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Reply

Kenneth Joel Shapiro

I am pleased to see that Bekoff and Jamieson (B&J) and I are in substantial agreement on many of the issues raised in volume I of their recent book and in my review of it. In particular, I agree with them on the following:

1. Recognition of moral kinship with nonhuman animals is likely to follow recognition of "behavioral and emotional kinship."
2. Cognitive ethology can provide an "epistemic infrastructure" necessary for the philosophical argument for and the public acceptance of that kinship. We should add that the emerging subfield of "animal studies" also can make an important contribution to that necessary empirical base. This enterprise, which provides social scientific studies of the ways in which nonhuman animals figure in our lives, already has given rise to academic programs and journals (*Anthrozoos* and the forthcoming *Society and Animals*).
3. Cognitivism is responsible for some recent gains in the re-minding of nonhuman animals, a necessary move in the recognition of kinship.

And, in particular, I believe B&J agree with me on the following:

1. Cognitive ethology has residual problems— notably, an adherence to methodological behaviorism, which, at times, revisits the limitations of its predecessor, behaviorism proper, and an over-reliance on the metaphor of the computer, which metaphor fails "to make room



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for subjectivity” or, as I might put it, remains experientially thin.

2. Partly offsetting this is the increasingly frequent use of language which attributes intention and purpose to nonhuman animals.
3. However, for most investigators this intentionalist discourse is largely limited to a heuristic device and is not accompanied by a commitment to the fact of nonhuman animal minds and experience.

B&J agree on my formulation of a dilemma for cognitive ethology but disagree on the prospects for and form of its resolution. As B&J rightly suggest, my account is purposely provocative, particularly on this issue of prognosis. I cannot predict the future and have given up trying since I bet on Carter in 1980. Frankly, prognostication is for me now a thinly veiled attempt at influencing, not predicting, the future.

In that vein, I suggested that cognitive ethology will crystalize into a reductive physiological discourse on the one side and an interpretive science on the other. B&J mistook me to imply that the latter is for me a negative outcome. It is not. I simply “predicted” that biology or psychology or the emerging conglomerate field of cognitive science (computer science, cognitive psychology, linguistics, neuroscience and philosophy) will refuse to give it scientific standing.

In fact, I think B&J might agree with me that an interpretive science, one that complements traditional natural scientific methods with a broad range of qualitative, ethnographic, phenomenological and historical forms of inquiry, could provide the revised “conception of science” to which they optimistically refer. For an interpretive science emphasizes understanding and deemphasizes positivistic preoccupations with method and validity. Understanding refers to the harmony between the experience of those individuals being studied and our explication of that experience. Having “re-minded” them, an interpretive science of nonhuman animals would also give them back their experience, both of their own marvelous worlds and of the suffering to which they are prone.

