In 1982 Ivan Illich delivered a series of lectures on gender, "From Broken Gender to Economic Sex." His coincident critique of sociobiology seemed to me sensible and needed, but I was bothered by one aspect. Actually, I had heard Illich in London in 1981 make what seemed to me an inaccurate distinction between pain and suffering, remarking that animals do not suffer. Illich's writings often express a deep concern for the defense of nature, and knowing this, I found his distinction between pain and suffering troubling, even while I could agree that suffering is a category that may have important human meaning (see, for example, Kierkegaard's The Gospel of Suffering). Although an ethics of animal liberation could, perhaps, be constructed upon the fact of pain alone, I felt that drawing such a distinction made it more difficult, because Illich is so widely listened to, for animal liberationists to do their work of changing attitudes. During one of his last lectures I told Illich my concern. "You have," he replied, "caught me in a profound prejudice."

What, I have wondered since, is the nature of that prejudice, and what is its validity? What is its profundity? With Illich one can be sure he has his reasons. Is it, I have wondered, no more than speciesism? So, I have been trying to assay what benefits for genuinely ecological thought Illich's distinction might hold. My conclusion at present (even while suspecting that much of sociobiology is simultaneously reductionist with respect to animals and humans both) is that the distinction as Illich applies it differentially to our species and to others is misapplied. Both our species and many others feel or experience pain, but we are not the only species that suffers. Illich's prejudice, unfortunately, although much of value can be learned from him, even from this aspect of his thought, is directly in the Catholic tradition of belief that animals have no souls. Such a position is nonsense. If humans have souls, or our lives may have to do with soul-making, so also do animals. If neither do, that may or may not be an important matter.

Pope John Paul II's statement in 1983 commending those who "abandon inadvisable forms of domination, the locking up of all creatures," does not essentially alter this position, that animals have no souls, in the religious doctrine of the West.

Religiously, upon what authority can Illich's profound prejudice be undone? It can, I think, only be undone by a Pope willing to assert in an encyclical, and by a Church in conclave willing to announce, that the belief that animals have no souls has no status in divine will. But for the Church to reach such awareness brushes close to polytheism, of which monotheism is deathly afraid when not confident that it has been crushed. Certainly, such awareness of animal soulfulness threatens monocultural society's secular belief that there is but one species and its name at present is Humanity.

Monotheistic religions are, of course, not the only determinants of the attitudes of cultures. Secular ethics need not be restrained by the viewpoints of the churches, or given over to its own one-dimensionality. Nevertheless, it may be that for this profound prejudice to end, a Pope will have to risk its opposition. Then, in Poland and elsewhere, it may come to be realized that freedom and justice are sufficient goals for Solidarity. The "meat ration" is an unbecoming concern.

The profundity of Illich's prejudice is the intense and easy peaceable nature, including humanity, that shall be the outcome of undoing the prejudice.

Hillman is right about the most important work with animals being the work with the animals in our dreams. We need to follow Hillman in the doing of this work. The noble work of activists in society, however, must go on, for the world, too, is real. We need to hope for a pig in our dream. We need to hope for pigs.

Perhaps what we need is a new framework for the work in the world, a Panhumanism seeing animals as human and humans as animals, linked first through Pan with the polytheistic divine. Then we could understand the suffering of animals, too, to have significance.