our bodies and yet the enigmatic way in which we define them as human. This monster does not live at the boundary of the human community, but rather destroys the comfortable fiction of such a boundary: if we differ so little from him, then how do we differ from those creatures we have labeled “animals” and have excluded from “us”? “Human” suddenly means much more by meaning much less.

And it is thus that the creature represents a crisis and a discovery. Count Turolla understandably retreats in fear—the world has changed and he is not what he has thought himself to be.

## 6. Conclusion: The Lunatic Fringe

Men are mad things.  
*Two Noble Kinsmen*

Perhaps we are the only animals to define ourselves in such a way as to insist on our uniqueness. Perhaps this is a mad pursuit. Yet, crossing the line between human and animal, we are taught in countless ways, can only result in tragedy.

This is the lesson, I take it, of the vampire and the werewolf in our mythology. Here, the human becomes animal—in body and spirit—and nasty things begin to happen. The context of the transformation is one of evil and suffering, and the consequence is always death—death for the human victims and ultimately death for the monster as well. The stories warn us to maintain our human identities, for an animal nature brings forth an animal body which in turn leads to death.<sup>56</sup> There is no fine line to walk. To be animal is to act like an animal, to have the body of an animal, and to die as an animal. In much the same way that Reverend Singh saw the transformation of Amala and Kamala's bodies into animal bodies, so do the vampires and the werewolves of our nightmares transform, abandon their humanity, and become the Other.

But we now know that this alterity is a construct without clear criteria, though it has been a difficult lesson. We have approached the feral child with anxiety and fear. We have completed her transformation into an animal when her ambiguity threatened us, constructing her body and soul. And the Bigfoot has confronted us with all that we are and all that we are not, forcing us to see our bodies and our natures in a new way.

Emmanuel Levinas was concerned that Husserl's argument for intersubjectivity made the Other a modification of the Self, thus stripping the former of his true alterity. The transcendence, the radical otherness of the Other seemed lost—subsumed under the known, the familiar, the Self. One might have similar worries as the boundary between human and animal is eroded. One might fear that we are anthropomorphizing in a philosophically dangerous way, finding enough humanity in a gorilla, a Bigfoot, even a dog, for instance, to bring these creatures into the fold. But the work we have been doing here should show how this need not be the case. If anything, it is the Self that runs the risk of collapsing into the Other, not vice versa. Even some scientists who cling to the notion of species are recognizing that what we call humans are really best understood as the third chimpanzee species under the genus *Homo*—that there are thus common chimpanzees (*Homo troglodytes*), pygmy chimpanzees (*Homo paniscus*), and human chimpanzees (*Homo sapiens*).<sup>57</sup> Such categorization still misses the point, but it is interesting to note the way in which it misses the point. Levinas' worry was never about discovering his own alterity, never about collapsing the Self into the Other. That this may happen is not the ultimate goal of our questioning the boundaries, but it may be a sign that we are on the right path.

We have cast ourselves in an ambiguous role in the story we are telling. In fact, this “we” clearly needs reevaluating, for such a story concerns the whole of the living world regardless of how we dole out the parts. And if there are conclusions to be drawn, then we know that the concept of humanity need not be abandoned, yet it must not be thought of as an isolating characteristic either. To be human is not to be separated from the rest of the living community, but to be immersed in it. It is a world in which all that is living is tied together—our goods intertwined and enmeshed. Categorization is an attempt to unscramble the jumble, but it carries with it unspoken values that lead to real crises of ethical conduct. Some categorization is more conducive to living well (i.e., living morally) than others. Some native peoples, for instance, have categories that point out the ties between us rather than obscure and deny them. Yet the

possibility of refusing to classify and categorize life according to its usefulness to humanity, according to its ancestral relation to humanity, according to what makes sense to humanity has disappeared: the choice to refuse categorization is no longer a live one. So the world is a jumble—let there be chaos! Let there be mysterious ties that refuse breaking! Let feral children roam our intellectual forests! Let there be monsters!

Grover Krantz mockingly has written that if a Bigfoot were ever caught or killed—if we had the body before us—there would “be profound statements from many...philosophers...and from all of the lunatic fringe.”<sup>58</sup> He is probably right. But as we explore who and what we are it makes little sense to silence the voices that question what we have traditionally thought ourselves to be. The power of the narrative pen is great, and the “we” behind “our story” is richer and more complex than some may wish to believe. Within this “we” lives a multitude of subjects—the “human” and the “animal,” the familiar Other and the feral Selves of our collective experiences. Unpacking the “we” is telling a story—a new chapter in an old tale of a brave new world that has such creatures in it.

Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>The account of Singh and the wolf-children which follows is drawn from Douglas Candland's *Feral Children and Clever Animals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 55-68.

<sup>2</sup>Barbara Noske, *Humans and Other Animals* (London: Pluto Press, 1989), p. 184.

<sup>3</sup>Gunnar Broberg, "Homo Sapiens," in *Linnaeus: The Man and His Work*, ed. Tove Frängsmyr (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 159-60.

<sup>4</sup>Charles Winick, *Dictionary of Anthropology* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), p. 339.

<sup>5</sup>The examples here are numerous, though one might begin with Dorothy Sayers, "The Human Not-Quite-Human," in *Masculine/Feminine*, ed. Betty Roszak and Theodore Roszak (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); Janice Moulton, "The Myth of the Neutral 'Man,'" in *Sexist Language*, ed. Mary Vetterling-Braggin (New York: Littlefield, Adams, and Co., 1981); Joyce Penfield, ed. *Women and Language in Transition* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1987); and Jeanette Silveira, "Generic Masculine Words and Thinking," in *Voices and Words of Women and Men*, ed. Cheris Kramarae (New York: Pergamon Press, 1980).

<sup>6</sup>This is a strange sort of thought experiment, I know. It forces us to think of alien creatures or Bigfoot—beings without classification and beings which might very well not exist. But the point is relevant for our experience of feral children. And, as we shall see, by forcing us to consider such cases we will get a better understanding of what we mean by "human."

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Noske, *Humans and Other Animals*, p. 153.

<sup>8</sup>This is a large subject. It touches on the question of the nature of a tool and the nature of technology—questions too grand to concern us at the moment. It is interesting to note, though, what modern cities and modern technology have done to our "natural" human abilities. It is clear that some knowledge has been lost at a rate at least as great as other knowledge has been gained. Generations of humans—removed from the land, reduced to working for wage labor in a mechanized society—no longer have any real skills of survival such as tool making. Without processed food and "mechanized fire," most of us would go hungry. Rare is the individual among us, even, who could grow grain, mill it to flour, and bake a loaf of bread. The acts of eating and providing shelter, etc. are accomplished quite well by non-humans who are not dependent on external apparatus—tools that have come to rule us.

<sup>9</sup>See, for instance, David Premack, "Language in Chimpanzee," *Science*, v.172, 1971, pp. 808-822. Premack argues that chimps can think in abstract symbols. Especially intriguing is one

chimp named Sarah who learned that a plastic blue triangle represented an apple. When asked to describe the triangle, she indicated “red” and “round.”

<sup>10</sup>Noske relates the story of how pigeons did the job of picking out pictures with trees as the pictured trees become more and more abstract—better, even, than the most sophisticated computers. (*Humans and Other Animals*, p. 144).

<sup>11</sup>who seem capable of learning other species of birds’ languages and interpreting the content—a warning, a caution, a signal of found food—even if they can only speak/sing their own.

<sup>12</sup>Noske, *Humans and Other Animals*, p. 155.

<sup>13</sup>Actually, the French “nose” is an interesting case. All animals are said to have a “museau” except for the dog, who, like a human has a “nez.” The French are well known for treating dogs as if they had a superior status, and this is reflected in the language. Some people say that the French treat dogs better than they treat Americans, though this author would never think to perpetuate such a stereotype.

<sup>14</sup>Related examples abound (e.g., German humans “essen” food but German animals “fressen” food), perhaps culminating in the ultimate animal-meat/human-muscle duality which clearly demonstrates the power of language to determine ontology and teleology and not just to label objectively.

<sup>15</sup>Mary Ann Warren’s (in)famous definition of “person” in her “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion” (*The Monist* v. 57, n. 4, Oct. 1973: 43-61) suffers from this same problem. It is endemic to the genre of list-definitions. Note the ease with which the following argument and line of criticism serve to dismantle a position such as Warren’s as well as Winick’s.

<sup>16</sup>The phrase “well-developed” should be a warning signal here.

<sup>17</sup>I say “recent” for a reason which will become clear below in my discussion of a search for the mother of humanity.

<sup>18</sup>See Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein, *The Bell Curve* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

<sup>19</sup>See Philip K. Bock, *Modern Cultural Anthropology* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 3. The diagram which follows is based on Bock’s own.

<sup>20</sup>See Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* (New York: Modern Library, 1949), a work first published in 1871.

<sup>21</sup>“The World of National Geographic: Mysteries of Mankind” airdate 5/21/95.

<sup>22</sup>This problem suggests that “human” as an anthropological term is a *vague predicate*. There is a great deal of literature on vague predicates—both as a topic for analytic philosophy (in that vague predicates tend to create paradoxes such as the Sorites paradox) and in the abortion debate concerning the status of the fetus as “person.” For an introduction to the latter one might see Jane English’s “Abortion and the Concept of a Person,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* v. 5, n. 2. Oct. 1975: 233-43. I will not pursue the argument that “human” is a type of vague predicate here, though most of what I have been saying in another form would count as evidence for such a formalized argument.

<sup>23</sup>Darwinism does not face criticism from creationists only. See, for instance, A. R. Manser, “The Concept of Evolution,” in *Philosophy* 40:18-34, 1965; Norman Mabeth, *Darwin Retried* (Boston: Gambit, Inc., 1971), and I. Bethell “Darwin’s Mistake,” in *Harper’s Magazine* 252:70-75, 1976, who argue that “survival of the fittest” is a tautology since the only way to identify “the fittest” is to see who survived. Karl Popper (*The Philosophy of Karl Popper*, ed. Paul A. Schlipp (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1974): 43-61) is also famous for, among other things, his insistence that Darwin’s evolution is untestable and nonfalsifiable. And scientists such as Julian Huxley and Willi Hennig (see Hennig’s *Phylogenetic Systematics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966)) have even suggested an alternative scientific twist to Darwin by introducing the notion of a “clade” as a branch of the evolutionary tree. As Peter Bowler (*Evolution: The History of an Idea* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989)) points out “transformed cladists claim that the ancestor-descendent link so crucial to evolution cannot be derived from their way of expressing relationships. Outspoken critics of Darwinism, they have extended the charge that the attempt to reconstruct the past history of life is unscientific and have taken up enthusiastically some of the established arguments against natural selection.” (p. 345). Such arguments are indeed more numerous than one might at first imagine.

<sup>24</sup>and other such figures in the world’s religions.

<sup>25</sup>Cf. my “The Boundaries of the Phenomenological Community: Non-Human Life and the Extent of our Moral Enmeshment,” in *Becoming Persons*, ed. Robert N. Fisher (Oxford, England: Applied Theology Press, 1995). pp. 777-87; “Deep Community: Phenomenology’s Disclosure of the Common Good,” in *Between the Species* 10, no. 3-4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 98-105; and “They Say Animals Can Smell Fear,” in *Animal Others: On Ethics, Ontology, and Animal Life*, ed. H. Peter Steeves (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 133-78.

<sup>26</sup>In my “Deep Community” I even suggest that to be human is to be connected to animals, and that a human community that is not in the presence of an animal community—another theme of science fiction—is not a human community at all. This “feral” community could not achieve the status of “human.” Note that such an argument need not rely on a strict

definition of what constitutes humanity. Our enmeshment, though, is certainly necessary for our being “human.”

<sup>27</sup>and other living beings!

<sup>28</sup>Philip José Farmer, *Mother Was a Lovely Beast* (Radnor, PA: Chilton Book Company, 1974), p. 232.

<sup>29</sup>Candland, *Feral Children and Clever Animals*, p. 59.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>32</sup>Candland (*Feral Children and Clever Animals*, p. 61) points out that the commentator Zingg is troubled by this apparent impossibility, and goes to great lengths to document cases of reflective human retinas, even reporting the case of an American biologist involved with a shooting at night due to such reflection. Zingg’s scrambling for evidence—scientific and biological—attests to the point being made here.

<sup>33</sup>I cannot resist two short examples. The first comes from the magazine *Fitness* (June 1995) in a story urging women to aerobicize and marry rich. “How to marry a rich man?” asks the subtitle. “Become incredibly buff.” In one story a trainer who met his wife at the gym admits that when he first saw her he said to himself: “she [has] very nice hamstrings” (p. 74). One could argue the case that until recently, *hamstrings* did not exist in our culture—let alone nice ones. The second example comes from a 1996 CNN report on beauty indicating that in many cultures, including our own, the beautiful human face—especially female—has little or no chin. The smaller the chin, the greater the beauty (and the more properly human?). This is especially intriguing given the importance of the chin in defining humanity for so many scientists/anthropologists—irony with no equal!

<sup>34</sup>Dog and cat diet foods serve as a good example here as do doggy sweaters, but again the point is deep. The body of the chicken and steer are certainly social constructs—objects-for-ingestion. Circus and zoo animals are also obvious constructs. Indeed, the power relations mentioned below infect the nature of all animal bodies.

<sup>35</sup>Noske, *Humans and Other Animals*, p. 167.

<sup>36</sup>The phrase is James Hart’s. Confer his *The Person and the Common Life* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1992).

<sup>37</sup>Hart, *The Person and the Common Life*, p. 196.

<sup>38</sup>Most of what follows is taken from Michael Grumley's *There are Giants in the Earth* (New York: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 25-36.

<sup>39</sup>The stone became known as "the jadeite amulet," and Turolla has since exhibited and published photographs of it. He believes it to have been carved by the creatures he encountered in the cave—yet further evidence that this race of *Monos Grandes* possesses culture, tool skills, symbolic expression, and intelligence, and that they hold the key to prehistory and perhaps our very humanity.

<sup>40</sup>The famous Patterson film has been dissected *ad nauseum!* See, for instance, chapters 4 and 5 of *The Sasquatch and Other Unknown Hominoids*, ed. Vladimir Markotic and Grover Krantz (Calgary: Western Publishers, 1984). Here the film is analyzed frame by frame, and Dimitri Bayanov suggests that the creature's lack of a chin (!) separates her from humanity (see p. 224).

<sup>41</sup>My personal favorite is R. Lynn Kirlin's and Lasse Hertel's vocal tract length estimator,

$$L_3 = \frac{35300 (\sum k^2 / o_k^2 + 1 / o_\emptyset^2)}{4 \sum K f_k / o_k^2 + f_\emptyset / o_\emptyset^2}$$

which, I take on faith, says something about vowel pronunciation and the probability that a recording made by Alan Berry is actually of a beast of unknown origin. (See *Manlike Monsters on Trial*. ed. Marjorie M. Halpin and Michel M. Ames (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), p. 289). I do not mean any disrespect to the authors (the work, as I understand it, is based on Hertel's master's thesis at the University of Wyoming). I merely refer to the massive equation as a symbol of science's confrontation with Bigfoot and its losing battle to define our distinct humanity.

<sup>42</sup>Halpin and Ames, *Manlike Monsters on Trial*, p. 272.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 288.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 243. And all of this without ever seeing a Sasquatch brain.

<sup>45</sup>R. I. M. Dunbar, "What's in a Classification?" in *The Great Ape Project*, ed. Paola Cavalieri and Peter Singer (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 110.

<sup>46</sup>Stephen R. L. Clark, "Apes and the Idea of Kindred," in *The Great Ape Project*, ed. Cavalieri and Singer, p. 118.

<sup>47</sup>Richard Dawkins, “Gaps in the Mind,” in *The Great Ape Project*, ed. Cavalieri and Singer, p. 82.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>49</sup>Grover S. Krantz, *Big Foot-Prints* (Boulder, CO: Johnson Books, 1992), p. 173.

<sup>50</sup>John A. Keel, *Strange Creatures from Time and Space* (London: Neville Spearman, 1975), p. 84.

<sup>51</sup>Markotic and Krantz, *The Sasquatch and Other Unknown Hominoids*, p. 144.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>53</sup>Cf. e.g., Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

<sup>54</sup>Markotic and Krantz, *The Sasquatch and Other Unknown Hominoids*, p. 23.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17. (*italics added*).

<sup>56</sup>This is a fascinating subject. Note also that werewolves and vampires reproduce by penetrating the bodies of humans—by biting other people. Again there is the theme of body purity and uniqueness.

<sup>57</sup>See, for instance, Jared Diamond, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Chimpanzee* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991).

<sup>58</sup>Krantz, *Big Foot-Prints*, p. 273.