

**Animals in the Fiction of
John Irving and Haruki Murakami**

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Abstract

This thesis examines animals in the fiction of John Irving and Haruki Murakami, two authors who have much in common, contemporaries whose work is both commercially successful and regarded as literary. Different in that Irving works within a traditional realist framework while Murakami delves into the magical, each includes animals in his fiction. They employ anthropomorphism and zoomorphism in a variety of ways and demonstrate how animals, as Claude Levi-Strauss puts it, are “good to think with”. I draw on the work of Erica Fudge in an overview of thinking with animals and examine the role of anthropomorphism and how it complements animal advocacy and liberationism in Irving’s *Setting Free the Bears*. I compare and contrast anthropomorphism and zoomorphism in *The Hotel New Hampshire*. In doing this, I complicate and challenge Wendy Doniger’s assertion that “sexuality makes humans into animals; language makes animals into humans”. This also applies to Murakami’s animals, who have further roles including enabling engagement with a magical dimension. I argue that, as instantiated in both writers’ fiction, animals evoke thought effectively largely because they are, as John Berger puts it, “both like and unlike”, and as Fudge identifies, that the “paradox of like and not like...exists in our fascination with animals”. My argument is that it is this very paradox, that they are simultaneously both “them” and “us”, along with other factors, such as the diversity, versatility and the inherent ambiguity of animals, that renders them fascinating. Furthermore, Murakami’s magically real animals link conceptual realms that are conventionally separate and facilitate criticism and challenging of conventional human hegemonic structures while operating outside national and cultural boundaries. In summary, Irving’s and Murakami’s animals are good to think with for many reasons, not despite their enigmatic furry ambiguity, but largely because of it.

Introduction: Making Sense of Animals

John Irving wrote *Setting Free the Bears* as his Masters thesis. It was published as a novel in 1968 with Haruki Murakami later translating it into Japanese. Animals abound in the fiction of Irving and Murakami, both authors writing and thinking with animals. Daston and Mitman use the phrase “thinking with animals” to refer simultaneously to the ways in which people “think they know how animals think” and also how people “use animals to help them do their own thinking about themselves” (12). They contrast this with thinking ‘about’ animals where they (non-human animals) are object and we (human animals) are subject. The evolution in the way that people think both with and about animals is reflected in the representation of animals in literature, of writing with animals. Written animals are very different from living animals. They exist on a page in what the writer chooses to write of them and what the reader reads of them and into them. People can gaze freely at animals in a zoo or in the wild but we read them in a text in only the words in which they are written along with our individual associations. Any animal in literature is a narrative construct and may be subject to representation and interpretation shaped by long traditions of other animal narrative.

In Aesop’s fables, traditional Japanese animist stories, Greek, Roman and Norse mythology and many other early examples of literature, animals are widely employed, both as images emblematic of characteristics and ideals (animal imagery), and as characters analogous to people (a form of anthropomorphism). Writing with animals and the reading of written animals has a long history. There is also the pre-history of stories told with animals pre-dating a written system in the narrative tradition of a wide range of cultures. Thinking with animals as evident in writing and reading with animals has an extensive history. There is a much longer oral tradition of

storytelling where thinking with animals involves speaking and listening with animals. As well as being written and read, stories with animals are told and heard.

Erica Fudge builds on Levi-Strauss's assertion that animals are good to think with, in the way fingers are good to count with (*Animal* 12). She further develops John Berger's observation that animals and humans are "both like and unlike" (4). Fudge identifies a "paradox of like and not like...that exists in our fascination with animals" (*Animal* 7). She goes on to identify a second paradox. Examining the philosophical writings on animals in early modern England, Fudge asserts that "to assert human supremacy writers turn to discuss animals, but in this turning, they reveal the frailty of the supremacy which is being asserted. Paradoxically, humans need animals in order to be human. The human cannot be separated because in separation lies unprovability" (*Perceiving Animals* 4). There are many such paradoxes and ambiguities in the employment of animals in literature in general and the fiction of Murakami and Irving in particular. There is also a fascinating paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference between the literature and the lives of the two writers which, along with the abundance of animals, makes them a fruitful pairing of writers for the purposes of this study.

Animals abound. There are many characters and creatures in the fiction of Irving and Murakami who are transmorphic (an umbrella term for zoomorphic, anthropomorphic, and transformational between mythological or magical and human). The range of animals is extensive. A head-count of Irving's animals includes bears, dogs, elephants, pigs, lions, cats, cows, goats, chimpanzees, horses, zebras, mice, moose, pigeons, peacocks, turkeys, vultures, crows, loons, hawks, lizards, fish, an armadillo, a lynx, an oryx, assorted small mammals and the Under Toad. Murakami's animals include unicorns, sheep, dolphins, monkeys, a vanishing elephant, an

elephant factory, a little green monster, kangaroos, talking cats, man-eating cats, a wind-up bird and literati crows as well as the more ethereal birds and hybrid mythical-magical beasts and INKlings of *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*. The animals are diverse and prominent.

In reading these animals there is a need to lay out clearly a number of research questions: How do humans and other animals meet and intersect in the fin-de-millennium, late-capitalist, postmodern fiction of John Irving and Haruki Murakami? What are the paradoxes and ambiguities and how and why are these animals fascinating? Is it true, as Doniger asserts, that “sexuality makes humans into animals; language makes animals into humans” (25)? If so, how and why does this happen in the fiction of Murakami and Irving? Under which of the conceptual models that I propose (Cartesian, Darwinian, intersecting and their various combinations and complications) are the animals best read? How does this vary according to the different lenses of various theoretical approaches, including psychoanalysis (particularly Freudianism), New Criticism and historicist criticism? How and why are animals in general and Irving’s and Murakami’s animals in particular, good to think with and read and write with? I argue that it is, in part, because animals transcend language. By “transcending” language, I mean that animals operate at a level beyond words, evoking images for readers based on their individual experience and cultural archetypes. Like the proverbial picture, a written animal paints many words. Just as real animals communicate with one another and with human-animals non-verbally, imaginary or represented animals evoke responses in readers utilizing associations beyond the words the author supplies. This contributes to what I argue are principal virtues of animals in literature, which are the paradoxes and ambiguities that fascinate us. A case could be made that animals are good to think and write with

despite their ambiguity. I argue that it is *because* of their ambiguity. Fingers are good to count with because of their simplicity. Fingers are few, statically bunched, and largely homogeneous. Animals are good to think with because of their complexity, their animation, their extreme diversity, their blurriness and furriness. We look at animals in order to think with them, to observe how we are “both like and unlike” (Berger 4). Moreover, the closeness of animals to humans enhances the degree to which we can be fascinated by the simultaneous similarity and difference. There is nothing else with which we can compare and contrast humans so readily. We are “far, far more closely related to any animal than we are to any object” (Peterson 7). Consequently, it makes more sense to look at animals, both in reality and in literature, than, say, plants or rocks.

Why look at Irving’s and Murakami’s animals? Not unlike Fudge’s paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference, there is a paradox inciting my particular fascination with Irving and Murakami. They are simultaneously similar but different, contemporary authors whose work straddles the divide between mass-appeal popular fiction and literary respectability. Irving published his first novel at 26, Murakami at 30. Irving was 36 in 1978 when his fourth novel, *The World According to Garp*, was published, spawning “[t]he Garp Phenomenon” (French). Murakami was 38 in 1987 when his fifth novel, *Norwegian Wood*, came out in Japan to similar success, acclaim and a significant place in popular culture. Judith Caesar describes Murakami as “an ‘in’ writer” (26). For both writers, with success came celebrity and financial freedom to write full-time. Murakami was so successful that he left Japan “to flee his own celebrity” (Hensher). *Norwegian Wood* was translated and published in English in 2000. Both Irving and Murakami entered the twenty-first century as important international writers in both a literary and a cultural sense. Popular success can work against being accepted as literary. Murakami has been accused of being

“batakusai” (“reeking of butter”), overly-influenced by Western culture, and, by Kenzaburo Oe, of “failing to appeal to intellectuals with models for Japan’s future” (Kelts 1). In other words, his work has been viewed by the more conservative literary establishment as neither sufficiently Japanese nor sufficiently intellectual to be considered great literature. Many beg to differ and Murakami makes “no secret of his fascination with the West” (Fisher 155). Murakami’s defense includes the identification of a “mutual reservoir” of global popular cultural influences (Wray). “The Rise and Fall of Sharpies Cakes” is a response to the dictates of the literary establishment, who are depicted zoomorphically and satirically in the story as blind, close-minded, in-fighting crows.

Murakami comments that when he interviewed Irving, Irving described readers as “addicted,...always waiting” (Wray). Murakami and Irving both have an addicted and waiting fan base. Regarding the balance of popularity and literary value, Matthew Strecher writes of Murakami that critics have argued that:

his works somehow seem to lack the severity, the density, the sheer difficulty of those by some of his predecessors... Yet arguments such as this lead us to the inescapable conclusion that some of the resistance to Murakami, at least, is grounded in simple literary snobbishness. Murakami’s prose is easy to read, comparatively easy to translate, and rarely hides behind much of the ambiguity, the mystery for which Japanese literature has traditionally been so renowned...To conclude, however, that Murakami’s work lacks critical importance amidst other Japanese literature because its language is clear, because it is readable, because it entertains, is simply absurd (28).

Similar comments could be made of Irving in the American context. Irving and Murakami share readability, accessibility, popularity and a place in mass culture. Gabriel Miller writes of Irving: “He

is very much against the post-modern tendency in fiction and criticism to promote what is 'difficult', academic, and consciously 'important' over what is seemingly 'easy', readable, and perhaps popular" (8).

Irving and Murakami are near contemporaries, baby-boomers, part of the sixties counter-culture generation. They are alike in their position in their respective literary canons and national and international culture but very different writers in other ways. Irving's American take on Dickensian realism, although it has been described as "gothic bizarre", remains within the realm of the plausible (Freeland 763). Murakami, while capturing the zeitgeist of postmodern Japan, ventures into the realm of magic realism. Irving writes extensively with bears, Murakami writes with sheep. Irving is a "dog person": he lives and writes with dogs. Murakami is a "cat person": he lives and writes with cats and previously ran a jazz bar called "Peter Cat" (Wray). He describes the way a story evolves for him as "like a cat...captured in the hall, and you are looking for the way to put her out" (Braunias 6). Irving writes of feeling comfortable once he has "the bear on stage" (Sheppard 7).

In the first chapter I propose animal liberationism and anthropomorphism as potentially complementary concepts in Irving's *Setting Free the Bears*. I use "liberationism" in the same sense as women's liberation with connotations of advocacy, agency and the extension of rights. "Liberationism" also resonates with the "setting free" of the bears and other animals. Anthropomorphism increases identification and engenders empathy. The naming, inherent anthropomorphism and implied attribution and advocacy of agency to animals help humans to understand them. This includes real-world animals such as Washoe and Nim Chimpsky (chimpanzees), fictional animals such as Yann Martel's tiger, Irving's bears or Murakami's cats, or

animals whose anthropomorphism spans reality and fiction such as Keiko (the orca of *Free Willy* fame). Thinking and writing with animals in our language is no more speciesist than reading literature in translation is xenophobic. We use the tools we have. If we accept that humans and animals are paradoxically simultaneously similar and different, both halves of the paradox can help us to further our understanding. We can think with them, in both senses, as both human-like animals and as animal-like animals. This furthers the case that paradox, ambiguity and our fascination with these leads to animals being good to think, read and write with. As well as the ascription to animals of names and human-like identity and agency, I look at the question of how, in plausible real-world adult fiction, animals can be ascribed communicative ability and linguistically expressed rationality without making them actually talk. That animals cannot talk makes them ultimately unknowable. The ambiguity inherent in that widens the scope of readings and interpretations. I also look at how and why animals are effective in evoking empathy. The foundation of my argument is that the paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference, as identified by Berger and Fudge, facilitates anthropomorphism, enables empathy, and builds on the premise that animals are good to think with.

In the second chapter I compare and contrast anthropomorphism and zoomorphism principally in *The Hotel New Hampshire* but also in “The Pension Grillparzer”. In fairy-tale fashion, *The Hotel New Hampshire* has three bears: State o’Maine (an anthropomorphic bear, often on and usually around a motorcycle), zoomorphic Susie (a woman in a bear suit) and the unnamed rocking bear of Fritz’s circus. “The Pension Grillparzer”, originally embedded in *The World According to Garp*, is a kind of practice run for *The Hotel New Hampshire* in its setting in Freud’s Vienna and motifs of bears on cycles, hotels and close-knit families. While Doniger posits that “sexuality

makes humans into animals; language makes animals into humans” (25), I argue that sexuality is just one of many “animal” instinctive drives and behaviours that contributes to zoomorphism and that the relationship between sexuality and animality is complicated.

In Chapter Three I examine Murakami’s magically real animals. My approach to Murakami focuses on three novels, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, and *Kafka on the Shore*, and four short stories, “Superfrog Saves Tokyo”, “A Shinagawa Monkey”, “The Dancing Dwarf” and “The Elephant Vanishes”. Like Irving’s animals, Murakami’s animals reflect the paradoxes and ambiguities of animals in postmodern fiction, including Fudge’s paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference. As with Irving’s use of animals, I discuss the role of language and sexuality in anthropomorphism and zoomorphism and the reading of animals. Paradoxes and ambiguity abound with a desirable breadth of interpretation. Murakami’s animals are images which may be ascribed with symbolism by the reader. The animals can be likened to more explicit Rorschach ink-blot, where associations with particular animal shapes are reader-specific, based on archetypes and individual experiences, prejudices and reactions.

The animals that are most accessible are Irving’s bears and Murakami’s cats. As well as the authors having personal affiliations with these animals, bears are inherently anthropomorphic in form and cats are familiar as pets, the cats in *Kafka on the Shore* being particularly anthropomorphic and accessible because they speak. Animals, in “striking abundance” in magical realism, offer a connecting door between real and magical (Schwalm *Animal Writing* abstract). As Murakami’s animals often speak, they also bridge the gap between human and animal, and in the case of *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, between parallel worlds, conscious and unconscious. Animals play a role in confronting and criticizing conventional human structures such

as late-stage capitalism. This is particularly evident in Murakami's employment of the metaphor of an elephant factory, which in "The Dancing Dwarf" reflects the alienation and commodification inherent in a Marxist analysis of capitalism. The elephant factory metaphor in *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* offers a Freudian reading of the construction of consciousness and memory. The metaphor is versatile and, like other magically real animals, can operate outside the confines of national boundaries. The INKlings in *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* are creatures which are a hybrid of Japanese mythological and global urban-modern. They are employed to explore what underlies humanity rather than what links humanity and animality. Magically real animals have an extensive range of linking, challenging and complicating functions, which are discussed in the chapter on Murakami.

My primary source in the field of human-animal studies is the work of Erica Fudge with other major influences on my thinking with animals being Lorraine Daston, Greg Mitman, Wendy Doniger and Sarita Siegel in Daston and Mitman's *Thinking with Animals; New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism*. Other human-animal studies works consulted include Philip Armstrong's *What Animals Mean in the Fiction of Modernity*, Donna Haraway's *When Species Meet*, Randy Malamud's *Reading Zoos: Representations of Animals and Captivity*, and Dale Peterson's *The Moral Life of Animals*, all of which contributed to my reading of what animals mean in the fiction of Murakami and Irving. My main critical sources on Irving are Carol Harter and James Thompson, Terence Des Pres and Gabriel Miller, with further work by Haller, Nelson, Reilly and Sheppard consulted. I also read many reviews and read or watched many interviews with Irving. With Murakami's fiction, my main critical sources are Jay Rubin and Matthew Carl Stretcher. I also consulted critical work by Caesar, Chilton, Fisher, Hong, Kelts, Lai, Loughnan and Park as well as

many reviews. In the area of literary theory, Peter Barry and Terry Eagleton are my main sources. Matthew Carl Stretcher writes on magical realism as well as Murakami specifically. Further important sources in this area are Wendy Faris and Tanja Schwalm.

The question that this thesis addresses is how and why animals, in the fiction of Irving and Murakami in particular, are good to think with. My argument is multi-faceted. It offers Fudge's paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference between humans and animals as a primary reason for animals being, as Fudge puts it, "fascinating". In addition, the ambiguities arising from the nature of animals and the limits to our knowledge of their thinking, and consequent conjecture about and projection onto their thinking, allows for a diversity of readings and wealth of interpretations. Furthermore, the transcendence of language in the way in which, because they cannot talk to us, we employ conjecture and projection to read animals as archetypes and ascribe associations based on our own experience, prejudices and preconceptions, makes them multi-dimensional as characters and images. Put simply, animals are fascinating because they are paradoxically us and not us, furrily ambiguous, and cannot speak.

It has been important to engage with pre-existing critical discourse relating to Murakami and Irving, human-animal studies on animals in literature and culture and theoretical and technical understandings among literary scholars regarding concepts such as magic realism and Freudianism. However, in researching why it is good to think with animals, specifically Irving's and Murakami's fictional animals, it makes sense to do much of the thinking with these non-human animals themselves. Much of my work has been with the primary texts, thinking with the animals therein. Fudge cites William Harvey: "I do not profess either to learn or to teach anatomy from books or from the maxims of philosophers, but from dissections and from the fabric of Nature herself"

(*Perceiving Animals* 106). Similarly, I do not profess either to learn or to explain how and why fictional animals are good to think with from the maxims of philosophers, theorists and critics but primarily from dissections of the texts and from the fabric of the fiction and, figuratively, the animals themselves.

Like animals, shapes and spaces are good to think with. For me, three conceptual models, as represented by Venn diagrams, are useful in visualizing the relationship between people and animals in this context. The Cartesian model (two discrete circles within the same super-set) represents what Fudge calls the “absolute distinction of the human from the animal” (*Brutal Reasoning* 1). Cary Wolfe identifies a similar division of “the world of the living along the axis of ‘the human’ and *everything else*”. The Darwinian model (two concentric circles) shows humans as a subset of animals (arguably paragons). The intersecting model is two intersecting circles. The area of intersection represents anthropomorphism, zoomorphism and other transmorphisms. This intersecting model is far less absolute, allowing for shades of grey, and has permeable parameters which allow for movement back and forth, such as the transition of Irving’s Susie back and forth between speaking asexual human and non-speaking sexual bear in *The Hotel New Hampshire*. This intersecting model reflects the widespread shape-shifting, animism and transmorphisms of ancient literature, mythology and storytelling as well as that which occurs in the postmodern and post-postmodern in literature. A third circle can be added to represent mythical or magical creatures that transform anthropomorphically or zoomorphically. The re-emergence of magic realism in literature can be read as a revisiting of the intersecting conceptual model of ancient animist mythology.

More complicated combinations and augmentations of the Venn diagrams are possible, incorporating features such as a focus on the transmorphim itself or the littoral zone around the transmorphim, the introduction of a parallel dimension as occurs in *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* and *1Q84*, the introduction of multi-dimensionality to represent complexity, and the overall furriness, somewhat akin to the fuzziness of fuzzy logic, that human ultimate unknowability of other animals generates.

In examining the written animals of Murakami and Irving we can see the different ways in which human-animal relations are understood and expressed and these models can be used as tools to interpret this. With written animals, it is the intersecting conceptual model that is most applicable when we consider that all writing is, by definition, anthropocentric and anthropomorphic, and therefore necessitates the projection of some degree of human-animal thinking onto non-human animals. The Cartesian model can be implemented as an analytical tool to accentuate the differences between human and non-human animals and has a place in reading written animals and some elements of human-animal relationships in the real world but to deny that human beings are a subset of animals is simply not credible in this day and age. The Cartesian conceptual model is perhaps best viewed as a way of thinking with animals (or *not* thinking with them, disregarding them) that has been surpassed firstly by Darwinism in the way we think with animals in the real world, and secondly by the model of the two intersecting circles in the way we think with animals, and about human and non-human animal relations, in the written world.

The Cartesian view of humans and animals was a binary: humans had logic, reason and language; animals did not. The Judeo-Christian tradition asserts humanity's dominion over animals (or beasts) and for Descartes there is a clear sense of superiority of human animals over

non-human, although, even as early as Shakespeare, man is a paragon “of”, not “above”, animals. With the eventual acceptance of Darwinism in the late nineteenth century, there was inevitable erosion of the perceived barrier between the animal kingdom and humankind. A duality developed, that human beings were at the same time both part of the animal kingdom and separate from it, both “us” and “them”, Berger’s “both like and unlike” (4). Animals could define what we are and what we are not. On this level, in the real, natural world, taxonomically, humans are animals, but animals are not human. With written animals, however, such clear-cut assertion is not possible. Written animals are not living animals. They are constructed by a human writer and are motivated and manipulated by human concerns. Matters are complicated by anthropomorphism and zoomorphism, both ways of thinking with and about animals (both human and otherwise) and literary devices with which to express this thinking in writing.

Philosophers Donald Davidson, Jose Luiz Bermudez and Daniel Dennet all argue against animals having higher-order thought. Dennet’s argument is that “the ability to *say* what mental state one is in is *the very basis* of one’s having the higher-order thought that one is in such mental state, and not the other way around...[S]ince animals are incapable of *saying* what they are feeling or thinking, they are incapable of *thinking* that they are feeling or thinking” (“Animal Minds.” I.E.P. 2.a.ii italics in original). Peter Carruthers argues for sophisticated thought being able to occur without language (*ibid.*). Erica Fudge asserts that it is primarily speech that characterizes anthropomorphism, as can be observed in children’s literature and in popular culture. While we can observe that real-world animals do not have human-like speech, they can be observed to communicate and speech can be attributed to animals in fiction as a device. I would argue that it is language in general rather than vocalization specifically that most conventionally humanizes

animals. If animals are portrayed as thinking with language or in being named with language, they are anthropomorphized, made more human, with our linguistic-based form of thinking projected onto them. The animals in *Setting Free the Bears* have their communication translated into language by Irving. They don't speak like some of Murakami's animals but we are granted access to read their minds by their thoughts being translated from "bearish", if such a thing exists, into English. The existence of language, reason, consciousness and thought in animals is conjecture, not unlike the conjecture regarding the mental functioning of humans in comas, vegetative states or suffering from "locked-in" syndrome. We cannot know what or if animals think. Animals transcend language. It is through the ascription of human language, whether that be speech, projected language-like thinking, simplistic conjectural summaries of assumed sensations or simply the granting of a name. Their extra-linguistic nature and consequent ultimate unknowability is advantageous in that we have to actually think with animals rather than just listen or read. We are forced to interpret rather than simply receive. While this kind of complexity and ambiguity makes animals good to think with, the flip-side is the anthropocentrism inherent in anthropomorphism. Fudge cites Thomas Nagel trying to imagine life as a bat: "It will not help...to imagine...one has webbing,...has very poor vision,...perceives the world by...high-frequency sound signals...[I]t tells me only what it would be like for *me* to behave as a bat behaves...[which]is not the question. I want to know what it is like for a *bat* to be a bat" (*Pets* 42 italics in original). Fudge points to the "difference between a bat's experience of its own batness and a human construction of bat-ness" (*ibid.*). The point both Nagel and Fudge are making is that we cannot know an animal mind. We can only guess from our human perspective. We use language to describe and communicate how we think animals think but in so doing we cannot help but anthropomorphize. With that comes the bias of anthropocentrism.

Animal fables and children's literature are full of animals who talk with humans (E.B. White, A.A. Milne, Kenneth Grahame) while examples of talking animals are relatively few in modern adult literature (*Animal Farm*, *Watership Down*, *Beak of the Moon*). In adult fiction, the animals talk to other animals but usually there is a linguistic barrier between non-human animals and people. It is not possible to have talking animals within the realms of realistic fiction. It can occur however in magic realism, such as some of Murakami's work (or in science fiction, speculative fiction, satire such as *Animal Farm* or *Gulliver's Travels* or fantasy). What is possible in more realist fiction is the attribution of linguistically-expressed human thought to animals and a depiction of such. This can be found in, for example, *The Whale Rider* or some of the animals in Irving, especially in *Setting Free the Bears*. So we have animals that think in human language but, in a context of realism, are unable to vocalize their thinking, and animals in children's literature and a small number of adult works, who can speak but only to other non-human animals. It is only in magic realism (or science or speculative fiction, fantasy or satire) that linguistic communication between non-human animals and people can be depicted. Notable examples are *Planet of the Apes*, Murakami's *Kafka on the Shore* and of course Kafka himself. With the suspension of disbelief required to read magic realist fiction comes the opportunity to examine human-animal interaction in a much more direct way than is possible without the animals having been granted the gift of spoken language and inter-species comprehension.

As both Fudge and Doniger assert, it is this granting of linguistic ability that most thoroughly anthropomorphizes animals in both literature and popular culture. The ability to speak or to think in linguistic terms enables an animal to become, in one sense, a person, a character in a work of fiction rather than part of the imagery. Once granted a speaking part or the equivalent of voice-

over narration, an animal is no longer just an extra or a walk-on but a principal player with lines to deliver and a larger role, part of the action, not part of the background scenery. They do, however, take a considerable leap away, in the reader's conceptual awareness, from equivalence to real-world animals. They become demonstratively written animals.

When animals become characters, their influence is much greater. An interesting example is the tiger Richard Parker in Yann Martel's *The Life of Pi*. The tiger neither speaks nor has his thinking directly depicted linguistically. However, his psyche, as perceived by Pi, is so crucial to Pi's survival that Richard Parker becomes a character. He has a human name. It is this human name, not human-like language portraying his thinking, nor human-like speech that a magic realist conceit might allow, which helps in this particular anthropomorphism. Conversely, the self-mutilated Ellen Jamesians in John Irving's *The World According to Garp* are distinctly zoomorphic through the subtraction of language, their tongues severed and their human power of speech relinquished, as indeed is Garp's, although less willingly and temporarily, following his accident. Nothing could be more clear an illustration of the animalization of a human character than the assassin Pooh Percy's tongueless cry of " 'ucking 'ig!" (523).

Doniger adds a corollary to Fudge's view, stating with admirable but arguable simplicity that "sexuality makes humans into animals; language makes animals into humans" (25). I would argue that sexuality is only one component. The zoomorphism of people is characterized by the exaggeration of a variety of animal instincts and behaviours, not restricted to sexuality, but also including, for example, violence arising from territorialism, "fight or flight" reactions to perceived danger, and evolutionary drives geared towards the survival of genes behind such actions as altruism, as championed by Wilson and the sociobiologists. Terry Eagleton refutes an "untenable"

criticism of Freudian psychoanalysis that Freud is a “pan-sexualist” who “brings everything down to sex” arguing that Freud rated sexuality as “central enough to human life to provide a *component* of all our activities” (163 his italics). Sexuality is a component in making humans arguably more animal, as Doniger would have it, but one component among many. Furthermore the relationship between sexuality and animality is more than simply one of cause and effect. Sexuality is extremely complex in humans and other animals, as are issues of gender, preference, attraction and identity. These are all components of the process of zoomorphism, as instantiated in the character of Susie in *The Hotel New Hampshire*. Other arguably “animal” drives and “instincts”, in the Freudian sense, are also components in the zoomorphism of humans in such arenas as furry fandom in the real world and in zoomorphic characters, such as Susie or Murakami’s Sheep Man, in literature. Other than through voyeuristic observation, as portrayed in Sara Gruen’s *Ape House*, and physiological and anatomical studies, it is debatable whether humans are any better qualified to comment on the complexities of animal sexuality than we are on animal language, reason and thought. Perhaps we are more like animals in sexuality than they are like us in language but that seems an extraordinarily sweeping statement to make and one that must surely be restricted to mammals for a start and only a small number of species whose reproductive processes match ours in terms of seasonality and suchlike. Add to that the separation of sexuality and procreation brought about by contraception and the implications of that sociologically and the links between human and animal sexuality seem to grow even more tenuous. As Gillian Beer puts it, for animals the emphasis is on “productivity rather than congress; generation rather than sexual desire” (116). As with other instinctive behaviours, there has been sublimation and repression brought about by human civilization. For Fudge, an arena of zoomorphism in the popular culture of early modern Europe is the Bear Garden, where baiting

took place. She writes of humans “sink[ing] below the level of the beasts” and that “[t]o watch a baiting, to enact anthropocentrism, is to reveal...the animal that lurks beneath the surface. In proving their humanity humans achieve the opposite. The Bear Garden makes humans into animals” (*Perceiving Animals* 15). What O. Schruttt gets up to at night in the Small Mammal House of the Vienna Zoo in Irving’s *Setting Free the Bears* is akin to the “entertainment” of the Bear Garden which “emerges as a place of immense contradictions: the place which reveals the difference between the species also reveals their sameness” (*Ibid.* 19).

While focusing on sexuality and animalistic behaviour highlights the similarities between non-human and human animals, language is the greatest area of difference. Young children of the postmodern age, for all their twenty-first century sophistication, have no issue with accepting talking animals in literature. However, as they mature into adults, their view of animals changes from a naive acceptance of the intersecting model to a realization of otherness to match the Cartesian model, then to a further Darwinian realization of kinship with animals and finally to a mature understanding of the complexities of metaphor and a lack of absolute boundaries. We can follow a similar pattern through these two authors’ works as they grow as thinkers and writers (with animals). There is a set of three parallel tracks here along the cyclical path between the three models. Human thinking with animals has moved conceptually from the intersecting model to the Cartesian to the Darwinian and back to the intersecting. Secondly, the thinking of a child maturing into adulthood follows a similar progression in the way in which animals are understood. Finally, the written animals of the postmodern fiction of Irving and Murakami reflect changes in these authors’ thinking and writing with animals along a similar track.

Anthropomorphism can be viewed negatively, as an arrogant, anthropocentric projection of human values and characteristics onto animals entitled to their own sovereignty and agency. Chimpanzee tea-parties might fall into this category. However, in the constructed world of literature, humanizing animals, making them more easily read by giving them language by which we, as human readers, can more easily identify with them and seek to understand them, is anthropomorphism that is beneficial and illuminating. Simply, it enables us to decode and read written animals. The same can be said for zoomorphism. Seeking to understand the animal nature within humanity can only help to throw light on the ways in which we are the same and the ways in which we differ. If this leads us to explore what could be perceived as humankind's more bestial instincts and behaviours, so be it. When people behave like animals, they can be observed more objectively. "Behaving like animals" is not a necessarily derogatory description. It can mean behaving according to our natural instincts in a positive sense. As our attitudes towards animals become more progressive and more inclusive, so does their representation in literature. As we come to see ourselves more and more as part of the animal kingdom, like the officials at the end of *The Life of Pi*, we prefer the version of the story with the animals. Throughout the interweaving of the "Zoo Watch" sections with the "Notebook" passages in the middle section of *Setting Free the Bears*, where the narrative alternates between relating the often barbaric and dehumanized behaviour of human beings during wartime and the peaceful anthropomorphic nature of the zoo animals despite the machinations of the beastly O. Schrutts, it is clear which species are being presented most sympathetically. Even in the chaos of the freed animals there is little evidence of animals' cruelty to one another but many illustrations of human cruelty to other animals.

The benefits of a non-human animal presence in literature outweigh the drawbacks. Animals can reflect human concerns in a way that the inanimate cannot, whether that be as transmorphic characters or the employment of animals as imagery. As Daston and Mitman put it, people use animals to “symbolize, dramatize, and illuminate aspects of their own experience and fantasies.” Zoomorphism, anthropomorphism and animal imagery all feature extensively in the fiction of John Irving and Haruki Murakami and it is interesting to compare the form and function of animals and the way in which this evolves in the oeuvre of each writer within the different genres of representational and magic realism and within the contexts of Japanese and American literature.

Fudge suggests an east-west split in the way in which human-animal relations are viewed. She argues that the Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation allows for this: “So while there is a link between humans and animals – an animal may have been human in a past life, a human may become an animal in a future life – there remains a sense of superiority and inferiority” (*Animal* 17). She goes on to contradict the question of human-animal superiority in the context of Japan while still retaining the east-west divide:

the challenge offered by the theory of evolution was not experienced throughout the world...[I]n America...creationism turned itself into ‘Creation Science’ to gain credibility, In Japan primatologists accepted evolutionary theory without difficulty. As Frans de Waal has noted, ‘to the Buddhist and Confucian mind, both ideas [of evolution and of humans as descendants of apes] are eminently plausible, even likely, and there is nothing insulting about them...[Q]uestions about animal behaviour [in Japan] were from the start uncontaminated by feelings of superiority and aversion to the attribution of emotions and intentions that paralyzed Western science. (*Ibid.* 20)

In the Japanese context, there is also the influence of animism that sits alongside Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity and especially Shintoism in the spirituality of twenty-first century late-model capitalist Japan. Littlejohn explains Shinto as “essentially a ‘life religion’...primarily concerned with the here and now, the abundance of nature, and human and animal fertility” (90-91). In Japan human and non-human are kindred spirits. Murakami himself cites “Japanese folktales and old stories” as sources (Wray). While in Irving’s North America, and especially in the Bible belt, human is only partially animal (or beast) and animal is certainly not human, in Murakami’s Japan it is possible to hold the belief that human is animal and animal is human.

Murakami’s Sheep Man in *The Wild Sheep Chase* is a far more successful blend of species than Irving’s cycling and dancing bears. The talking cats in *Kafka on the Shore*, allowing for the willing suspension of disbelief that magic realism requires, hold more authenticity and dignity as characters than Irving’s dogs. So do Murakami’s Sheep Man and Superfrog characters. Magic realism allows for animals to talk, significantly eroding the border between animal and human. Murakami’s birds occupy a different realm again, as messengers between the earthly and the ethereal, the conscious and the unconscious, the thinking human and the instinctive animal. They can be seen as neither animal nor human but as go-betweens. The golden beasts, the unicorns in *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* are a physical embodiment of the animal nature of humanity. Magic realism and “Japanimal[ity]” allow for much more expansive use of animals as characters and images to define and explore that which is human and that which is animal within us all (Pflugfelder). Irving’s realism is much more restricted by, among other things, the Judeo-Christian heritage of separating humanity from the beasts and the impermeable parameters of plausibility.

Wherever their origin, whether magical or plausible, animals are good to think, read and write with because of the paradoxes and ambiguities in their relationship to humans, because of the paradoxes and ambiguities between and within domains, kingdoms, phyla, classes, orders, families , genus and species, because of their transcendence of language, and because of their complex nature and inherent furriness.

Animal Liberation and Anthropomorphism in *Setting Free the Bears*

Making sense of Irving's bears involves recognizing their form and function, how they behave on the page and why they are there. In this chapter I adopt a number of angles of critical reading and examine how animal and human concerns are juxtaposed by the use, in the central section of the novel, of alternating narrative threads. This leads into an examination of the historical and geographical context of the novel and how this can temper its reading. The Viennese setting and the Freudian association affects this, as does the way animals operate as archetypes. Language, in the form of imagined speech and names, is a crucial catalyst in anthropomorphism and individualization of animal characters. I also discuss the metaphoric employment of animals and how the physical similarity of bears to humans engenders reader empathy. Sexuality, which is a core feature in Irving's later use of written animals, is another important component. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Irving's interpretation of and debt to, Darwinism.

Setting Free the Bears is an unusual novel, not nearly as well known as Irving's later works. It began as a thesis and became a first novel. It has the feeling of a history dissertation thesis adapted and incorporated into a creative writing thesis project. Strictly realistic in the world it describes, it is, at times, somewhat unlikely or bizarre but it remains within the boundaries of conventional realism. The structure, however, is unconventional in that two narratives are interwoven and two first person narrators are employed. The first third is a road-trip buddy adventure about Siggy Javotnik and Hannes Graff, two Viennese university drop-outs, who buy a motorcycle together and embark on an adventure. For this first section, entitled "Part One: Siggy", Hannes Graff is the narrator, Siggy the protagonist. The middle section, called "Part Two: The

Notebook”, is Siggy’s notebook, found on his body at the time of his death. The fictional Hannes Graff transcribes the contents of the notebook and interweaves the two narratives alternating between “The Highly Selective Autobiography of Siegfried Javotnik” and the numbered “Zoo Watch” chapters because “it was almost impossible to endure either the verbosity of Siggy’s souped-up history or the fanaticism of his frothing zoo watches – if you were to read them whole” (263). Hannes Graff also declares that “Siggy made some obscure connections between his awesome history and his scheme for busting the zoo” (263). Siggy is the narrator of both strands of the notebook. The erroneously titled autobiography is predominantly not about Siggy at all but about his “pre-history”, the lives of his parents, grandparents and influential figures in Austria during the time up to and including the Second World War. The “Zoo Watch” strand is a narrative describing a night spent on reconnaissance in the Vienna Zoo where Siggy witnesses the actions of O. Schrutt, the zoo’s night-time guard, who pits various species of animal against each other in fights, for his own amusement. Siggy plots a zoo-bust. Because of the tight interweaving of the two narrative threads, the reader is led into drawing parallels between the animals of the “Zoo Watch” and the human characters of the “autobiography”. The third and final section, entitled “Setting Them Free”, sees Hannes Graff returned to the role of narrator. He also becomes the protagonist, Siggy having been killed when crashing the motorcycle into a trailer laden with beehives. Hannes Graff and his girlfriend Gallen carry on with the motorcycle odyssey, travelling to Vienna to carry out the zoo-bust that Siggy had planned. They free the bears and other animals and although predictably, a fair degree of carnage ensues, some animals make it symbolically to freedom.

Just as an overview of the unusual narrative structure is relevant to reading the bears and other animals, the context of the novel is relevant to determining different critical perspectives for reading and potential metaphorical interpretations. In analyzing the setting free of the bears and other animals, their literal liberation, acknowledgement of the historical and socio-cultural context is important. *Setting Free the Bears* was published in 1968 when the expansion of the animal rights movement and the development of human-animal studies were still some distance in the future. The novel is set in part around and during the Second World War, but as Terence De Pres puts it: “the book’s main line of action, which culminates in animal apocalypse when the Vienna Zoo is ‘liberated’, takes place in the sixties, which is to say in the far-reaching shadow of World War II”(xii). The continued international occupation made that shadow particularly strong in Vienna. The demographic bulge of the baby boom that came of age and formed the counterculture and protest movement of the late sixties cast the shadow wider. The question of the liberation of female, minority, and homosexual human beings were issues that were to precede any widespread examination of the question of animal liberation. In the late nineteen-sixties, both Europe and the United States were steeped in the emergence and rapid expansion of liberationist ideologies, such as the civil rights movement, second-wave feminism, sexual liberation and the general countercultural zeitgeist.

Racial segregation was a burning issue in America. Second wave feminism, not yet to the fore, is explored to a much greater extent in Irving’s fourth novel, *The World According to Garp*, published some twelve years later after the watershed years of the nineteen-seventies. There is little grist for a feminist theoretical criticism of *Setting Free the Bears* at least insofar as the animals being symbolic of repressed womanhood. With the exception of the overtly masculine

oryx, there is no reference to the gender of the zoo animals. It is more as one element among many, in the context of the general youth counter-cultural and anti-establishment ethos, that feminism can be seen as a concern. The effects of the widespread availability of the contraceptive pill and increased mobility for young people in the late 'sixties are often cited as contributing to the counter-cultural movement. Free love and freedom to roam are part of the "Easy Rider" ideal. This is evident in the casual liaisons with the two young women Wanga and Karlotta during the first zoo visit. Siggy and Hannes Graff are members of this generation looking to unlock the cages of convention and conservatism. They put flowers in their helmets as they circle the city on their zoomorphic "beast" of a motorcycle (10). *Setting Free the Bears* has parallels with the ethos of Ken Kesey's *Merry Pranksters*. The zoo 'bust' is an anarchic act redolent of protest and demonstration, an example of thinking with animals that we animals are all in need of liberation.

Irving makes direct reference to civil rights demonstrations and police actions in the American South, as reported in a newspaper handed to Siggy by the Balkan waiter he had been quizzing about the war. A photo of African-Americans being assaulted with water from fire-hoses suggests a direct parallel with the captive state of the animals in the zoo. Siggy's irony is dry: "Marvelously clean people, the Americans; they wash their black folk with fire hoses" (104). This could be a reference to the parallels between racial segregation in the U.S. and the segregation of species at the zoo as well as an oblique observation with regard to ethnic cleansing. Civil rights for humans in the United States is the literal battle of current events in the late 1960s, with the zoo 'bust' a corresponding metaphor. The role of youth in the counter-culture in Europe and in the U.S. is carefully laid out by Siggy: "I guess if you're twenty-one in 1967, in America, you needn't glut yourself with pre-history; in America I understand that there are crusades every day. But I'm

not in America. I'm in the Old World, and what makes it old isn't that it's had a head start. Any place that's lagging, waiting again for the National Crisis – that's an Old World, and it's often a pity to be young in it" (104-5).

Setting Free the Bears was written around the time that Irving was studying abroad in Vienna, when liberation from Nazi occupation was very much in living memory as was the much more recent withdrawal of Allied "liberation" forces. The city is depicted as full of new hope with symbols of spring, renewal and youth. In "The Notebook" sections of *Setting Free the Bears*, which are interwoven with the narrative of "The Zoo Watch" fragments, the original annexation of Austria is encapsulated in the zoomorphic transformation of Ernst Watzek-Trammer. His streetcar-riding eagle persona is a trussed Austrian eagle, destined to be kept flightless and fettered until the end of the war. The zealous patriot dresses and behaves as a symbolic Austrian eagle as a protest against the Nazi annexation of his beloved Austria. It is a political statement that transforms the chicken farmer into a pie-plate-and-feather-clad symbol of his homeland. Unlike the violence of activists in later Irving novels, the attempted bombing by the radicals in *The Hotel New Hampshire* and the assassination of Garp by the radical Ellen Jamesian, Pooh Percy, this zoomorphism as political activism is peaceful and for show only. He wreaks harmless havoc. Zahn Glanz also dons the eagle suit, becoming, for a time, literally a political animal before fleeing the city. These two men masquerading as birds at large in the city foreshadow the chaos that will ensue when the bears and other zoo animals are set free some thirty years later. These zoomorphic birdmen are potentially simultaneously symbolic of patriotism, liberation, desperation and paradoxically, both entrapment and flight.

Vienna is Hitler's city, Freud's city, the "city of dreams", and Irving's city. In dream interpretation, animals can be symbolic of the id. Irving lived in Vienna as a student and fledgling writer and it is a recurring setting in his later novels. The Freudian dimension of Vienna is more explicitly and extensively addressed in *The World According to Garp* and *The Hotel New Hampshire*, the influence of Hitler and Nazism in *Setting Free the Bears*. A motivating factor in the plot to free the animals is as a response to Siggy, and later Hannes, observing the inhumane treatment the animals suffer at the hands of O. Schrutts. The zoo 'bust' plot is interspersed with an historical narrative describing the fate of Austria and central Europe during and after the Second World War, the young Irving fictionalizing history and historicizing fiction. The zoo is the central image of the novel, the animals employed on one level as emblems of entrapment and ultimately liberation. Their imprisonment and ill-treatment at the hands of the Hitleresque zookeeper, O. Schrutts, can certainly be read as historical fable. Because of the way that the "Zoo Watch" and "Notebook" sections of the novel are alternated, it is easy to draw a parallel between O. Schrutts' machinations and those of A. Hitler and others with respect to various ethnic groups and nationalities of human-animals in central Europe in the earlier half of the twentieth century. O.Schrutts invades and annexes, pits one group against each other, teasing and torturing. As Siggy observes, "O. Schrutts has gone too far" (202), "O. Schrutts knows no bounds" (204) and earlier, a connection with Nazism is made: "I know where he's come from, though. Twenty or more years ago – it's common history what various O. Schrutts were up to...After how many atrocities to previous small mammals, how very fitting that old O. should end up here" (197-8).

With regard to context then, one of the principal considerations is the setting in Vienna reflecting back on the Second World War, the time when a real zoo 'bust' was attempted. The

second contextual consideration is the counter-cultural youth-driven zeitgeist of the late nineteen-sixties with its focus on liberationist ideologies. The revolutionary anti-establishment spirit of the two narrator/protagonists is expressed in their desire to free the bears. Not only the individual animals, but the main narrative thread of the novel, the zoo 'bust', can be read as a metaphor for social liberationism. The setting free of the bears takes place in nineteen-sixties Vienna but is symbolically linked to the widespread freeing-up of thought and culture across Europe and the United States in the latter half of the twentieth century. The ambiguous animals can be read to represent minorities.

The bears in *Setting Free the Bears* don't have individual names. They are representatives of a species rather than human-like individuals. Gabriel Miller identifies them as symbolizing distinct elements of animal nature: "Here the reader is introduced to the 'Famous Asiatic Black Bears', symbolic in the novel of ultimate brutality and described as 'unfamiliar with compromise'. This species [is] contrasted with the 'Rare Spectacled Bears' who represent the more socializing impulses of harmony and appeasement" (28). In the context of the interweaving of the "Zoo Watch" sections with "The Notebook", which traces the course of the Second World War, Chamberlain's "appeasement" is a carefully-chosen word. For Miller the two species of bear reflect human rationality at opposite ends of the spectrum, the deterrent of aggression pitted against the new order of making love, not war. Hitler was unfamiliar with compromise. The post-war baby-boomer hippy generation, as exemplified by Siggy and Hannes, embraces "harmony and appeasement". The Famous Asiatic Black Bear's day has passed. He meets his end in the fracas of the zoo bust. The final image of the book is of the Rare Spectacled Bears, those hippy harbingers heading for the hills, the final sentence, "I expect to hear great things of the Rare Spectacled Bears"

(340). They are the new order anthropomorphized. There is more to be heard of bears in “The Pension Grillparzer”, *The Hotel New Hampshire* and *Last Night in Twisted River*. *The Hotel New Hampshire* both opens and closes with an image of a bear.

In *Setting Free the Bears*, Irving begins playing with anthropomorphic techniques, progressing only part way down that path. The animals in the zoo are individualized but not named, which allows them to retain their animal form and a degree of dignity. They are not pets or Disney-esque characters but written representations of wild animals in captivity, naturalistic animals wholly believable to adult readers, not clothes-wearing or talking animals of children’s literature. Individualization is a better term than anthropomorphism for the way the bears appear on the page. They are responsive and reasoning but still animal. They have individual identities but not human equivalency. This is achieved by individualizing without speech.

Another way in which language assists the anthropomorphism process is in the naming of animals. With the growth of animal advocacy and as animal behavioural psychology has evolved into ethology, it is becoming more usual to identify individual animals by name rather than number, to recognize their individuality, and to be wary of “anthropodenial” (an aversion to recognizing the human characteristics shared with animals), recognizing in animals “a complex and familiar inner life”(de Waal). Mitman writes of the clout of “pachyderm personalities” (175). As he and Daston put it, “animal personalities move the public and politicians more effectively than wildlife statistics” (6). Siegel identifies the requirement of film-makers for leading characters among non-human animal subjects. Animal individuality is a principal focus of leaders in ethology such as “Leakey’s angels”, Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey and Birute Galdikas. They communicate with, live with, and name the animals they think with and study. With primates, the anthropomorphic

shift required is not large. People are primates and other primates look like us. Bears also need a smaller leap of identity to become identifiably human than antelopes, mammals a much smaller shift than jellyfish. The more human-like a species, the more easily it engenders empathy. Evolutionary relatedness or phylogeny is part of the reason, but as Daston and Mitman point out, so is domestication. For anthropomorphism, “chimps and dogs are prime candidates, amoebas and eels are not” (11).

Bears are particularly well-suited to anthropomorphism and this similarity has been noted and exploited for a long time. Fudge cites a twelfth century bestiary where the bear is presented “through its likeness to the human...The anthropocentrism...is clear: animals are studied because they allow us to say things about humans and human lives” (*Perceiving Animals* 93). Many bear species are roughly the same size and shape as humans, so much so that a person in a bear-suit can plausibly pass as a bear, as is the case with Susie in *The Hotel New Hampshire*. Bears have forward-facing eyes, near-vestigial tails and they can stand upright on their hind legs, thus resembling human beings. These factors are conducive to what Des Pres identifies as Irving’s “fellow feeling” for animals (xii). Where they are not particularly human in their facial structure, they most nearly resemble a dog, the animal with which people are probably the most intimately acquainted. Consequently, they seem familiar and friendly and frequently appear in literature and popular culture. Some examples from literature and popular culture that readily spring to mind are Winnie the Pooh, Paddington, Rupert, the Three Bears, Baloo, Yogi, Smokey, the Berenstain Bears, the Care Bears and the Hair Bears. They appeal to children as friendly, not fierce. They are furry, rotund and cuddly like the ubiquitous archetypal teddy-bear and they all speak. Anthropomorphism takes place when animals take on human characteristics and abilities, most

notably, as identified by Fudge, the power of speech. Children are more willing to accept a talking animal such as those of A.A.Milne, Rudyard Kipling, Kenneth Graeme or E.B.White. For adults, talking animals are only acceptable analogously in fables such as Aesop or satire such as *Animal Farm* or *Gulliver's Travels*. These bears, unlike Irving's, are implausible. Irving's bears do not speak. Nor do they put out forest fires like Smokey or save drowning piglets like Pooh. Irving's later bears push the boundaries with their riding of unicycles and motorcycles and their role as performers, but in this first novel they behave as bears in a zoo do and as one would expect freed bears would. In strictly plausible realist fiction, animals can only be anthropomorphic to the extent where they are still believable.

The similarities between bears and humans are intended to attract reader empathy. Irving declares: "In my fiction I've always felt that as soon as I get the bear on stage, everything is all right; I can focus the reader's attention in specific ways, maybe because most readers are quicker to show sympathy for animals than for other humans" (Sheppard 7). Irving believes that readers will always identify with a bear without the same reservations they have in accepting the foibles of his human characters. An Irving bear is a kind of furry everyman with which readers can identify without prejudice. Naming grants an individual identity if not a human-like personality. Irving's later bears have names (State o'Maine/Earl and Duna). The bears in *Setting Free the Bears* are known only by their species name, a partial step in anthropomorphism and individualization. Similarly, some of the human characters ("the Balkan waiter", "the patriot", "the chicken-farmer") are referred to by grouping rather than by individual names or identities. Irving, at times, seems to view people (and other animals) as members of a group or subculture rather than individuals. This is evident in his much later novel, *A Son of the Circus*, where human characters are variously

described by their religion or occupation rather than their name. Similarly, the animals in *Setting Free the Bears* are only partially anthropomorphic, and likewise only partially individualized. They are representatives of their species with each species, or, at least, each of the example animals of each of these species, represented as having particular characteristics. Identifying animals by species, and in this case subdividing bears into various sub-species, grants them some kind of identity, albeit a group one. Grouping humans together by ethnicity or occupation achieves the same end result but coming from the opposite direction, a zoomorphic-like shift from named human individual to member of a sub-species, in this case a culturally-defined one. This is similar to the archetypal animal characters found in fables such as Aesop, in *Animal Farm* and in children's literature. Daston and Mitman explain that "a clutter of individuating detail" (9) accompanies human characters and that "substituting animals as actors [which] strips the characterizations down to prototypes" (9) is beneficial to delivering a clear moral or message.

Opinion on the desirability of anthropomorphism in ethology, thinking, literature and popular culture has shifted. Accordingly, in *Setting Free the Bears*, written in 1968, Irving's bears are identified by species. For *The World According to Garp* in 1978 and *The Hotel New Hampshire* in 1981, the bears have names. Individualization and anthropomorphism were once seen as disruptive to the impersonal, dispassionate impartiality required by science. This has changed. Naming and identifying individual animals as human-like, especially with respect to advocacy for their legal and moral rights, is now condoned. This is a step beyond what Daston and Mitman identify as the "default assumption" of similarity between humans and animals whereby "post-Darwin anthropomorphism became almost synonymous with anecdote and sloth and opposed to scientific rigor and care" (3). Frans de Waal explains: "To endow animals with human emotions

has long been a scientific taboo. But if we do not, we risk missing something fundamental, about both animals and us" (1). Modern recognition of animal "personalities" is based on observational ethology, not anthropocentrism, anthropodenial, or scientific "sloth". A scientific and an animal liberationist conceptual model of the relationship between real-world humans and animals is one of intersecting domains. Written animals always contain the element of the human writer so are necessarily conceived in the same way. In literature, as in science, naming animals, with the degree of individualization and anthropomorphism that this entails, has become an acceptable norm.

Representation of animals in literature by no means always incorporates anthropomorphism or zoomorphism. Written animals can retain their animal shape in all respects. They can be characters, pets, performing or working animals, symbolic, or simply present as part of the setting. A degree of conjecture is inevitable in that an author is necessarily a human-animal who cannot claim to intimately know or be able to represent the mind of an animal, but overt projection of human characteristics can be avoided. There is an example in *The Cider House Rules*: a lynx that Homer observes on a snow-covered hillside after his return to St Cloud's. The lynx very clearly stands for Homer: its "helplessness on the ice" (423) and its "sideways descent" (423) are metaphors for Homer's inevitable return to St Cloud's. Like the lynx, Homer's fate is determined by nature. This animal appears fleetingly as a simple metaphor, an animal representing a human, its position and fate parallel to Homer's but still wholly animal. There is conjecture as to the nature of its instinctual operation but no projection or imposition of human characteristics or qualities. There is no going inside its head but it is still good to think with as an object of metaphor.

Irving wants his readers to think with animals in the manner of Daston and Mitman and Levi-Strauss. He likes to “get the bear on stage” (Sheppard 7). The evolution in the way that people think both with and about animals is reflected in the representation of animals in literature, of writing with animals. Written animals are different from living animals. We read them less freely than we can gaze at them in a zoo or in the wild although we do bring our archetypal preconceptions, preferences, prejudices and outside experiences. Unlike human characters, who can have their inner selves revealed through dialogue, in the case of animals, only subjective description is possible. Every element of a written animal is created by a writer and the interpretation of that text is tempered by the input of the reader. Both writer and reader are human, so there is much projection of human interpretation onto the representation of animals and conjecture as to what the motivation and psychological workings of animals might be. In a “written animal”, the “animal” part may be animal but the “written” part is human. Written animals therefore always occupy a zone where animals and humans converge. Modern thinking has dismissed the notion of a distinct mutually exclusive Cartesian split between humans and other animals. In the literary representation of animals the overlap between human and animal is even greater. Written animals are necessarily more human than real animals, inviting us to think with them as we read them in a text which has been written with animals as part of the language. Thinking with animals occurs at both the productive and receptive ends of the chain of communication. As with a telephone signal, it is necessary to convert the animals to another form, in this case language, in order to transport them across the gap between writer and reader. The animals are not as fully fleshed as human characters but they are sentient, animate, and, to varying degrees, individualized. With ambiguity, there is, on one hand, unknowability but on the other, a lack of human clutter.

Cartesian dogma denies the existence of an animal mind on the basis of a lack of language and therefore reason. Animal liberationist theory disputes the reasoning. The view of a reasonable modern human-animal is that a lack of linguistic expression is insufficient reason to write off the animal kingdom as unreasoning. Dumb animals in one sense are not dumb animals in the other. Furthermore, animals such as birds and whales clearly communicate with each other using sound but not in a form readily described as language, the term “song” often being used, a good example of anthropocentric projection and condescension. Scent, gesture and posture are also used for communication. Lack of language does not necessarily mean a lack of reason but it does present some obstacles not the least being how to represent animal thinking or “brutal reasoning”, as Fudge might term it, in written form. How can we effectively *think* with animals when we cannot *talk* with them? We have to talk *for* them, which is dangerously anthropocentric and presumptive as it implies that, to some degree, we are attempting to also *think* for them.

As progressive and alternative as *Setting Free the Bears* may have been, it dabbles neither in psychedelia nor in magic realism and, although veering into the unlikely or implausible, it stops short of the impossible, animals literally talking. In all but one short passage Irving stops short of giving the animals any human-like capacity to communicate. Initially, Hannes Graff's presence is “passed along the animals' grapevine” (382) but there is no indication as to whether that is at a linguistic or even audible level. A human interpretation is given to the walrus' vocalizations and the giraffe's “radar”. Anthropomorphism occurs but the utterances are not linguistic. The walrus belches. Giraffes are largely silent within the range audible to human beings. Irving represents the giraffe's language, which he expresses in English as being achieved by the giraffe's “radar”. Human language is superimposed on the animals' communication:

The terrible Asiatic Black Bear deafened the zoo.

“God, what’s *that?*” said Gallen.

“BROP!” said the endlessly belching walrus. “That’s our terrifying leader. That’s who it is.”

The giraffe now transfixed me with his neck. “How could you?” his radar asked. “How could you even have considered it? (382).

Shortly after, Graff makes noises to the monkeys, who respond. Gallen comments: “‘I didn’t know...that you knew how to talk to monkeys.’ But I thought: It’s clearly a matter of them knowing how to talk to me. And make me one of them” (383). Here is the fulfillment of Fudge’s prescription for anthropomorphism, the walrus, the giraffe and the monkeys having acquired an approximation of human language. However, it is only an approximation and it is projected and subject to interpretation. Irving goes so far as to explicitly attribute at least one of the zoo animals with thought: “The famous Asiatic Black Bear is *thinking!* I thought. Or plotting”(327). The bear, the human character and the author are all thinking and plotting with animals. There is both projection and conjecture. The bear appears to Hannes Graff to be thinking. This is both conjecture on Graff’s part and Graff projecting his own thinking on to the bear, and narrating this in the form of reported thought, which is, in turn, being related by the author. Attribution of language further enhances anthropomorphism while animal agency and “animality” are retained. With the Asiatic Black Bear, whose “thinking” Irving italicizes for emphasis, the terms “thinking” and “plotting” suggest human-like reasoning, expressed by the author and the narrator in words, by the bear in its posture and ritualized pacing. The writer and the reader are thinking with the

bear and in so doing we are considering “something fundamental, about both animals and us” (de Waal 1).

When humans write with animals the greatest obstacle is language. While there has been extensive research into communication with other animals, using, for example, sign language with chimpanzees and bonobos, there has been limited success in achieving human-like communication. The desire to succeed at inter-species communication even by supposedly dispassionate scientists is great but it is apparent that a large degree of wishful thinking and over-interpretation clouds scientific rigour. Fudge gives the example of Clever Hans, a horse renowned for an alleged ability to calculate (*Animal* 113). His trainer subconsciously gave him cues with body language when he counted to the correct answer. Fudge cites similar issues with experimental programmes involving communication with apes using sign-language (*Animal* 123). Human sign-language users noted a tendency among researchers to over-interpret every movement as a deliberate sign. One particularly ridiculous example was a researcher interpreting what they read as a sign for “nipple” signifying the ape’s intention to communicate “people” because the words sounded alike (*Animal* 123). No matter how much we might want to be able to talk with animals, there are no Doctor Dolittles. Gesture, body-language and ritual behaviour, such as grooming among primates, can allow for some human understanding of the thinking and behaviour of animals but the language barrier is a particularly impermeable one. Berger asserts that in communication between humans, “even if the encounter is hostile and no words are used (even if the two speak different languages), the *existence* [his italics] of language allows that at least one of them, if not both mutually, is confirmed by the other. Language allows men to reckon with each other as with themselves” (5). Language would allow humans to “reckon with” or better “think with” animals and as Fudge and

Doniger argue, with language comes anthropomorphism. Writers use language to make animals more effective vehicles for human concerns.

Any representation of animals in literature involves a combination of projection and conjecture. On one hand, we project a human outlook and human concerns onto written animals. On the other hand, writers attempt to represent the animality of animals. Writers can make animals perform rather than speak. Irving declares that “[b]ears may seem more significant in my books than they really are. I would be embarrassed to claim any significance to an animal about which I know so little” (Sheppard 7). While Irving plays down their significance, it is difficult to ignore their presence. In *The World According to Garp*, in authorial self-parody, Garp’s literary opus closely resembles Irving’s. A review of one of Garp’s early books criticizes Garp for “still writing about bears. Perhaps when he grows up he’ll write something about people” (190). By writing about bears he *is* writing about people. Irving is aware of the proliferation of bears but unapologetic. Sheppard purports that “an Irving bear is a pathetic creature whose strength and dignity are ridiculed by its overriding need to perform.” (7). This is more applicable to Irving’s later bears, Duna and State o’Maine/Earl, who are anthropomorphized by their cycle-riding. There is, however, the germ of this performing bear concept in *Setting Free the Bears*, not so much of performance per se, but of being exhibited. Citing a particularly appropriate example of a preconception of “performance”, Daston and Mitman state categorically that “[t]hinking with animals casts animals in performances. By this we do not just mean bears riding bicycles...[b]ut we do mean outward spectacle, a way of making something abstract, hidden or conjectural, visible and concrete” (12). The bears are not so much “performing”, in the usual sense, as appearing in captivity and on display which, in itself, threatens their strength and dignity. When bears

“perform”, they are thrust on stage before us and we have no choice but to use them to think with. A performing bear represents the need to perform that Sheppard identifies and a desire for approval in animals, both human and otherwise, in general, and writers in particular, as much as in bears. We cannot know if the bears themselves want to perform or to be set free. That desire is conjecture and projection on the part of the narrators, Siggy and Hannes Graff, the author Irving, and animal liberationists or zoo visitors who might question the desirability or ethics of animal captivity. It is debatable that we can assume that an animal that is receiving food and water, medical care, opportunity to breed, a degree of recreation, protection from predators and a consequent longer life expectancy in captivity than in the wild would express, if they could, a desire to be set free. We can think with animals but not for them.

In order for the reader or zoo visitor to feel empathy towards an animal, there needs to be some injustice, some violation of rights being seen to be done. The way in which O. Schruttt stages fights between animals, particularly in the case of those who would otherwise never encounter each other, is inherently unfair, a form of bullying, an example of human cruelty to animals. We, the human readers, side with the non-human animals and identify with the narrators' outrage at the animal abuse and abuse of power on the part of the despicable O. Schruttt. The animals are an oppressed group with whom we can empathize. Empathy is engendered without language, without anthropomorphism. O. Schruttt holds all the keys and can taunt and torment from his position of ultimate authority. It is only in the human witnessing of his atrocities that they can become known. The animals are a minority who cannot speak for themselves. They can only be spoken for by a human agent, by Siggy and Graff within the narrative, and by Irving in connecting them with us, the readers. We empathize with the animals and are

reminded of our own animal status. Animal empathy is a vital element in furthering the cause of animal liberation. The more that similarities between human animals and non-human animals are recognized, the more we as people feel impelled to grant similar rights. Anthropomorphism can be a valuable tool in the propaganda for the cause of animal advocacy. Philip Armstrong and Erica Fudge both refer to the film *Bambi*, which Armstrong identifies as “surely a high-water mark of sentimental iconography” (225). Such is human nature that people are much more likely to respond to the dewy eyes of a deer or bear than a rat. Charity begins at home. Bears, as stated, are inherently anthropomorphic and consequently engender empathy in human animals, hence Irving’s expressed impatience to “get the bear on stage” (Sheppard 7).

This reader-as-animal phenomenon also occurs in interpreting the oryx, an antelope-like creature whose spectacular testicular adornments are dwelled on at some length. The oryx can be read to represent the burgeoning sexuality of the two protagonists. While much is made of the Famous Asiatic Black Bear’s initial capture from the wild and subsequent subjugation, the oryx was born in captivity and is, like the boys, yet to experience sexual liberation. A peripheral character, Hinley Gouch, known only for being the initial captor of the Asiatic Black Bear, resurfaces later in the novel when Siggy’s notebook reports that “Hinley Gouch hated animals on the loose having so long and self-righteously denied the animal in himself” (85). At this point Siggy has conducted his reconnaissance of the zoo and, contemptuous of Hannes Graff’s animal lust for Gallen, is fighting with his own Hinley Gouch-like repression, denying the animal in *himself*. “Denying the animal” is a phrase that provides a chapter title in *Setting Free the Bears*. In *The World According to Garp*, Irving again uses an animal image to represent sexual lust, describing Garp’s examination

of Helen's lingerie drawer as "like a bear holding a great trough of food in his forepaws, and then losing himself in it" (338).

In *Setting Free the Bears*, the oryx functions as a none-too-subtle symbol of the boys' more animal urges. Their animal sexuality is also manifested in a zoomorphism to balance the anthropomorphism that surrounds the zoo animals, the bears in particular. In accordance with Doniger's prescription, they become animal in their attitude and approach to sexuality. The anthropomorphism of the animals, it should be reiterated, is subtle and reasonable. The animals are readable and elicit human empathy but they are not caricatured, satiric, or in any way unrealistically depicted. On the other hand, the zoomorphism that surrounds the boys' sexuality is somewhat laboured. Irving dwells on the physical prominence of the oryx's reproductive equipment: "a bull from just under his buttocks he was, all the way to the knots on his lean knees" (15). A boy runs from the oryx enclosure gesturing and hollering. The delicate Wanga is protected from exposure to the oryx. Karlotta "would be one of us – marked for life; to remember always having seen the oryx "(19). Irving wants to acknowledge sexuality as part of the shared world of human and non-human animals but deals with it coyly. The oryx's reproductive equipment is prominent but unexplored, an elephant (or parts of one) in the room.

The young Irving is equally oblique in equating orgasm with sneezing and in the mating animal metaphors employed in the description of the consummation of Graff and Gallen's relationship with its mountain stags, thin ice on the edge of frozen streams and timid galloping does, an example of "sentimental iconography" (Armstrong 225). Des Pres comments on how Irving "acknowledge[s] the animal dimension of being" (xii). In this sex scene Irving tries to show how, as Doniger asserts, sexuality brings out what could be seen as "the animal dimension of

being” but, in trying to depict the tenderness of young love and sexual initiation in some sort of sylvan idyll, the prose becomes clichéd and the animal references seem a little silly. These metaphoric animals in the Freudian dream world of the young Graff are nowhere near as convincing as the literal ones in the zoo. These are animals which exist only in Hannes Graff’s unconscious as opposed to those in the zoo which interact with many characters and are more available to connect with the reader. The dream deer are less effective because they are two-dimensional tokens, pastoral clichés. The more rounded, three-dimensional, fully-fleshed animals in the Vienna zoo are less sentimentally characterized and are more substantial animals with which to think.

This aspect of “denying the animal” does not continue beyond Irving’s first novel. Sex and sexuality are very much to the fore in Irving’s later novels. It is as if he first explores the human nature of animals in *Setting Free the Bears* and then the animal nature of humans. The oryx and the deer in *Setting Free the Bears* are Irving’s first tentative steps into attempting to convey sexuality, something which he does successfully in later works. Siggy and Hannes identify with the oryx and we are urged to not deny the animal within. Cartesian dualism states that there are bodily appetites and passions involving aggression, violence, sexuality and where the body-as-machine acts independently. This is often associated in our thinking as non-human animality but this is not necessarily true. They could just as easily be described as human urges or appetites. To view them as “animal” can absolve responsibility or maintain an anthropocentric sense of superiority. In *Setting Free the Bears*, the inter-weaving of Gallen and Hannes Graff’s sex scene with images of the courtship behaviour of wildlife draws a parallel between animal and human sexuality. There is, however, rationalization and discussion that goes on between the two

characters, with their sexual union clearly being an act involving reason and emotion as well as purely “animal” appetites. When human language enters the picture (a mutual declaration of love) “[i]t was the only part that felt at all forced – or seemed remembered from a history of necessary prefixes that we didn’t use quite naturally between us” (287.) Their minds and bodies are not so much split as working in tandem.

Irving’s playing with anthropomorphic techniques sits comfortably alongside an advocacy of animal rights. The term “animal advocacy” is, in this context, preferable to the potentially confusing use of the term “animal liberation” movement, given that Irving’s novel refers to a literal liberation of zoo animals. Either way, thinking and writing about animals in a manner that clearly recognizes their individuality and ability to think and to reason to some level, while stopping short of actual human-like spoken language, helps to engage the reader in this understanding of animals which, may in turn, lead to a recognition of rights and a need for liberation. While recognizing that which is human in animals and that which is animal in humans is largely beneficial for animal advocacy, the area where literary anthropomorphism, in this case, is detrimental to the cause may be in the less than successful, and in some cases fatal, outcomes of the zoo ‘bust’. The champions of anthropomorphism, the bears, are successful in their liberation. The Rare Spectacled Bears, of whom we “expect to hear great things” (340) are last seen heading for the hills. The Famous Asiatic Bear is left to exact revenge on the Machiavellian O. Schrutt. The antelopes, however, including the oryx, perish at the hands of other animals, both human and otherwise. The flip-side of captivity is protection. The zoo ‘bust’ is ultimately disastrous. Far more animals die than reach survivable freedom. What started as a Merry Prankster-like escapade of anarchic flower-bearing hippies wanting to free the animals in the zoo, as an expression of their own countercultural

exuberance as much as anything, ends in horrific bloodshed. Released into an environment in which they are ill-prepared, the zoo animals are killed by each other or by vigilante groups of human animals. Here, the urban, human environment is one for which they are ill-suited, hence Des Pres's "animal apocalypse" (xii). He describes the freeing of the animals "some to eat, some to be eaten" (xii) in fatalist terms and describes how "to see things this way,...to behold life as foredoomed...the novelist becomes...as T.S. Garp [and presumably Irving] will say of himself, 'a doctor who sees only terminal cases'" (xii). Irving himself, writing in 2012, of Des Pres's 1980 introduction to *3 by Irving*, states simply: "No overview of my novels is more insightful... It holds up" ("A Note from John").

The boys, in conceiving and carrying out Siggy's plan, are guilty of over-anthropomorphism, attributing the animals with too much agency, too much individuality, too much human-like equality. What they fail to realize in contemplating and carrying out the zoo bust is the inevitability of the resulting bloodbath. Anthropomorphism and its companion anthropocentrism can be read as symptoms of human arrogance and speciesism and in this sense are at odds with animal rights. Literal liberation or emancipation is not the same as the gaining of real rights appropriate for animals. If we draw an historical equivalent with human history, segregation, discrimination and lack of equal opportunity lingered long after the abolition of slavery. Opening the cage door is only the first step in setting free the animals. What happens in the narrative of *Setting Free the Bears*, liberating animals into a hostile environment to which they are ill-adapted, is not so much a progressive step for animal rights as an ill-directed if well-intentioned demonstration of anti-establishment sentiment. In the parlance of the sixties, Siggy and Graff, while intent on "sticking it to the man", succeed only in taking it out on the animals. The arrogance and anthropocentrism of

anthropomorphism is, in this sense, at odds with the rights of animals, principally the right to a natural animal existence and not to be exploited or endangered. This arrogant anthropomorphism is the other side of the literary anthropomorphism that can be used as a positive force in engendering empathy and understanding and furthering the cause of animal advocacy.

Since the acceptance of Darwinist evolutionism, the prevailing conceptual model of the relationship between human and non-human animals is the one suggested by those very terms, “human animals” and “non-human animals”, not the mutually exclusive (and non-inclusive) “man” and “beast” or “human being” and animal”. *Homo sapiens sapiens* is a subset of *Animalia*. We are a type of animal, not a separate entity. There are many implications of this, not the least of which is the recognition that animal behaviour and human behaviour are, in many areas, one and the same thing. There are two main areas where a distinction can be made, the diagnostic features that place us within the human-animal group. The first, as discussed, is language. The second crucial distinction is that non-human animals adapt to their environment but, for the most part, do not, as human-animals do, attempt to adapt their environment to themselves, in other than the simplest of nest-building or implementation of very primitive tools. Social insects are perhaps the exception and it is interesting that they feature as the cause of Siggy’s death. The bees, inadvertently set free, kill Siggy, in much the same way that the zoo animals, as was “natural”, killed their liberator in the true story of the attempted freeing of the animals from the Vienna Zoo towards the end of the Second World War.: “ ‘I understand,’ [Siggy]... said ‘that whoever it was ended up like a lamb chop’ ” (249). Irving seems fascinated by the event, referring to it in both *The 158lb Marriage* and *The World According to Garp*. There is a blunt description in the latter: “When the anarchist frees them, they eat him. That was only natural” (188). The laws of the jungle still

apply on the city streets. In their best interests, when bears are set free, it should be into an environment to which they are suited.

For Irving, endings are all-important. He begins by writing the concluding sentence, the ultimate destination of the novel (“John Irving’s Twenty Year Sentence”). *Setting Free the Bears* ends with the successfully liberated Rare Spectacled Bears, encountered heading into the forest. They are already automatically anthropomorphic in that they are spectacled. Successful anthropomorphism without denigration and successful liberation without enhanced danger are positive outcomes. The final sentence is succinct: “I expect to hear great things of the Rare Spectacled Bears” (340). For *Setting Free the Bears*, it is an enduring ending image. Furthermore, the line anticipates the role of bears in Irving’s later fiction. Bears have been identified as animals that are very clearly both “them” and “us” and this is to be exploited in further fiction. So far, the extent to which the bears have been made human has been restricted by their captivity in a zoo. Set free, there is the potential for them to become more human, as we will see in the trained bears and the bear-suited human who are to appear in the later novels. In what is, after all, Irving’s first novel, he is beginning to play with anthropomorphism and incorporation of the “animal dimension of being”, experimenting with attribution of language and representation of sexuality in acknowledging the closeness of human and non-human animals. Simply, the bears have been set free.

Anthropomorphism and Zoomorphism: Bears in *The Hotel New Hampshire*

Bears reappear in *The Hotel New Hampshire*, in the form of the anthropomorphic, motorcycle-riding State o' Maine/Earl and the zoomorphic Susie, a woman in a bear suit. These bears are much more prominent than those in Irving's first novel. John's mother declares: "I don't know what the bear is *for*...so I couldn't guess what it could be *like*" (212). The how and why of these bears, what they are like, their form, and what they are for, their function, is the subject of this chapter. These bears are much more conventionally anthropomorphic and operate in more human domains than their caged predecessors in *Setting Free the Bears*. This chapter develops and expands the analysis of these more fully-fleshed bears, building on the discoveries of the previous chapter. It begins by discussing the precursor to *The Hotel New Hampshire*, "The Pension Grillparzer", looks at the fairy-tale nature of *The Hotel New Hampshire*, at language and other forms of communication such as smell, posture and animal noises and at sexuality and Freudianism and discusses to what extent all of these contribute to transmorphosis and how and why these various elements make Irving's animals good to think with. Irving has set free the bears at the climax of his first novel. Now we will see where he goes with them, and what the great things are that he expects us to hear of them.

The first bear in *The Hotel New Hampshire* enters, humanly, by motorcycle and boat, accompanied by his trainer, who is nick-named Freud. From the very beginning *The Hotel New Hampshire* cries out for a Freudian reading. By this, I mean a reading whereby the text is treated like a patient who is the subject of psychoanalysis with consideration for concepts such as id, ego and superego, sex drive as a vital instinct determining behavior, Oedipal complex, wish fulfillment,

the pleasure principle, penis envy, oral, anal, latent, phallic and genital stages of development, dreams as suppressed and altered desires, Freudian slips – the range of Freudian analysis that has become part of everyday twenty-first century culture. Jungian archetypes also have their place. Terry Eagleton sums up the work of psychoanalysis “in one of Freud’s own slogans: ‘Where id was, there shall ego be’ “(160). With a patient under psychoanalysis, the aim is to bring the instinctive “animal” id to the surface. Reading animals psychoanalytically in Irving’s Freudian works has similar aims. As with *Setting Free the Bears*, “The Pension Grillparzer” and much of *The Hotel New Hampshire* are set in Vienna, Freud’s city. There is a strong Freudian dimension to the dream-reading sequences in “The Pension Grillparzer”, although the dream animals are horses rather than bears while a bear roams the corridors of the waking world. The bear-trainer Freud in *The Hotel New Hampshire* is later referred to by John Berry, the narrator, and the other members of the family, as “our Freud” in contrast to “the other Freud” (Sigmund). When ambiguity occurs, it is clearly deliberate. In a 1981 interview with Gabriel Miller, Irving admits to “being a great fan of [Sigmund] Freud.” (196). Miller states that “animals in fairy tales usually stand for the id, or animal nature in Freudian terms. This has been the case in Irving’s fiction as well, the bears, especially in *Setting Free the Bears*, representing the wilder, more aggressive aspects of personality” (137).

A Freudian reading of animals logically segues into a discussion of sexuality and the relationship between childhood and anthropomorphism before examining animality and the body, in particular the sense of smell, and the posture and sounds of animals, which are utilized to portray the animality of humans as well as the humanity of animals. Smell, posture and sound are animal means of communication and incorporating them into fiction is less anthropocentric than

making animals talk or think in language. Zoomorphism also takes place when humans are seen to be engaging in these more “animal” means of communication.

“The Pension Grillparzer” is a short story embedded in *The World According to Garp*, attributed to the fictitious Garp. It precedes *The Hotel New Hampshire* and can be read as a developing ground for the bear motif as well as for the hotel setting. In “The Pensioner Grillparzer”, the Cartesian outlook of Johanna is pitted against the Freudian world view of the other characters. It explores the bear’s attempt to adapt to a human world and the leading characters’ attempt to adapt to hotels in a way that is developed further in *The Hotel New Hampshire*. “The Pension Grillparzer” tells of a visit by the narrator and his hotel-inspecting family to a small hotel in Europe. Before arriving at the eponymous pension they learn of “a suspicion of animals...What unheard-of perversion is that?...A beast of a man sneaking about in disguise! Up to what? It’s a man in a bear suit, I know it is” (99). The narrator is first to encounter the suspected bear: “there were no claws...if a bear had claws, you would see them...A domestic bear, perhaps. At least – by its presence in the W.C. – a housebroken bear. For by its smell I could tell it was no man in a bear suit; it was all bear. It was a real bear” (108). Whether zoomorphic, an imposter in a bear suit, or an actual anthropomorphic housebroken bear, this bear is a decidedly human-like bear that evokes the intersecting model of humanity and animality. In comparison to *The Hotel New Hampshire*’s more fully-fleshed State o’Maine/Earl, this bear, Duna, is a figure of pathos, a bear whose animal spirit has been broken. He is, it transpires, a real bear who lives a semi-human domesticated life, perhaps no less a “perversion” (99) than a bear-suited human. He is “housebroken”, his animal spirit broken, confined to the urban pension. State o’Maine, by comparison, roams the spacious grounds of the Hotel Arbuthnot-by-the-Sea. Duna rides a unicycle, a circus-like

parody of upright posture, a clown-like imitation of a human. State o'Maine/Earl travels by motorcycle, an ursine spirit "born to be wild". Duna is more akin to the archetypal Eastern European performing bear, a wild animal enslaved, demeaned and degraded. He has become institutionalized and lives a sad semi-human life in the company of his adopted family. Apart from being an object of pathos, he is a symbol of failure to adapt and failure to improve, reflecting Irving's view of Vienna in particular and the old world of Europe in general. State o'Maine/Earl's adaptation to a human environment, while still imperfect, is more successful than Duna's, which is also redolent of hopelessness akin to the pension's doomed attempts at reclassification.

Duna also operates as an object of suspicion and fear, the uncivilized wildness of nature which threatens the grandmother, Johanna, in particular. The pension is, for her, an uncivilized place where bears and men who, against the laws of nature, walk on their hands and read other people's dreams, roam the corridors, a dark Freudian world of dreams and animals. A dichotomy develops between Johanna's affinity for civilization and dominant superego in conflict with the id and accompanying validation of the wild, the exotic, and the animal that the other characters embrace. Johanna remarks, having discovered evidence of the bear's having been in the car, that the pension's classification should be way below a Class C: "They have fallen past Z...They have disappeared from the human alphabet" (126). For this character there is a line between human and animal that should not be crossed. She has even less tolerance for the possibility of a man in a bear suit than a real bear. Hers is a Cartesian outlook on the relative places of humans and animals. The rest of the family is more forgiving and more Freudian in their outlook. For Johanna, however, the two worlds should remain discrete. Johanna is no friend of Freud, neither the close association between the id and animality nor the presence and significance of animals in dreams.

The bear's demise comes, when, in his old age, as a charity case at the zoo, he develops a rash and has to be shaved. Naked and vulnerable, like State o' Maine, Duna is "too old" and too humanized to be a bear anymore. A human can be called a "naked ape", a product of gradual evolution, but the term "shaved bear" suggests too rapid a transition, too engineered an evolution. "A shaved bear, one zoo official said, is embarrassed to death" (128). Both shaving and clothing animals are steps too far in anthropomorphism, demeaning and anthropocentric.

If, as Fudge intimates, speech is a key requirement for anthropomorphism, Duna largely remains an animal as he has no linguistic capability. However, he lives inside, travels by car, rides a unicycle, uses a toilet. This is human behaviour. He is not caged like the bears of the previous novel. He is in a hotel, an environment in which he can roam a little but to which he is no less ill-adapted. In *The Hotel New Hampshire*, John declares: "the first of my father's illusions was that bears could survive the life lived by human beings, and the second was that human beings could survive a life led in hotels" (70). Both of these illusions relate to existence in an environment to which the subject is ill-suited and struggles to adapt. That a bear could survive a life lived by human beings led in hotels is a double illusion. The inadaptability of this bear to a human life foreshadows that of the bears, both real and human, in *The Hotel New Hampshire*.

The Hotel New Hampshire is a fairy tale-like family saga and coming-of-age story about the Berry family, perhaps a play-on-words on "beary". It begins in flashback with Win and Mary ("Father" and "Mother" to the narrator John) falling in love while working at a hotel the summer after leaving school. They meet Freud, the bear-trainer and State o' Maine/Earl, the bear. After having five children (Frank, Franny, John, Lilly and Egg), they open the first Hotel New Hampshire in the town of Dairy. Franny is raped by Chipper Dove and two other footballers. On the same day

the family dog, Sorrow, is euthanased; he is later resurrected through taxidermy. Freud invites the family to Vienna to help him run the second Hotel New Hampshire with his “smart bear”, Susie, a young woman who wears a bear suit as a way of dealing with her rape. Mother and Egg die in a plane crash. The others live in Vienna through their adolescent years among the prostitutes and political radicals who inhabit the hotel. A mutual incestuous attraction develops between John and Franny. Franny has a sexual relationship with Susie and with Ernst, the pornographer radical. The radicals plot to blow up the Opera but are foiled heroically by Freud and the family. Lilly writes a best-selling book about the first Hotel New Hampshire. They return to the United States where Franny and John resolve their sexual attraction and the family exacts revenge on Chipper through a threatened bear-rape. Lilly commits suicide. The novel ends with the family purchasing the Hotel Arbuthnot-by-the-Sea, where the parents had met. It becomes a rape crisis centre run by Susie who marries John and retires the bear costume. They live happily ever after in what becomes the third Hotel New Hampshire.

The Hotel New Hampshire is both Freudian and a fairy tale and features bears in both a fabulous fairy tale opening and a happy ending. Bears are prominent and it is clear that we can think and write about people by thinking and writing about bears. They are empowered, literally so, in the case of the bear and the motorcycle. They are fairy-tale bears and “smart bears” although Freud’s “smart bear” turns out to be human. Zoomorphism, Susie’s response to rape, empowers her, evoking a “noble beast” motif, humans and animals linked by sexuality among other “animal” drives. In the absence of a bear in the middle section of the novel, Sorrow, the dog, serves as a versatile animal place-holder, a stand-in bear, a Garp-like Under Toad and a Churchillian black dog. In a Freudian way, Sorrow variously represents death, childhood and the

scatological. His stuffed state represents the human manipulation of animals, shape-shifting going beyond anthropomorphism as Sorrow's ominous presence takes on a number of forms. The physical manipulation of Sorrow is a form of anthropomorphism not requiring language. Sorrow is effective despite being dead and stuffed for much of the novel and odiferous when alive. Smell is a recurring motif, important for humans as well as animals. Communication through smell and animal noises, rather than human language, is connected with zoomorphism and links humans and animals.

While the bears of the title of Irving's first novel were largely peripheral, the bears in *The Hotel New Hampshire* are central, empowered characters. State o'Maine/Earl is even more anthropomorphic than Duna. Susie is zoomorphic, a woman in a bear suit. Early on, the reader meets the motorcycle-riding bear known initially as "State o'Maine" and later as "Earl". Some editions of the novel have a picture of the bear and the motorcycle on the cover and it was an image used in the promotion of the movie. A bear riding a motorcycle is a strikingly anthropomorphic image. A bear on a motorcycle is a step beyond a bear on a unicycle. This is a bear more engaged in the human world, a more empowered bear with more autonomy. This is not a beast-machine but a *beast-on-a-machine*.

The novel opens with Win Berry recounting the family fable of the bear. Harter and Thompson assert that *The Hotel New Hampshire* is "by design and structure...a modern fairy tale..." where "Irving secures his identity as fabulist" (103). A written, fictionalized, fabulous, domesticated bear is anthropomorphic on three levels and on all three is best suited to a reading under an intersecting conceptual model. Whether read as a figure in fable, a fairytale or a Freudian dream-story, this bear is anthropomorphic in the manner of a childhood story, although

he does not speak. A bear can dance, ride unicycles or motorcycles, but so long as he doesn't speak, he remains plausible within a realist narrative. It is as young children that the Berrys briefly know State o'Maine but mostly they know of him as family folklore. John recalls the line with which his father usually began the story: "He was too old to be a bear anymore" (4). Demarcation between animal and human is furry. The bear is linked with a motorcycle, from which he is inseparable. *Setting Free the Bears* opened with a zoomorphized "beast beneath you" motorcycle contrasted with the caged, un-named and only partially individualized, more generic bears of the Vienna zoo. By comparison, State o'Maine/Earl is much more anthropomorphic. He is connected strongly to the motorcycle, a fellow non-human at large in the human world of civilization as represented by hotels. So closely aligned are they, that the bear's fur is stuck to the motorcycle with corresponding patches of hairlessness on the bear. Both the bear and the motorcycle represent passion, emotion and instinct as subconscious elements of the human condition, "the beast beneath you."

Both the form and the function of the bears are principal concerns. John dreams of his mother's death and of his father promising that there will be no more bears. Not so in the waking world. Susie the bear is going to play a major part in their lives. Freud and the bear in Vienna are the topic of the conversation (Irving's italics):

"Do you *like* Freud?" I asked her.

"I don't really *know* Freud," Mother said.

"But Father likes him," I said.

"Your Father likes him," Mother said, "but he doesn't really know him, either."

“What do you think the bear will be like?” I asked her.

“I don’t know what the bear is *for*,” Mother whispered, “so I couldn’t guess what it could be *like*.”

“What *could* it be for?” I asked, but she shrugged again – perhaps remembering what Earl had been like, and trying to remember what Earl had been *for*” (212).

In answer to the questions, the bear is both *like* and unlike a human. The bear is *for* examining the inherent paradoxes and ambiguities in this. The ambiguity in “knowing Freud” must be deliberate. The concern for what bears are for (their function) and what they are like (their form) is an indication that the characters themselves and the author are thinking *with* animals as well as *about* them and encouraging the reader to do likewise, to focus on the simultaneous differences and similarities. Mother dies before she learns what the bear is for. For John, and for Franny, growing up, especially coming to terms with sexuality, will be in connection with Susie the bear and, as with Garp, with Freud’s Vienna. For John, if not for Franny, State o’Maine/Earl was the sexless teddy bear of childhood. For both of them, Susie is the embodiment of adult sexuality and their saviour from their drives towards incest.

As Franny puts it on the very first page: “Mother and Father simply didn’t discover sex until after the old man got that bear” (1). Psychoanalysis of *The Hotel New Hampshire* and other Irving novels would certainly include a discussion of what the bears are for and like. An animal liberationist reading would also include an analysis of what both Freuds are like and for. From the first page, the role of the bear as a symbol of the “animal” sexual nature of humans is established.

For Franny, bears mean sex. State o'Maine in his role in Franny's perception of her parents' courtship, and Susie the bear in her post-rape counseling and courting of Franny, are manifestations of that. For Franny, bears represent the sexuality that, for Doniger, makes people into animals. For John, sexuality is less animal and more human, symptomatic of (to borrow the words of Margaret Atwood) "the fall from seasonal mating into an incessant sexual twitching" (188) that separates humanity from animality. Human and animal sexuality can be compared but cannot be equated. *Setting Free the Bears* linked sexuality and animality simplistically and perhaps naively. The simplicity of the argument is demonstrated in *The Water Method Man*, where it is bluntly stated that "animals inspired sexual notions" (326). In *The Hotel New Hampshire* Irving's linkage of the two concepts is complicated and more complex than Doniger's simplistic equative assertion. Sex makes *some* people more animal, some less so. For example, sexuality makes Susie more animal in a positive sense, more instinctive, truer to human-animal nature. Ernst, while claiming animal authenticity, exploits and perverts sexuality in a human way, more removed from natural animal behavior.

The other half of Doniger's theory, that language makes animals human, is reflected in the bear's name. As State o'Maine grows older and regresses to a more naturalistic animal state of being, his name is changed to simply "Earl", a phonetic rendering of his animal language. The only language with which he is attributed, his name, has changed from an English phrase to a bearish growl. His identity is moving away from anthropomorphism and back into the woods. Conversely, Susie becomes more verbal, more human as she de-zoomorphizes and re-anthropomorphizes and sheds her bear-suit.

Bears also represent the fairy-tale nature of the novel. State o'Maine/Earl is not present in the main body of the story but only in the family fairy-tale mythology. The back-story is a fairy-tale within a fairy-tale. It is while watching the bear dance (animal as human) that the parents first come together (humans as animals). The bear, like the Gatsby-esque man in the white dinner jacket, is a mythical feature of lost youth and innocence. He dies before any of the children can know him as intimately as they will know Susie. Children readily accept and identify with animals in fables and literature as in life. Gail Melson puts it clearly: "Animals were so *there* [her italics] as part of the woof and web of childhood...that I had never noticed them" (4). The Berry children live with animals always *there*: Earl, Sorrow, Susie, Sacher, Fred and Four. They love the story of the bear, exhibiting a degree of Freudian infantile zoophilia, perhaps symptomatic of their hesitancy to grow up. Freud (the psychoanalyst, not the bear trainer) writes of how children relate to animals:

The child does not yet show any trace of the pride which afterwards moves the adult civilized man to set a sharp dividing line between his own nature and that of all other animals. The child unhesitatingly attributes full equality to animals: he probably feels himself more closely related to the animal than to the undoubtedly mysterious adult, in the freedom with which he acknowledges his needs (50).

This is particularly the case with the Berrys because their father is absent through much of their early childhood. The bear is their adult male role model. Due in part to their close exposure to State o'Maine/Earl and Sorrow, they lack inhibition and exhibit an animalistic fascination with the scatological. When the bear dies, as John explains, it was "very confusing to us – why this man, home from Harvard, and home from the war, should be dissolved in tears, hugging our old bear" (46). The children are more familiar with the bear than they are with their father who has

been engaged elsewhere in the adult spheres of war and university, worlds which are more ethereal and foreign to the Berry children than the gritty, tactile reality of “the bear’s presence – the stiff feel of his fur, the heat of his fruity and mud-like breath, the dead-geranium and urine smell of him” (46). This Freudian children’s affinity with animals can also be seen later in the novel in the way that the Berry children relate to Sorrow, both as a living animal and as a stuffed emblem of animality and impending danger. Sorrow, after taxidermy, becomes a symbol of death and menace, in many ways resembling the Under Toad from *The World According to Garp*. For children, there is a naïve intersecting model at work in the conceptual understanding of interaction and movement between the human and non-human animal worlds. It is accepted as wholly plausible and without the potential complications of language or sexuality which come with adulthood. The ubiquity of animals in children’s literature suggests that we have an innate affinity for them and can identify and empathise instinctively. We can add the factors of familiarity, simplicity, and lack of the clutter of the adult world.

From a Freudian perspective, growing up involves recognizing the “sharp dividing line” between animal and human (Freud 50). State o’Maine/Earl and Sorrow have important roles in this. Once the children grow up, the domestic animal of their household is no longer a real animal masquerading as a human or a posed dead animal but a human dressed as an animal. Lilly’s euphemism for the process of writing is “trying to grow” (295) and the semi-autobiographical novel which she eventually finishes is titled “Trying to Grow”, something with which they all struggle. Eric Berne’s Transactional Analysis, which builds on Freud’s psychodynamic model, may be useful. I would suggest that children unquestioningly accept an intersecting conceptual model allowing for talking animals. Maturing into adulthood, they become aware of differences between

humans and animals. They move to a Darwinian understanding of how humans are a subset of animals and eventually evolve into the fascination, identified by both Berger and Fudge, with the paradox of being both alike and unlike, as represented by the intersecting model. In the parent stage, shades of grey are acknowledged. It is a cyclical path. A child reads or is read stories with anthropomorphic animals, moves away from them as an adult but returns to them as a parent. Similarly, *The Hotel New Hampshire* ends with John urging Susie to don the bear suit one last time in order to make an impression on some visiting children. As a soon-to-be parent, it is his belief that every child needs to see a bear at least once, thinking with animals not merely good but essential. This resembles the Parent-Adult-Child model as presented in Berne's *Games People Play*.

Growing up is a central theme in the novel. Win Berry resists growing up and assuming responsibility as an adult and parent until the bear has grown too old to perform. It is only after the death of the bear, ironically shot, almost as a rite of passage by a boy who presumed the bear was wild, that Father can move into the adult world, the world of hotels. When Freud leaves, selling the motorcycle and bear to the young Win, he enigmatically advises Mary to "forgive" Win. The forgiveness is for the bear and what it represents in Win: his id, his wildness, his immaturity. Win tours logging camps with the performing bear until the bear gets "too old to be a bear anymore". Win finally grows up and becomes "Father". He is too old to be *with* a bear anymore and he adopts a more adult and more human lifestyle.

In an adult world, a "smart" bear is a human bear. In John's dream foretelling his mother's death Win promises there will be no more bears. This is soon undermined. There is another bear, Susie, and a continuation of a fairy tale existence. Susie enters the story when Freud contacts Win, urging him to bring his family to Vienna. "I FINALLY GOT A SMART BEAR" telegrams Freud. This

“smart” bear is to be a major character in the story, an altered human being disturbed and damaged by rape, who adopts an ursine identity as a way of dealing with it. The telegrams continue: “YOU’LL LIKE THE BEAR. A SMART BEAR MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE...REMEMBER MIRACLES DON’T GET BUILT IN A NIGHT BUT IN A COUPLE NIGHTS EVEN BEARS CAN BE QUEENS” (177). The promised bear is a symbol of exoticism, a reincarnation of the wildness, the id that State o’Maine/Earl represented. The Berrys don’t yet know that this “smart bear” is not a bear, but a human dressed as one, exoticism supplanted by absurdity. They are underwhelmed to learn that the bear has a mundane English name: “‘A bear named *Susie*?’ ” Frank said. He seemed irritated that it wasn’t a German name, or that it was a female bear. It was a disappointment to most of us, I think – a kind of anticlimax before we’d really got started” (202). Part of an animal’s appeal is its otherness and exoticism, features which spark imagination. *Susie*’s American college-age familiarity beneath the suit aids identification, especially for Franny. The combination in one character of exoticism and familiarity make *Susie*, “a smart bear”, an ideal mentor for the main characters and representation to the reader of the fascinating paradox of human and animal.

A bear in captivity has neither dignity nor exoticism. The dashing of the family’s hopes of encountering the truly exotic in a bear called *Susie* is foreshadowed in the fleeting glimpse of the circus bear moving into the first Hotel New Hampshire. The children regard the “perfectly ordinary animals” (204). This bear is a truly pathetic creature: “In a gray cage, with nothing painted on it, a dark figure sat swaying in place, rocking to some sad inner tune... ‘That’s a bear?’ Franny said. It was mostly a dog and pony circus, it seemed – with one ape and one disappointing bear: mere tokens towards the exotic hopefulness in us all” (204). State o’Maine/Earl is a wild spirit, a bear with autonomy and dignity despite his domestication, more in partnership, first

with Freud and then with Win, part of a cross-species business deal. The circus bear sees this symbolism undermined. This bear, like Duna, has gone beyond anthropomorphism and, even sadder than a dancing bear, has become a rocking bear, institutionalized and psychotic, its animal nature subjugated beyond redemption, a shadow of a bear. The reader, like the Berrys, anticipates the nature of the third bear that awaits them in Vienna, a “smart” bear.

Arriving in Vienna, the Berrys discover Susie is a woman in a bear suit Freud makes clear the distinction, in his mind, between animal and human:

“There are no smart bears,” Freud said, ominously. “Except this kind” ...We regarded Susie the bear – a smart bear, indeed; and a Seeing Eye bear, too. Knowing she was not a real bear suddenly made her appear larger; she took on new power before us. She was more than Freud’s eyes, we thought; she might be his heart and mind, too (214).

Again, we have animal as id. Irving comments in an interview with Gabriel Miller: “The second bear [Susie] is no real bear. It’s the bear in us, or something.” (195) Susie’s bearishness is her internal animal nature, in part her sexuality, which emerges when Frank and John witness her with Franny, tellingly as half-bear and half-woman. As Franny clearly signposts, “Maybe there’s a *bear* inside her that wants to get out” (379). Earlier in the novel, Junior Jones comforts Franny after the rape by asserting that the rapists never touched the “you in you”. Franny’s quest for that “you in you”, her id and her sexual self, through her liaisons with first Susie, then Ernst and ultimately her own brother, is in some ways a search for her animal self as Doniger and Freud might have it. It is Franny, after all, who originally asserts that her parents didn’t “discover sex” (1) until the bear appeared. Referring back to the conversation between John and his mother, for Franny, that is what the bear is *for*, to introduce animal sexuality first to her parents and later to herself as she

recovers from her rape. Irving's employment of characters who address the boundaries of human and animal is similar to his employment of transgender characters in other novels such as *In One Person*. Those characters inspire consideration of gender and sexuality. Animals and transomorphic beings inspire consideration of humanity and animality.

The bear-trainer Freud writes: "ALL VIENNA IS AN ELABORATE JOB OF CONCEALING SEXUAL REALITY. THIS IS WHY PROSTITUTION IS LEGAL. THIS IS WHY WE BELIEVE IN BEARS" (207). Freud's odd English and telegram language results in a humorous but succinctly sagacious juxtaposition of assertions. For Freud, bears and prostitutes, each in their own way, are the embodiment of human sexuality, which he sees as being repressed in and by Vienna. Franny's wounded sexuality undergoes a process of healing in Freud's city. "Franny with Susie the bear" (283) is top of the list of what Frank remembers of Vienna. Both he and John identify Susie in the scene as resembling Sorrow, the Sorrow of many poses, the Sorrow that "floats" (276). The "song Susie the bear ma[kes] Franny sing" is brought about by "a headless bear lapping there...like an animal eating from a fresh kill, like an animal drinking in the heart of a forest" (274). It is a crucial scene rich in both animal and sexual imagery. Franny's initiation into adult sexuality as she recovers from the trauma of her rape is with a headless she-bear, the zoomorphic Susie.

While sexuality is seen as libidinous, instinctive and "animal", rape and pornography are human constructs. Becoming a bear, Susie's response to rape, empowers her, evoking a "noble beast" motif. The typical Irving-esque central act of violence, "both physical and psychological" in *The Hotel New Hampshire* is Franny's rape (Lounsberry). It happens in the dark woods, a world of bestial malevolence. Sheppard describes the novel as "a fairy tale dealing explicitly with rape, incest, prostitution and terrorism. Imagine the Brothers Grimm without the dense mythological

overlay” (2). Rape, prostitution and terrorism are adult human constructs, drives of the libido overlaid with commerce and politics. One principal concern of the novel is how Franny moves on from the rape. She attempts, despite the brutishness of her initiation into adult sexuality, to grow up through lesbianism, quasi-bestiality, and incest. As Doniger would have it, sexuality animalizes both John and Franny, but in the direction of an animality that is free of the ugly human violence and male oppression of Chipper Dove or political dogma of the terrorist-pornographer Ernst.

Becoming a bear as a response to her rape empowers Susie. She becomes the beast beneath. Chipper Dove’s rape of Franny is avenged by the Berrys’ bear-in-heat psychodrama. For Chipper, the impending rape is animal but we know that Susie is inside the bear suit. The other overt depiction of sex as an animal act regards the terrorist-pornographer Ernst, for whom sex and violence are intertwined. His zoomorphic interpretation of sex, gleaned from the *Kama Sutra*, is depicted as repugnant. For Chipper and Ernst, “brutality” offers revenge: “I wanted to see Ernst in the cow position – with a cow! And in the elephant position! With you know what.” (316). Susie’s “animal” sexuality, on the other hand, is sympathetically portrayed. She is a gentle sexual bear but with Ernst, the violence is the repugnant element and animal sexuality comes close to crossing the line to bestiality as in Chipper’s imagined ursine rape, a step too far in reading the intersection between species. With Chipper Dove and Ernst, the animal dimension of sexuality is both brutal and alienating but with Susie, in her liaisons with first Franny and then John, it seems wholly natural and liberating, the ministrations of a gentle bear. It seems, ironically, that the “brutality” associated with sexual behaviours such as pornography and rape is human rather than animal. Irving explores the paradoxes and complexities of sexuality in relation to human behavior and

animality to a much greater depth than previously. The linear link between sexuality and animality in *Setting Free the Bears* seems two-dimensional in comparison.

Susie's ursinity is also Franny's saviour. Susie encapsulates a sense of empowerment redolent of second-wave feminism, another strong independent female character, picking up where the Jenny Fields and Roberta Muldoons of *The World According to Garp* left off. This is revealed as soon as we discover she is "'a girl in a bear suit!' 'A woman,' Susie said. 'Watch it.' It was only 1957; Suzie was a bear ahead of her time" (239). Susie is a smart bear and a feminist bear. She is also a survivor of rape. She criticizes Franny's inability to deal with the rape, to "own" it. As a bear, Susie can engage with the world as a non-human. She eventually retires the bear costume and goes on to run a rape-crisis centre, writing "there is no one way that victims respond and adjust to this crisis"(217). Becoming a bear works for her and it works for Freud. She is his "enforcer", maintaining order in the hotel. Susie offers "bearish protection" to the prostitutes and terrorists, who, after all, deal in the animal worlds of sex, lust, territorial disputes and violence. Susie comments on her potency as a bear: "I'm not really so tough, but no one tries to fight a bear... No one fights back if you're a bear" (220). State o'Maine/Earl, unless someone comes between him and his beast-machine motor-cycle, is non-threatening. Duna is declawed and housebroken, domesticated. The bear of "Fritz's Act" circus is truly pathetic. When Irving's bears anthropomorphize, they lose their wildness, their inherent savagery. The zoomorphic Susie is the opposite. As people zoomorphize, like Susie or the second mole-man in Irving's *A Widow for One Year*, they can become dangerous and feared. People disguised as animals are confronting and lead the reader to consider, complicate and question the "animal" nature of human beings.

Zoomorphism is imaginative, requiring a conceptual leap. Lilly has this to say: “You can make fun of Susie because she’s afraid to be a human being and...deal...with other human beings...but you’ll have to admit it takes imagination” (263). Susie counsels Franny and in time they become lovers. Following the terror of her rape at the hands of a human male, Franny discovers her sexuality with a female bear. Franny eventually marries Junior. Susie marries John, after his and Franny’s battle with their incestuous animal urges has been won. At the end, Franny is pregnant but, unable to progress from adult to parent state, decides to give the child to John and Susie in a truly fairy tale ending. Miller sees their relationship as “Beauty and the Beast”:

Although Irving insists here, as elsewhere, that sex without love and devotion is animal-like, he recognizes also that the animal aspects of human nature can be charming and non-threatening (as in fairy tales). As Susie’s story proves, one’s animal nature must be befriended and respected if its beastly, destructive instincts are to be controlled and subdued to the development of the total personality (172).

However, I would argue that Irving is suggesting that destructive instincts related to sexuality are primarily human, evoking a fairy-tale noble beast motif. Animal sexuality, such as the sylvan imagery in *Setting Free the Bears*, is portrayed as pure and natural, but human civilization has the potential to pervert it, as we see with Chipper and Ernst in *The Hotel New Hampshire*.

Dogs, as well as bears, play important parts for Irving. Dogs are much more common as pets than bears. Many readers may more readily identify with less anthropomorphic but more familiar dogs than exotic bears. Between the death of State o’Maine/Earl and the appearance of Susie, the animal place in *The Hotel New Hampshire* is held by Sorrow, the dog. While the first Hotel New Hampshire is being established, there is no bear, only the bear-like dog, Sorrow. Irving-

esquely, there is a dark undercurrent of impending violent malevolence. John and Frank, on encountering Franny and Susie in an animalistic bear-suited romp, are both deeply affected. They see a marked resemblance between Susie the bear and Sorrow the dog, the harbinger of doom, and make a Freudian connection between sex and death. John and Frank foresee another disaster like the rape, the grandfather's heart attack and the plane crash, all linked to the emblematic Sorrow. The bomb is the eventual fulfillment of that prophecy. Irving employs animal imagery: "as weighty as Sorrow, that bomb was as big as a bear" (337). Sorrow, both as a living creature and as a stuffed specimen, is an ominous animal presence like the Under Toad in *The World According to Garp*. The Under Toad and Sorrow represent doom in the form of accidents and assassinations, rapes and bombs. They differ in that the Under Toad is a figment of Garp's son's imagination, a Freudian dream-animal from the unconscious, whereas Sorrow has a physical presence, initially as a living dog and then as a taxidermied animal, allowing for much greater reaction on the part of the human characters who are obliged to confront Sorrow in the flesh. While the Under Toad lurks beneath the surface, Sorrow floats, literally in marking the location of the plane crash and in the bathtub, and also metaphorically, an animal angel of doom, a Churchillian "black dog" whose presence hovers menacingly throughout the novel. "Sorrow floats." is a repeated phrase throughout the novel, serving to remind and reiterate that in the world according to Irving, although it is comic, tragedy is never very far away. The phrase "Sorrow floats", the references to the dog, and his reappearances in a number of taxidermized poses maintain this motif. In this way, Sorrow is a "repressed punning reminder" (Shostak 51). The Berrys are wary of Sorrow in his various poses. Although inanimate, he is, in a sense, larger than life. Sorrow is multi-dimensional, emblematic and ambiguous and like the Under Toad, permeates the novel as an anthropomorphic and emblematic presence.

Sorrow represents animality, death and childhood. His unrestrained nature is underlined: "Sorrow was dreadful to smell; ...seemed viler to me, too, than my faint memory of the foul odors of Earl [the bear]" (57). Franny however, adores him. The night of Franny's rape is Halloween. An atmosphere of the danger of cruelty to both humans and animals prevails: "It had been another Halloween when [a] cow had been led to the...swimming pool,...and drowned" (89). As they run through the fairy-tale-like woods, Franny wishes to John that the dog was with them. As John sees it: "Sorrow *will* be with us, I thought – knowing what Franny didn't know: that Father had taken Sorrow to the vet's this very day, to have the old dog put to sleep" (90-91) because of his "terminal flatulence" (91). The dog is put down the same day Franny is raped. Bizarrely, Frank, an amateur taxidermist, stuffs and mounts Sorrow, who becomes a symbol both of death and of the underlying animal nature of human beings. Miller explains:

Sorrow...was a dog who could not control his instinctual nature; in Irving's universe, the failure to harness such urges, to control and understand them, leads inevitably to death. In this tale of growing up, it is necessary for the children to confront the baser aspects of themselves and others. Only by facing the unpleasantness that Sorrow represents...will they be able eventually to understand and control it (p150).

Ultimately, John and Franny come to "understand and control" the "instinctual nature" of their incestuous attraction to one another. As Miller suggests, it is only "by facing the unpleasantness", "confronting the baser" (or more animal) "aspects" of themselves, that they are able to move on and grow up. Miller relies on a regressive and restrictive interpretation of animality akin to Doniger's simplistic association of animality with sexuality. My own reading would see Sorrow, and the animality with which he is associated, in more ambiguous terms. Among other things, Sorrow

functions as an emblem of childhood, his arbitrarily enforced death akin to Franny's rape and loss of innocence. Frank and Egg's determination to keep the dead dog signify a desire to cling to childhood, a time when we think freely with animals.

As a stuffed animal, Sorrow is neither animal nor human but a synthetic object of animal origin. This places the preserved dog very much in the converging zone of animal and human. It is human intervention that places him in an attack pose, that re-animalizes what is now a lifeless object, but through the representation of a lust for predation, not sexuality. Frank's repressed anger at Franny's rape and the mud-puddle incident of homophobia that degraded him is manifested in Sorrow's attack pose. Iowa Bob has a nightmare premonition of Sorrow appearing in his room: "But he didn't *look* like Sorrow. He looked like he wanted to *kill* me" (p134). That is exactly what happens. A closet door springs open and the stuffed Sorrow flies out causing Iowa Bob to drop dead. "The dog's hackles were drawn back farther than I ever saw old Sorrow's hackles drawn back when Sorrow had been alive...*This* Sorrow meant business" (137). Dogs communicate with posture but this is human-imposed posture. In death, Sorrow becomes a posed animal as well as a written animal, an example of humans thinking and writing with and literally manipulating animals.

The manipulation or arrangement of animals involves a subject-object relationship, more of a moving *of* animals than a "thinking *with*". Human-manipulated animals lose their autonomy and become human instruments. Daston and Mitman, in examining the moral dimension of anthropomorphism in relation to the advocacy of animal rights, surmise that if anthropomorphism is "invalid – a childish illusion or a self-centred projection" (4), it follows that "humans would no longer be justified in using animals as stage props to act out certain ways of being human" (5). This

leads them to ask if we can “ever really think *with* animals?” (5). They question whether, in the light of changing human attitudes to animals, animals have become “like that of the taxidermist’s craft, little more than a human-sculpted object in which the animal’s glass eye merely reflects our own projections” (5). Sorrow in many ways encompasses this sense of artificiality. As a “human-sculpted object” he has a much greater role as a dead, stuffed animal, reflecting our projections, than as a live dog. Euthanized for “terminal flatulence”, he is also an object lesson in human-imposed suppression of animality. Sorrow’s inability, in older age, to live up to Win Berry’s illusions that animals can survive lives lived as humans and can therefore survive lives led in hotels, leads to his death. Frank’s perception that Sorrow’s inanimate presence comforts Franny leads to his being stuffed and mounted. The posed state of Sorrow, no longer a living, farting dog, but “a human-sculpted object”, is integral to Franny’s inconsolability following her rape, to Iowa Bob’s death, to Egg’s eccentricity and to Mother’s and Egg’s death. Sorrow represents different things to different characters at different times. His role is many-faceted. Manipulated by the characters, he reflects their projections in the various poses that are imposed.

Furthermore, the various taxidermic poses of Sorrow give him a life after death. After Sorrow is thrown out, Egg retrieves him: “Egg would be the retriever of Sorrow, in more than one sense. Retrieving Sorrow is a kind of religion, too” (150). Sorrow, who represents the death of the animate, both human and animal, becomes Egg’s harbinger, in that way resembling the Under Toad. The dead dog causes further havoc including delaying John’s initiation into adult sexuality when Bitty faints on discovering Sorrow in the bath-tub. He is re-mounted less aggressively, becoming Egg’s constant companion. Egg’s plane crashes and the wreckage is found because of what looks like a dog swimming. John comments: “This knowledge of what led the rescue crew to

the bodies came as no surprise...Sorrow floats...[W]e must all watch out for whatever form Sorrow would take *next*; we must learn to recognize the different poses” (206). Reading the poses introduces another layer to reading the written animals. Posture is a form of animal language but also the manipulative interpretation of the taxidermist. John describes the departure to Vienna: “my last look caught Egg in motion, struggling to run among the midgets, Sorrow held like an idol above his head – an animal for all those other, *ordinary* animals to worship” (204). Sorrow is an extraordinary animal, central and influential beyond death. A stuffed, posed dog is a unique central character.

“Sorrow floats” is a refrain reminding us that when the animal within us is not acknowledged, danger looms. Like the Under Toad, he resurfaces when there is danger or death in the offing. When the terrorists plot to blow up the Opera, the threat is described with animal images: “sitting among them was surely the shape Frank and I had seen in the car...that animal shape of death, that mechanical bear, that dog’s head of chemistry, that electrical charge of sorrow” and later, “that bomb was as weighty as Sorrow, that bomb was as big as a bear” (284). The remaining members of the family remain vigilant, always on the lookout for any sign of the reappearance of the symbolic Sorrow. John asks: “Hadn’t Sorrow taught us to be on guard, to look *everywhere*? Sorrow can take any shape in the world” (325). Whether it is Sorrow the dog or the Under Toad, a transmorphic figure makes a more readily identifiable symbol than a faceless feeling. Transmorphism gives body to an abstract notion creating a being with which to think. Manipulation is a form of anthropomorphism that does not require language. For most of *The Hotel New Hampshire*, Sorrow is dead, a human interpretation projected onto the preserved skin and bones. Sorrow is no longer an animal but an object, an inanimate ex-animal locked in an

artificial pose, an object that can be either humanized or re-animalized. Neither of these processes requires the attribution of language or sexuality that Fudge and Doniger have nominated as the main ingredients in transmorphosis. Unlike the interaction that occurs between characters, whether human or animal, characters react to Sorrow, who acts as a catalyst. A rare dead dog, Sorrow illustrates the diversity and versatility of animals in writing.

A virtue of animals is their versatility. We can live and think with them in a variety of ways, and as Fudge says, “thinking and living are never separate” (*Pets* 13). Domestic animals have an important role; they “help us to construct who we are” (*Pets* 110). After Win Berry is blinded, he acquires a seeing-eye dog. The dog functions not only as a guide but to take the place as companion of State o’Maine/Earl, Sorrow and the now-retired de-zoomorphized Susie. As he says, “I need an animal around...[j]ust make sure it in no way resembles Sorrow”(393). Man and dog operate together as a team, almost like a single creature while simultaneously alike and different. Win outlives each of the dogs. While Susie is a unique human-turned-bear-turned-human and Sorrow an anthropomorphic and re-animalized pet, the seeing-eye dogs are depicted with successively less individuality. The fourth dog doesn’t even have a name. It is simply “Four”. Loss of language has restored human to animal to object. In Sorrow’s case, his language was, in life, largely gestural and, in death, postural. Like Four, a loss of language marks a re-zoomorphism, a kind of de-anthropomorphism. Irving’s dogs operate differently from, but no less effectively than, his bears.

An element in zoomorphism, one especially relevant to dogs, is smell. An emphasis on smell adds an animal dimension to *The Hotel New Hampshire*. It is Sorrow’s smell, the malodorous manifestation of his inability to adapt to “a life lived by human beings...[in order to] survive a life

led in hotels" (70) that leads to his death. Irving dwells on the animal smell of people as a medium of fascination and attraction. In writing about smell, Irving draws attention to both the animal nature of human sexual attraction and the effect of civilization which renders some scents undesirable, notably those related to excretion. The animal power of scent at times overrides human taboos, as with the incestuous attraction between Franny and John. He relates that her "smell made [him] dizzy" (320) and that "Franny always smelled nice to me – although at times she gave off a very strong smell" (123). He fixates on Ronda Ray's "absorbing odour" (134), "her nightclothes, smelling – ambiguously – like her watchband – like the back of her knee" (98). In acknowledging the animal power of scent and pheromones, he recognizes that Ronda's smell is "simply Franny's smell taken several stages too far" (148). Initially in childhood, Franny has the most animal sensibility with regard to the sense of smell. John describes how she "could lie next to Sorrow for hours and be unaffected by the dog's various stench... Franny seemed to notice smell, in general, less than the rest of us... she had a cheerful curiosity about strong things. She could go the longest, of any of us, without a bath" (65). Whereas she had been the most comfortable with her animal scent, after the rape "Franny did not smell nice to herself. And so she took so many baths that she did not smell at all" (123). An animal-like highly-developed sense of smell is equated with adult human "animal" sexuality and animality.

Smell is a primitive and reminiscent sense, evocative of early memories. Irving writes descriptively of smell and scent. When John claims his first memory, "as opposed to what I was *told* happened" (46), the way it is described is animal in nature, steeped in the most animal senses of smell and touch: "We were, all of us, really too young to have *known* Earl, but the bear's presence – the stiff feel of his fur, the heat of his fruity and mud-like breath, the dead-geranium

and urine smell of him... was... memorable to us”(46). Although the bear is anthropomorphic in many ways, the memory of him is clearly of an animal nature. Conversely, the zoomorphic Suzie’s animal dimension is also encapsulated with imagery of smell, especially in the passage where, for almost the last time as a bear, she seeks out John at the third Hotel New Hampshire in Maine. John again describes a mixture of smells in relation to this bear: “The bear’s breath was hot, and a little fruity...Mixed with the pleasure of its fruited breath, and the mustard-green sharpness of its summer sweat, I detected the obvious odour of mothballs” (435). Susie herself declares, “I’m sweating like a pig in this dumb...suit, but I smell so bad and look so awful I don’t dare take it off” (436). Susie is eventually convinced to shed her bear suit. As the fairy tale ends, humans revert to human, animals revert to animals, and smell recedes behind words and the artifice of human language. Smell is a component of the “noble beast” paradigm in the sense that it is associated with animality and with a more direct, more honest and more “grounded” mode of connection between both human and non-human animals than human language.

Loss of language is connected with zoomorphism. As well as acknowledging smell in animal communication, animal utterances are also recognized in linking humans with animals. State o’Maine’s name becomes simply “Earl”, as that is all he says, and Susie’s bearish utterances are written with the same onomatopoeia. “Earl” is the simplest unit of communication employed when simple straightforward agreement is all that is required. John notes, “When we got married, that’s what she said when she came to her moment to say ‘I do’. Susie said ‘Earl’” (437). In Suzie’s zoomorphism, language is lost. By the same token, characters engaging in sex are given non-linguistic “animal” sounds as dialogue, for example, Ronda Ray and the Texan (‘Oooooooooo!’ gasped Ronda Ray. ‘Hoo, hoo, hoo!’ the Texan cried (133)) and Mother and Father in Room 3E

('Oooooooooo!' went the woman. 'Hoo, hoo, hoo!' went the man... 'Yike, yike, yike!' said the woman. 'Muff, muff, muff!' said the man" (141)). John explains how he "knew that Franny had been cured of taking baths. It was overhearing my mother and father that did it; I think that made her own smell seem perfectly natural to Franny again" (146). Animal-like non-linguistic noises and smells validate animality in human sexuality. In expressing sexuality aurally, there is zoomorphism in the way that human language is supplanted by animal sounds.

The overall significance of animals in *The Hotel New Hampshire* is reinforced by the way in which the novel both opens and closes with a bear running free, the first anthropomorphic, the last zoomorphic. In the fairy-tale ending, a family arrives at the third Hotel New Hampshire, in fact, a rape crisis centre. They have never encountered a bear so John persuades Susie to become a bear one last time and appear magically out of the wilderness. This ending is derivative of Lilly's favourite ending from *The Great Gatsby*: "The bear that paused by the woodpile, its breath a fog upon the bright, cold morning, its paws softly denting the fresh, untouched snow – as if it were the first bear on earth, and this the planet's first snow – *all* of it had been convincing. As Lilly knew, everything *is* a fairy tale. So we dream on." The reader is left with this image of a bear in the snow as John as narrator does a stock-take of the "smart bears" in the lives of the surviving Berrys:

This is what we need: we need a good, smart bear. Some people's minds are good enough so that they can live all by themselves – their *minds* can be their good smart bears...Frank has a good, smart bear for a mind...And Franny has a good, smart bear named Junior Jones...My father's illusions are his good, smart bear – at last. And that leaves me, of course, with Susie the bear – with her rape-crisis center and my fairy-tale hotel – so I'm all right too (401).

We can think and write about people by thinking and writing about bears, particularly “smart” bears. The story ends as it begins, with a bear. In the end, however, there is this list of “smart” bears, as prescribed by “our” Freud, written bears from the converging zone of the intersecting conceptual model. The children have succeeded in growing up, helped by thinking with animals, written (or told) and real. In *The World According to Garp*, Garp is criticized for “still writing about bears. Perhaps when he grows up he’ll write something about people” (190). Irving defiantly continues with bears-as-people and people-as-bears in *Hotel New Hampshire* to good effect in laying down a world according to Irving wherein animals and humans are layered within each other. Until Susie’s inner bear gets out, there is a bear trapped in a human trapped in a bear, a multi-dimensionality which transmorphism allows.

The Hotel New Hampshire employs a symmetrical narrative structure which balances and equates bears and humans. There is a finely-balanced inverse symmetry between anthropomorphic State o’Maine/Earl and zoomorphic Susie. Susie is a “woman in a bear suit” (239) who everyone “want[s] to get over being a bear...[and for] the *bear in her* to emerge” (387). As a performing bear, State o’Maine/Earl is a bear in a human suit, literally so in the acts he performs wearing Iowa Bob’s altered suit. One act with Win involves the bear pretending to apply for a job and then on command, taking off the clothes which “[f]or some reason is...silly for a crowd of humans to watch....When Earl was undressed, Father would say, ‘Well, come on don’t stop now. Off with the bear suit.’...’My God, you’re a *real* bear!’”(37). This exposing of the bear is reminiscent of Duna’s humiliating end in “The Pension Grillparzer”, “embarrassed to death” (128). The other, more dignified act, where we also see the bear in human clothing, is on the ballroom dance floor of the Hampton Beach casino, “the short, bent, broad bear in Iowa Bob’s suit,

surprisingly graceful on his hind paws, shuffling after my mother, who led” (38). In Susie’s case, the donning of the bear suit is a coping mechanism, a way of operating in the world and healing from her horrific rape, until such time as she ceases to wear it. For the real bear, enslaved in captivity there is no such choice. Susie can revert to being a human but, at the end, State o’Maine/Earl is “too old to be a bear anymore” (4). Freud (the bear trainer) describes, at the beginning how the bear is already in some sense “not a real animal no more” (20). In a most Freudian way, he emphatically addresses the bear on his departure, “May you one day be grateful that you were rescued from the disgusting world of *nature!*” (38). State o’Maine, his name thenceforth reduced to “Earl”, might well have been, in his own best interests, best left in a state of wildness. While written bears, either anthropomorphic or zoomorphic, necessarily occupy the intersecting zone of human and animal, in their natural habitat, in the interests of cultural (and physical) safety, perhaps humans and bears are best kept apart.

The arguments for and against humans engaging with animals in their wild habitat can be seen in two episodes from opposite ends of the novel . They could be read as opposing views regarding engagement between humans, specifically bears, and animals. Freud fails to prevent an obnoxious anti-Semitic German hotel guest from coming between the bear and the motorcycle and the bear attack. The man’s wife reacts to the sight of the charging, apparently wild, bear: “ ‘*Gott!! Wut Vilderness!*’ she cried, and fainted sideways” (29). For the visiting Europeans, it is a demonstration of the uncivilized, untamed nature of the new world. For them, bears are to be feared and avoided. In contrast, the final appearance of Susie as a bear in the snow, which John requests for the benefit of visiting children, is a truly fairy-tale ending as John wants it: “ ‘Everyone should see a bear, Susie,’ I said. Of course she agreed. She was grouchy about it, but that made her

performance all the better; Susie was always superb as a bear, and now she is getting convinced that she is a lovely human being, too" (449). Susie need never be a bear again. This is her swan song as a bear. Her penultimate performance was masquerading as a bear in heat for the revenge rape of Chipper Dove. On that cathartic occasion, she is more bear than ever but as Lilly points out, "The bear in you gets out today Susie" (395). Once Susie's, and Franny's, rape demons are exorcized, Susie is free to be a human being again. As Win points out: "Susie's got to stop being a bear...We shouldn't keep encouraging her...New York is a terrible place for a bear. I'm afraid the bear days are over" (393). The bear days may be over but the fairy-tale motif continues to the end with John Berry declaring: "just when you think you're out of the woods, it turns out you're still *in* them...How could we have put away that old dog of our childhood, our dear Sorrow, as neatly as Susie folded up her bear suit and said, 'That's it. That's over. Now it's a whole new ball game'"(404).

It is important to examine in what ways we are similar to and how we differ from animals. Proponents of zoos argue the case that bringing humans and animals together fosters empathy in humans for animals and can thus benefit the species. The argument is that exposure to animals, while not necessarily good for the individual animal caged in the zoo, benefits the species as a whole. Close encounters are essential for engendering empathy. Meeting with animals can occur in zoos, where humans can gaze at animals and vice versa, but also in the written words of novels, where the gaze is one-way and harmless. Armstrong summarizes: "living inexpertly with animals and our own animality amidst the ruins of modernity, we are especially in need of narratives that attempt translation between the animals we are and the animals we aren't" (225). Bears, humans, bears-as-humans, and humans-as-bears all function well in these kinds of narratives because of their similarities in physical form and inherent association with one another. Irving's fictional bears

are particularly well-suited for examining “the animals we are and the animals we aren’t”. By meeting them on the page, we can examine in what ways we are similar to other animals and in what ways we differ. We are fascinated with the paradox of their simultaneous similarity and difference and the diversity of interpretations inherent in their furry ambiguity.

Where Species Meet: Murakami's Animals on the Boundaries of Realism

In this chapter I discuss Haruki Murakami's use of animals in his magic realist fiction. Most of the animals operate similarly to Irving's in that they play on the human fascination with the paradoxical simultaneous similarity and difference between human and non-human animals. This contributes to making animals good for thinking objectively about human concerns with, in accordance with Levi-Strauss, Berger, Fudge and Daston and Mitman. However, Murakami's magically real animals perform further functions beyond generating fascination and evoking empathy through anthropomorphism. They are employed to link conceptual realms that are conventionally separate, challenge conventional dominant human structures and operate outside national boundaries. I next examine how Murakami's work fits into the magic realism genre and how animals operate in that genre and in Japanese tradition, before discussing how various animals in Murakami's fiction function in the three ways suggested above. I look in turn at the Sheep Man (*A Wild Sheep Chase* and *Dance Dance Dance*) and the title characters from "A Shinagawa Monkey" and "Superfrog Saves Tokyo". The middle section of the chapter deals with magically real creatures, which differ significantly from animal-human hybrids. The mythological beasts and INKlings from *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* are different in that they are neither anthropomorphic nor connected to any real-world animal. Consequently, they do not function in quite the same way and neither do Murakami's elephants. Unlike the INKlings and the beasts, the elephants are based on real-world animals, albeit magically enhanced, but similarly they are not anthropomorphic and do not speak. The chapter concludes by examining Murakami's cats from a range of stories and novels. The cats are more "conventionally" magically real and so

link realms, challenge human hegemonic structures and operate outside national boundaries in the same way as the Sheep Man, the Shinagawa Monkey and Superfrog.

Murakami's animals link conventionally separate realms: human with animal, magical with real (or mythological with magical and real) and, as for example in *Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, parallel magical dimensions to each other. By talking, animals cross the boundary from real into magically real and also provide a link across the boundary between normally non-speaking animal and speaking human. As well as linking realms, Murakami's animals, as with other cultural references drawn from his "reservoir", such as music, serve to internationalize his fiction, unite local and global issues, and broaden his readership. His animal characters come from outside a particular national culture, whether that be, for example, the Sheep Man, a hybrid creature partly derived from sheep, which were unsuccessfully introduced to Japan as part of expansionism, the beasts or unicorns in *Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, mythical creatures across many cultures, or the INKlings, modern urban mutations of traditional folk creatures.

Animals are outside the hierarchy and structure of human society and can be employed to objectively challenge and question human hegemonies. Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney writes of monkeys in Japanese culture that they "have represented the forces that oppose the rigid hierarchical tendency in Japanese culture and society, always calling the structure into question and reminding people there are alternatives" (239). Monkeys are a traditional symbolic form but one that is commonly read as anti-traditional. Murakami's animals also call dominant, particularly late-capitalist, structures into question. Faris argues that magic realist writing often takes a stance against established social orders and hegemonic structures (179). She goes on to cite Fredric

Jameson in order to develop the idea that magic realism challenges the “reification of realism in late capitalism” (180).

In an essay on Murakami, Matthew Stretcher defines the broad term, magic (or “magical”) realism, as “what happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe” (267). Murakami’s animals often signal such an invasion, with the narrative switching from strictly realist to a more magical dimension. As well as functioning as objects for Fudge’s fascination with the paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference in the same way as Irving’s animals, like Lewis Carroll’s White Rabbit, Murakami’s animals often connect the reader to a parallel world. An example is the goat in *1Q84*: “The rules of the world had already changed when the Little People came out of the goat’s mouth. Anything could happen after that....The dead goat’s mouth turned into a passageway” (535). Such rabbit hole-like portals link the magical world of the Little People with the real world, the 1Q84 world with the 1984 world, the fantastic with the realistically fictional. Similarly, Aomame’s entry into the parallel 1Q84 world is described as “like an animal released into a new forest” (110). The return from the parallel world, which Tengo knows as “the cat town”, is marked by the presence of a billboard Esso tiger whose image is reversed, illustrating how animals can be employed to connect two parallel realms.

One of Wendy Faris’s descriptors for magic realism is the “closeness or near-merging of two realms” (172). She is referring to proximity and accessibility between the “magical” and the “real”, which is evident in *1Q84*, but this description of the connection between two realms could also be applied in many cases to the animal and human realms such as the connection between Nakata and the talking cats and the hybrid nature of the Sheep Man. The very act of an animal talking creates a communicative link between humans and animals as well as a connection between

magical and real. Accordingly, a talking non-human animal is, in itself, a neat embodiment of magic realism. Magic realism is a hybrid of the fantastic and the merely fictional. Hybridity between human and animal in a character such as the Sheep Man or the White Rabbit reflects the hybridity of literary forms which magic realism entails. Tanja Schwalm comments on a “striking abundance of animals” in magic realism (*Animal Writing* abstract). They certainly abound in Murakami’s magic realism and are invariably involved in an invasion of the realist narrative by something “strange to believe” (Stretcher 267).

Animals “have the capacity to represent the differentiations, characters and dispositions of...society” (Franklin 9) and are richly diverse. The expansive diversity of species offers a long list of beings to think with. In contrast, “humankind is but one species, one form...Aristotle says as much” (Clark 13). A taxonomic approach can lead to the ascription of particular significance to particular species. For example, in a Marxist reading elephants could represent a capitalist commodity and, in a psychoanalytical reading, monkeys might stand for the id. Yet such an approach runs the danger of being over-generalized and prescriptive. Translator and critic Jay Rubin cites a passage from *Hear the Wind Sing* in which two characters discuss the meaning of a Rorschach ink-blot-like pattern on a wall resembling two monkeys: “[Murakami] has been stubbornly consistent in denying that there are ‘symbols’ in his writing. But the Rorschach monkeys are typical of the images he flashes at his readers: generic animal...images that the author refuses to define – either in interviews or his texts – so that, like Rorschach blots, they can work on the mind of each individual reader” (34). Such resistance to simple, linear, symbolic interpretation is a feature of magic realism. Despite Murakami’s denial, I would argue that there are symbolic dimensions at work, and ones that he invests in, but they can shift or develop in any

number of unexpected ways. The magical elements, by virtue of being “magical”, do not require an allegorical reading. In a universe where the rules have been bent, magical elements, such as talking animals, can be accepted as they stand. Rubin goes on to say that “animals fascinate Murakami for what they share with the unconscious life of the human mind: alive but devoid of rational thought, in touch with mysterious forces but unable to communicate. Animals are richly symbolic without having any specific allegorical themes attached to them” (51). Murakami (writer) denies symbolism while Rubin (translator and therefore both reader and writer) argues that animals are “richly symbolic” but furrily ambiguous. Murakami wants his animals to be images that “can work on the mind of each individual reader”. “Images” that “work on the mind” become “symbols”.

Animal images are ambiguous but not as ambiguous as ink-blots. They do not have the same capacity to represent absolutely anything. They are images with recognizable, identifiable shapes and attached archetypes, associations and schemata. For Murakami, symbolism is bestowed by the reader. The translator’s role, and one cannot help but think of the possible influence on Murakami of his translating *Setting Free the Bears*, is a unique process of attempting to re-encode words that describe images for another population of readers to ascribe with significance. Transcending language, animals are not endangered in translation and largely retain their qualities. It could be argued that the process of translation has to deal with national traditions of animal representation and associations but many animal associations, such as the traditional “see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil” monkeys and the utilization of monkeys as avatars for humans, operate outside of national boundaries. Also the globalization of animal

characters in popular fiction, such as the anthropomorphic Pooh Bear, further erodes the argument for a country-specific reading of animals.

While he may be “stubbornly consistent in denying that there are ‘symbols’ *in* his writing”, in *Pinball, 1973*, Murakami employs monkeys as a symbol *for* his writing. He describes the novelist as obliged to deal with a box of monkeys, releasing them into the world by writing them. He has no control over how they are read or under what conceptual model they are analyzed. Murakami writes:

Everyone had something they were dying to tell somebody or shout to the whole world – who knows why? I always felt as if I’d been handed a cardboard box crammed full of monkeys. I’d take the monkeys out of the box one at a time...and send them scurrying off into the fields. I never knew where they went from there (6).

According to this metaphor, not only can animals be read like more-defined Rorschach inkblots but stories themselves can be viewed as animals. Faris states that “metafictional dimensions are common in contemporary magic realism” (175). However, Murakami’s monkeys represent both the metafictional dimension and animism, whereby an abstract entity (in this case, a story) can be imbued with a life-spirit. Murakami also animistically imbues other non-human beings in this way, including concrete but inanimate objects, such as the stone in *Kafka on the Shore*, as well as animals themselves. Animism, in Japanese thinking, and Shinto in particular, “stems from belief systems of all of the people who inhabited Japan from the Stone Age” (Nielson). Murakami, although he is sometimes criticized for being not Japanese enough, embraces the animist tradition, melding it with Western traditions, creating a Japanese-Western hybrid of anthropomorphism. (Kelts 1). He draws on the animist tradition in anthropomorphizing animals as well as giving a

modern spin in animating corporate characters such as Johnnie Walker and Colonel Sanders. A fundamental element of Murakami's use of animals is his drawing simultaneously on recent developments in Western fiction, magic realism in particular, and traditional Japanese narrative. The effect is to provide characters which can be readily accepted by the reader as having magic qualities, on account of their heritage in myth or fable, and are accessible and attract empathy, firstly because they are animal and therefore outside human ethnicity or nationality, and secondly because they are anthropomorphic. This is evident in characters such as the Shinagawa monkey, Superfrog and the Sheep Man.

Magically real animals first appear in Murakami's third novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase*. A powerful capitalist organization headed by the Boss coerces the unnamed narrator and protagonist into a search for a mysterious sheep with a star-shaped birthmark. His friend, nicknamed the Rat, a recurring character from the previous two novels, has left a clue somehow connecting him to this sheep. The narrator travels to the north of Japan and is led somewhat magically to the Dolphin Hotel, which is coincidentally the former headquarters of the Japanese sheep-breeders' association. There he meets the Sheep Professor, an eccentric academic still obsessed and previously spiritually possessed by the sheep with the star-shaped birthmark. The narrator's odyssey continues to a remote farm-house in sheep-raising country in the hinterland of Hokkaido where he encounters the Sheep Man. The Sheep Man, the Sheep Professor, the Boss and the Rat have all, at times, been possessed or "sheeped". Furthermore, the Sheep Man is also a vessel for the ghost of the Rat. The result is a complex character, a hybrid, not just between a particular animal and human but between several. The novel ends with the destruction of the farm house and the narrator returning to the conventional world, free of the vagaries of ovine

possession. The Sheep Man has a number of functions. Like Irving's bears, he is a focus for examining animality in humanity and, like Murakami's other magical animals, he also links realms (magic and real, local and exotic, animal and human). He is a hybrid of animal and human: "The Sheep Man wore a full sheepskin pulled over his head. The arms and legs were fake and patched on, but his stocky body fit the costume perfectly. The hood was also fake but the two horns that curled from his crown were absolutely real" (251). This literally matches Faris's description of how "magic seems to grow almost imperceptibly out of the real" (174). It is never overtly stated whether the Sheep Man is a human in sheep's clothing or a sheep inhabiting a human's body in the way the Sheep Professor, the Boss and the Rat are possessed or "sheeped". The chicken-and-egg nature of this conundrum underlines the unimportance of making a definitive statement. That the character known as the Sheep Man inhabits the zone where species meet is what is of importance, not which side of the divide he originated from. It is his otherness which is important. In magic realism, animals and ambiguities abound and, as Faris says, "[m]etamorphoses are a relatively common event" (178). The Sheep Man can be read as both a sheep in human clothing and mutton dressed up as man. Oddness indicates otherness. Just as Irving makes Piggy Sneed oink and gives Owen Meany a capital-letter voice, Murakami has the Sheep Man run his words together, emphasizing the point that he is an exotic, "other" creature. He says, for example, "Sometimes it's like the sheep in me and the human in me are at odds so I get like that" (254). The peculiarity of the rendering of his language and the difficulty sometimes inherent in simply reading the Sheep Man's run-together utterances reflects the difficulty in interpreting the Sheep Man himself. The Sheep Man's behaviour as well as his speech is an amalgam of ovine and human: "The Sheep Man was just like an animal. Approach him and he'd retreat, move away and he'd come closer" (254). Furthermore, the Sheep Man refers to himself (or selves) as "we" to signify either his

dual state as both human and animal or his position as part of a mob-like mass mind. When the Sheep Man is last encountered in *The Wild Sheep Chase*, his body has been possessed by the narrator's human friend, nicknamed the Rat, who has, in turn, been possessed by the star-marked sheep. This conceit of spiritual possession serves to further blur the demarcation between magic and real and human and animal. Enhanced ambiguity leads to further fascination and a wider range of potential symbolic interpretations. Like Irving's Susie the bear, this complex, paradoxical, ambiguous Russian doll-like transmorphic character fascinates.

It is not until late in the novel that the Sheep Man first appears, ushering in the magical. It is not until his arrival that the narrative of *A Wild Sheep Chase* deviates from a conventionally realistic, if at times mildly bizarre, narrative. At first it seems he is possibly just a human in an odd costume but his paranormal state of being soon becomes apparent: "the Sheep Man's behaviour seemed to reflect the Rat's will... Something funny was going on. You could read it everywhere. Something was about to happen" (260). Something funny *is* going on. During the next visit the narrator looks in a mirror and sees that there is no reflection of the Sheep Man. The Sheep Man is neither animal nor human, a figment of the narrator's mind perhaps or a creature from another Carrollian dimension. Exit the Sheep Man, enter the Rat. It further transpires that the Rat is, in fact, dead: "I hanged myself from a beam in the kitchen," said the Rat. "The Sheep Man buried me next to the garage" (280). The narrator is chatting with a ghost. It seems that once we have accepted the existence, however insubstantial, of the Sheep Man, then anything goes. Once we accept magic realism, there is no limitation to what is "magically" plausible. Once words come out of the Sheep Man's mouth, like the Little People coming out of the goat's mouth in *1Q84*, anything can happen.

The Sheep Man (two words, both capitalized) is where species meet. He drinks and smokes like a human being. Language gives a human dimension as does Orwellian bipedalism. Conversely, there is reference to herd behaviour in his use of the first person plural form in speech. Contradictions abound with deliberate woolliness in his depiction. He is both a human in sheep's clothing and a man "sheeped", possessed by the spirit of a sheep. Another development further complicates the path of sheep possession that began with the Sheep Professor's "spiritual communion" with the birth-marked sheep, when the sheep "entered" him. The narrator questions the Rat: "'But the Sheep Man, the one who came visiting here, was, you, right?' 'Right. I took his form...'" (285). It would seem that the Rat can take the form of the Sheep Man just as the star-shaped birthmark sheep can "enter" the Sheep Professor, the Boss, the Rat and the Sheep Man. There is little explanation or elaboration, an instance of authorial reticence typical of magic realism and Murakami's unscriptiveness. Murakami presents the reader with a world which is unconventional only in the transmigration of souls related to sheep and the Sheep Man's lack of a mirror-image. With the exception of the power of his girlfriend's ears, attributable perhaps to poetic license or infatuation, these sheep-related phenomena are the only deviations from an otherwise conventionally realist universe. While isolated, they are striking diversions with considerable impact in twisting the tail and widening the range of potential interpretations of the narrative.

The sheep motif addresses and confronts imperialist and capitalist expansionism inherent in the role of sheep in Japan. Wool was needed to clothe an occupying force pushing into Manchuria and beyond. There was no tradition of sheep-raising in Japan and the farming of sheep can be read to represent expansionism and attempts to adopt Western practices that are not always suitable.

This is challenging and also ties in with the clichéd criticism of Murakami being too Western. Such critics might say he reeks not only of butter, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, but also of mutton. Somewhat paradoxically, while Murakami is often seen as something of a champion of external Western cultural references in contemporary Japanese literature, in *A Wild Sheep Chase*, in typically employing magic realism in an anti-conventional, anti-imperialist and, in this case, anti-capitalist critique, he is also attacking the Western influence on late twentieth century economic expansionism in Japan. However, it is quite feasible to be both Western and anti-Western in the counter-cultural tradition and this reflects both Murakami's and Japan's love-hate relationship with the West.

The "ovinity" (to coin a term without the human-imposed connotations of "sheepishness") of the Sheep Man may be happily coincidentally symbolic of capitalist expansionism. Jay Rubin quotes Murakami:

The Meiji government had a policy of encouraging the raising of sheep, but now sheep have been all but abandoned by the government as an uneconomical investment. In other words, sheep are a kind of symbol of the reckless speed with which the Japanese state pursued a course of modernization. When I learned all this, I decided once and for all that I would write a novel with 'sheep' as a key word.

These historical facts regarding sheep turned out to be a major plot element when it came time for me to write the novel. The character I call the Sheep Man is almost surely a being that floated up out of that vast historical darkness. At the time I was deciding to write a novel on sheep, however, I knew nothing about such facts. The Sheep Man was a product of a great coincidence (90).

The Sheep Man is a hybrid character who is eliminated by the end of the novel, a representative of a species rendered extinct. Just as sheep are neither native nor well-suited to conditions in Japan, neither is a Sheep Man well-suited to an existence in a late-stage capitalist world. That he does not survive is indicative of a questioning of hegemonic human structures, which occurs frequently in magic realism, in this case including the challenging of capitalist and imperialist ideas. As detailed by Murakami, sheep-raising in Japan never took off and the decline in sheep numbers in Japan makes the wild sheep chase of the title more of a wild goose chase in that it is arduous, purposeless and fruitless. The Boss, a major right-wing figure, is possessed by the spirit of the birth-marked sheep. With his death, the death of the Rat and the presumed death of the Sheep Man in the explosion, Murakami is signaling the demise of expansionism and “reckless” modernisation.

The totemic sheep with a star on its back is behind the narrator’s odyssey. Its spirit possesses first the Boss, then the Sheep Professor, the Rat and the Sheep Man. Although the sheep can be associated with the modernization of Japan as Murakami suggests in the quotation above, once again he proves typically evasive and dismissive of any stable symbolic meaning: “I made no story outline for *A Wild Sheep Chase* other than to use ‘sheep’ as a kind of key word and to bring the foreground character...and the background character ‘Rat’ together at the end. That’s the book’s entire structure...I believe that if the novel does succeed it is because I myself do not know what the sheep means” (90). When the author declares ignorance of the symbolic meaning of the sheep, and by extension, the Sheep Man, it is clear that he wants readers to feel free to bring their own interpretation to their reading of the sheep and there can be a degree of woolliness in the analysis to match the woolliness in the text. It is clear though that the Sheep Man

is a creature from the intersecting zone between animal and human and a connection, “through the looking glass”, and between the floors of the Dolphin Hotel, between a physical dimension and a metaphysical or spiritual one and also between human and animal and between Western and Japanese.

“A Shinagawa Monkey” also involves a connecting anthropomorphic animal, in this case a talking, name-stealing manifestation of a human unconscious. Monkeys are genetically and morphologically close to people and at least as well-suited for anthropomorphism as Irving’s bears. Murakami also draws on the Japanese tradition of “monkey as scapegoat [which] continues to be the dominant meaning of the monkey in contemporary Japan” (Ohnuki-Tierney 65). The monkey is transplanted into an urban human context amidst city government services, a dormitory and a car dealership, typical of Murakami’s merging of traditional and modern and rural and urban elements. Like *A Wild Sheep Chase*, the story begins in the realm of realism but the title hints that there may be a diversion into a more magical alternate reality. Shinagawa in Tokyo is an unlikely habitat for a monkey.

Again, the deviation from real to magical is signified by the introduction of a talking animal character. The protagonist, Mizuki is experiencing difficulty remembering her own name. Her name-tag and that of a former schoolmate are discovered to have been stolen and the thief is caught. The twists come in that the thief is a monkey and that the monkey talks. The human-like monkey is retrieved from the literal depths beneath the city and the metaphorical depths of Mizuki’s unconscious as part of her therapy, her issues of identity resolved when this “monkey on her back” is brought to light. The monkey is both anthropomorphic in its own right and also operates as an animal symbol of her unconscious, of her less evolved self. A monkey, as a smaller,

human-like being is an appropriate symbol, something that can be seen as being able to dwell within a human being. In another story in the same collection, "A Poor Aunt Story", the protagonist carries a poor aunt on his back, a concrete manifestation of a human extension of the proverbial "monkey on your back" idiom, a proverb brought to life in accordance with Faris's identification of the magic realist conceit of a metaphor made real (176). The monkey in "A Shinagawa Monkey" is not so much a burden on the character but more a weight within, that, when brought to light and dealt with, is ultimately set free. Mizuki's inner monkey has enabled her to question her own identity and to confront the issues that she has long repressed. She recognizes the therapeutic value of facing the unpleasant facts the name-stealing monkey confronts her with: "What this monkey's saying is true. I've known it for a long time, but I've always tried to avoid it. I've always closed my eyes to it, shut my ears. This monkey's telling the truth, so please forgive him. Just take him to the mountains and let him go" (332). The "see no evil, hear no evil..." monkeys spring to mind. The Shinagawa monkey is liberated and Mizuki's human identity is restored. She retains her id but in a conventional unconscious and less prominent form than an anthropomorphic monkey. It seems that, for Murakami, animals, like Irving's bears, are best returned to the wild, relieved of language, set free into an environment to which they are best suited. The Shinagawa monkey is released into the mountains in the same way that the successfully-freed bears are those that make it to the woods, not the animals who perish on the streets of Vienna.

Disguising her id in the form of a monkey, Mizuki's unconscious is given zoomorphic identity and anthropomorphic power of speech, enabling dramatization of internal dialogue, as with another Murakami short story, "The Little Green Monster". The monkey is opposing conventional

human structures in its criminality and in the way it challenges the role of names, and consequently individual identities, and the way they are registered in a complex modern capitalist society as represented by structures such as the city government bureaucracy and the college dormitory. Mizuki essentially loses her self when she loses her name, the monkey playing a part in both its loss and its recovery. While clearly anthropomorphic, as an animal, the monkey has universal appeal evoking empathy. This monkey is simultaneously a monkey aping human behavior, an underdog and a scapegoat. The magically real attribution of the power of speech to animals, such as the Shinagawa monkey, the Sheep Man and Superfrog, takes anthropomorphism to another level beyond that of Irving's bears, for example, which are restricted by the boundaries of conventional realism. This further enhanced anthropomorphism, advanced by the granting of speech in particular, encourages even greater recognition, identification and empathy on the part of the human-animal readers.

The monkey is captured from a Murakami-esque subterranean environment beneath the city. The above-ground and subterranean worlds are juxtaposed, with the animal characters integral in connecting them. As with the INKlings and Superfrog, the under-the-city habitat can be read as reflecting the role of myth underlying reality, filth underlying capitalism and folktales underlying modern culture in the Japanese context. The INKlings, Superfrog and the Shinagawa monkey are all animals or animal-like creatures that are important components in linking realms, challenging dominant structures and merging local and global contexts. In these cases, the settings of the narratives are also instrumental in these processes. The superimposition of the city surface over the underground realm illustrates myth underlying reality, challenges late-stage capitalism by

dwelling on its detritus and connects Japanese folk-tales involving underground creatures and modern global urban popular culture.

Like the Sheep Man and the Shinagawa monkey, the frog in “Superfrog Saves Tokyo” is another character whose anthropomorphism is enhanced by magic realism. Murakami is typically vague when identifying a potential archetypal ancestor for the talking Superfrog: “I was told many Japanese folktales and old stories...Superfrog might come from that reservoir of stories” (Wray). When examining animal archetypes formed in our childhood unconscious, the influences are many, varied and cross-cultural, especially with the globalization of literature and popular culture. Some elements of Superfrog “might”, as Murakami says, derive from traditional Japanese folk tales or the character may be an amalgam of influences from a variety of sources including such stories as Aesop’s fables, Kenneth Grahame’s *Wind in the Willows* or creatures from popular culture as diverse as Kermit or Godzilla. As previously discussed, there is a wealth of talking animals in children’s literature and folk tales from all cultures. As with these stories, the fact that the rules of the universe are altered in magic realism enables animals such as Superfrog to speak. Fudge questions whether Toad in Kenneth Grahame’s *Wind in the Willows*, who, like Frog, interacts fully on a human level, is animalized human or humanized animal. Similar ambiguity exists around Frog. He is well-spoken, apparently human in his reasoning and communicative skills but frog-like in form, albeit human-sized. There is a hint of the Cartesian conceptual model with anthropomorphism giving the frog “super” status, placing it above animals in a “higher” category, a term Darwin took pains to avoid when comparing human and non-human animals. Tellingly, it is only in the story’s title that he is referred to as “*Superfrog*”. He asks to be referred to as plain “Frog” rather than even the humanizing “*Mr Frog*”, let alone the elevating “*Superfrog*”. Whether

modesty or insistence on retaining his animality, despite his protestations, Superfrog is a hyper-evolved animal “superman” in a Shavian sense, a Nietzschean *ubermensch* of a frog, whose anthropomorphism has taken him above and beyond the evolutionary stage of human and other animals with his shape-shifting, world-saving and other powers.

Superfrog remains a non-human animal, despite the considerable movement towards human status that his reasoning and language bring. Written animals exist only in the thinking and writing of the author and the reading and thinking of the reader. There is no requirement for taxonomic hierarchical specificity. This is especially the case in magic realism, where once we have accepted the suspension of disbelief in one area, the doors are opened to any number of potential readings. Yet again, the Murakami magically real animal links realms, in this case, human and animal, real and magical (or mythical in the case of the earthquake-causing Worm character), terrestrial and subterranean, conscious and unconscious in relation to the perception of the leading human character. There is also an absurdist Kafkaesque quality to this story with the frog linking the real to the surreal. Moreover, he challenges the late capitalist workings of Tokyo as reflected in his role as enforcer in assisting the calling-in of bad debts resulting from the bursting of the bubble economy. He literally undermines financial structures by tunneling below the bank to do battle with Worm and save Tokyo. His character also draws on the heritage of film, western comic-book and Japanese *manga* and *anime* superheroes. Murakami is using a magically real hybrid creature to challenge conventions and structures and to appeal to readers beyond the clutter of individuating human detail. Superfrog is multi-faceted but inherently slippery.

While Superfrog and the Sheep Man each link human and animal and also real and magical, birds, along with the unicorn skull, connect the two parallel magically real realms in *Hard-*

boiled Wonderland and the End of the World. The “Hard-boiled Wonderland” is a subterranean setting, beneath an “invented Tokyo” (Chilton) and a “vaguely futuristic Tokyo” (Rubin 117), in other words, a magically real Tokyo. The “End of the World” is a walled town, representative of the narrator’s inner consciousness, created from a narrative he composed as a code for data-encryption. The walls are high and only birds can travel above them. Rubin’s interpretation of this is that “only birds can travel freely between the conscious and the unconscious worlds” (122). Birds are readily associated with the transcendental world of the spiritual and the angelic. Just as Murakami’s birds connect, as Rubin suggests, the conscious and unconscious, they also link magical and real, earthly and celestial, mortal and spiritual, animal and human, by flying high above the mundane concerns of the terrestrial.

Unlike the ethereal birds (“of the air”), the “beasts” (“of the field”) in *Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, while enigmatic, are concretely animal. The “beasts”, which are unicorns, are, enigmatically and confusingly, physical manifestations of thought, dreams and self in the world of the unconscious. They offer a tangible connection to the “Hard-Boiled Wonderland”, in the form of the skull that the protagonist is given to look after, with the suggestion that it contains the secrets of the connection to the alternate world. In the “End of the World”, he reads the dreams of beasts through holding their skulls and also witnesses the burning of the bodies of the beasts that perish as inevitably as his Jungian shadow weakens. The narrator’s shadow is separated from him on arrival and imprisoned. The shadow is an autonomous, speaking, inherently anthropomorphic, human-animal figure. Again, Murakami draws on the animist tradition. Like the shadows, the beasts are remnants of the physical, corporeal world. They are symbols that the narrator has created in his own “End of the World” construction, a complex

coding system. That the beasts are mythical creatures adds further to the mystery of their significance and again blurs the delineation between perception and reality. The beasts are part of our narrator's perception and therefore part of his reality. The Professor explains the two worlds:

"Everythin' that's in this world here and now is missin' from that world... No self. In that world of yours, people's selves are externalized into beasts."

"Beasts?"

"Unicorns," said the Professor. "You've got unicorns... surrounded by a wall" (270).

The encryption of the animals within the coded construct makes reading them even more difficult. With the fake skull he is given to take care of in the "Hard-Boiled Wonderland", the Professor is trying to make the narrator aware of the connection between the two worlds, the conscious and unconscious. The two worlds exist simultaneously, *Matrix*-like, for the narrator's two parallel identities. He minds the skull while his counterpart in the other dimension phrenologically "reads" the beasts' skulls in the library. The beasts are multi-dimensional and many-faceted. They can be read in many different ways. They are the physical animal component of humanity. They represent the id, the corporeal and the mortal. They are beastly and mythical, non-human, but symbolic of the essential bestial elements of humanity. They represent the physical, tangible world and also, as unicorns, the world of the past, of legend and of memories, where fable, myth, and, in particular, animal myth with its archetypes, offer a collective interpretation. Conceptually the beasts occupy the area between humans, animals and, in this case, mythological animals. The beasts remain animal but representative of the physical animal

dimension of humanity. They can be read as Cartesian animals-as-machines, Darwinian fellow-animals, or written creatures populating the area of intersection.

It should be remembered that the “End of the World” is a coded construct of the narrator’s unconscious, his invented unique story which is used to hide data. Consequently all of its elements including the narrative, the characterization, the metaphors and even the setting are complex and vague, almost impenetrable. The code is designed to be hard to crack. Compounding this is the fact that unicorns are inherently magical, mysterious and mythical. The beasts are not painted with clearly-defined lines. As the Sheep Man is woolly, the beasts are shaggy. While elusive, the beasts operate to connect the magical and the real, as with Lewis Carroll’s White Rabbit or Murakami’s Sheep Man or Superfrog, as well as connecting the two parallel worlds of the novel. The unicorn skull which features in the Hard-boiled Wonderland sections is a tangible link to the End of the World construct, serving as a clue and a key to that world for the narrator. The beasts, unicorns, that may, according to the narrator’s research, have a history in the real world, offer a link between magic and real, mythical and modern, past and present, conscious and unconscious.

The beasts, like other animals in magic realism, connect and also have a role in confronting conventional hegemonic structures. In this novel, there is a complex representation of late capitalism, referred to simply as “the System” in which “Semiotecs” and “Calcutecs” do battle for control in a complex dystopian conceit outside the scope of this discussion. The animal element of interest is the magically glowing unicorn skull which offers, as discussed, a link between the two worlds allowing for an unlocking of the all-important encrypted data which is a threat to “the System”. As in *A Wild Sheep Chase*, animals are employed to challenge dominant human structures such as capitalism.

While the birds operate above humans and the beasts alongside us, the INKlings are, in one sense, the beasts beneath us. They are the sewer-dwelling beings who inhabit the subterranean level of the “Hard-Boiled Wonderland”. The beasts are unfamiliar and mythological but not as intensely alien as the INKlings, who function as hybrids of traditional Japanese and more modern Westernized magical creatures. Faris states that in magic realism, “ancient systems of belief and local lore often underlie the text” (182). While the beasts are benign, gently ambling, sympathetic creatures, this is not the case with the INKlings. Urban, post-modern incarnations of *kappa*, mythical Japanese water-sprites, these Infra-Nocturnal Kappa (hence INKlings) represent danger and chaos, a link from the mythical to the contemporary. They are alien and alienating, mutant hybrids dwelling beneath the capitalist capital, monsters created by urbanization and industrialization, but evolving from traditional roots.

Just as *kappa* have a place in Japanese mythology, there is a legend of underground catfish whose movement is responsible for earthquakes. A written sculpted animal, twice imbued with human interpretation, three times, if you count the input of the reader, the narrator describes a carved image from the world below Tokyo:

Two fishes in a circle, each with the other’s tail in its mouth...On each...appendage...were three claws. Claws? The dorsal fins were shaped like tongues of flames, the scales rasped out like thorns. ‘Mythical creatures? Do you suppose they actually exist?’ I asked her (212).

In a magic realist world, this is a valid question. Having accepted the existence of INKlings, does the existence of giant, clawed catfish follow? Accepting the Sheep Man as plausible allows the reader to then accept communication with the ghost of the Rat and all manner of shape-shifting. It becomes difficult to determine which beings should be read as real and which as mythical in what

Salman Rushdie describes as a “dense conmingling of the improbable and the mundane” (cited in Faris 174). The subterranean, like the unconscious, is largely unknown. The underworld of the “hard-boiled wonderland” exists on a different plane just as the “End of the World” exists on another level of consciousness. In that world, the beasts are mammalian, familiar, magical and benign. In this world, the INKlings are reptilian, foreign, evil, and malignant. These subterranean creatures, evolved from ancient Japanese culture, quite literally underlie modern westernised Japan, in much the same way as Worm in “Superfrog Saves Tokyo”. The mythical joins the union of magical and real in these works. While the beasts are identifiably human-affiliated animals, the INKlings are definitively non-human, alien. While the beasts may be symbolic of an element of the animals we are, the INKlings are undoubtedly animals we are not.

Murakami refers to a “mutual reservoir” of stories and influences (Wray). Murakami’s animals arise from this reservoir, an amalgam of traditional Japanese mythical creatures and recent developments in Western fiction, magic realism in particular. Science fiction literature and movies and other popular culture can also be seen as influences. Murakami writes as an international citizen living in modern globalized culture. Murakami’s animals, and also his human characters, references and themes are not, albeit to the disapproval of the Japanese literary establishment, particularly Japanese, and consequently have international appeal. Creatures such as the beasts and the INKlings are examples of this. The INKlings are a futuristic incarnation of ancient *kappa* evolved to fit a magically real Tokyo while the beasts draw on the presence of unicorns in a range of mythologies, both eastern and western. The beasts and the INKlings are not like the speaking Sheep Man, Superfrog or Shinagawa monkey, nor are they individual characters like Irving’s anthropomorphic bears. They are mythical species far removed from humanity which

can still be seen to challenge conventional human hegemonic structures but more obliquely. They serve to extend appeal outside of national boundaries and they can be instrumental in linking realms, as instantiated in the inter-dimensional role of the unicorn skull. As mythologically-based beings, further removed from conventional realism, the INKlings and the beasts perhaps represent that which underlies humanity more than that which links it with real-world animality.

While beasts and INKlings are magical and abstract, Murakami's elephants are weightily concrete and pragmatic and more grounded in reality than the Sheep Man, the Shinagawa monkey, Superfrog, in that the elephants don't speak. They are, however, still magical in their absurdist depiction. "The Dancing Dwarf" opens: "I washed my face with great care, shaved, put some bread in the toaster, and boiled water for coffee. I fed the cat, changed its litter, put on a necktie, and tied my shoes. Then I took a bus to the elephant factory." (245) This dropped-in reference to an elephant factory in the context of a mundane morning routine is typical of magic realism in which, as Wendy Faris explains "Wonders are recounted largely without comment, in a matter-of-fact way" (177). This is followed by a very matter-of-fact description of elephant manufacture, "no easy matter. They're big, first of all, and very complex" (245). The *Metropolis*-like elephant factory can be read as a metaphor for the daily grind of late stage capitalism, on which Murakami has "an aggressive take" (Harrison). Although there is little overt interpretative explanation of the elephant factory, it evokes certain features of contemporary global economics, for example the alienation of people from their human nature and the commoditization of animals and nature under the capitalist mode of production. Switching from a Marxist reading to a Freudian one, the elephant factory can also be read as a metaphor for the way in which memory or rational consciousness is constructed, in the same way as this metaphor is employed in *Hard-Boiled*

Wonderland and the End of the World. Jumping between the world of the dancing dwarf, by definition diminutive, and the gargantuan world of elephant assembly is a deliberate juxtaposition of parallel worlds concerned with the very small and unrestricted and the very large and heavily controlled, perhaps reflecting local and global outlooks. Murakami emphasizes the difference between dreaming and waking, the lightness of creativity and the cumbersome bulk of the mundane. Whatever the interpretation, the elephant factory is an enduring image. There is a sense that an elephant, or in this case an entire elephant factory, has been placed in the story partly because it is an image of considerable size. The elephants manufactured therein are Cartesian beasts-as-machines, more readily identifiable as commodities, under a Marxist analysis of the machinery of capitalism, than as animals.

While in some senses dehumanizing, a factory is a human construct. An analysis grounded in Kafka is also valid for Murakami's elephant factory. In *Kafka on the Shore*, Murakami pays overt homage to Kafka. The principal character discusses his favourite Kafka short story, "In the Penal Colony": "I think what Kafka does is give a purely mechanical explanation of that complex machine in the story, as sort of a substitute for explaining the situation we're in. What I mean is...that's his own device for explaining the kind of lives we lead. Not by talking about our situation, but by talking about the details of the machine" (61). Murakami himself does this with his elephant factory, a metaphor he constructs to challenge late-stage capitalism and address associated concepts such as alienation and commoditization. There is a sense that we all are cogs in an unfathomable machine. An elephant factory is an appropriate metaphor for the absurdity, sheer enormity and inexplicability of the human condition as affected by the evolution of the bureaucratic, totalitarian, capitalist tendencies of Kafka's early twentieth-century Europe into the

more global late-stage capitalism that Murakami is now addressing. The fact that the factory assembles elephants, rather than machinery or conventional commodities, introduces an organic, animal dimension with a closer metaphoric link to human-animals. However, the elephants remain inanimate and just as, from a Marxist perspective, there is alienation and dehumanization inherent in the capitalist machine for human workers on an assembly line, for animals, here represented by elephants, there is a corresponding de-animalization as they become less an active, engaged participant in production and more a product. The animals are inanimate. That this seems oxymoronic only serves to further emphasize their commodification. Berger writes regarding the place of animals in expanding capitalism and mechanization that the “reduction of the animal...is part of the same process as that by which men have been reduced to isolated productive and consuming units. Indeed,...an approach to animals often prefigured an approach to man” (13).

In *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* an elephant factory metaphor is employed when the Professor explains the genesis of the narrator’s “End of the World” conceptual construct: “this was somethin’ you yourself made. You gave structure to your images. It is as if you descended to the elephant factory floor beneath your consciousness and built an elephant with your own hands without you even knowin’” (268). Later, as the end of the “End of the World” approaches, the Professor explains further: “you’ve begun t’ produce memories. Or t’ fall back on our metaphor, as your subconscious elephant factory changes, you’re makin’ adjustments via a channel to surface consciousness” (280). This elephant factory metaphor psychoanalytically illustrates the construction of memory whereas the one in “The Dancing Dwarf” is created as a vehicle for critiquing capitalism. The metaphor is versatile and is employed to link disparate realms, challenge conventional structures and unite local and global outlooks and concerns. An elephant

factory is a form of anthropomorphism, the humanization (in a technological form) of an animal and, in some senses, a return to the Cartesian concept of animal as machine. A factory is a human construct. The elephants are manufactured on a human-controlled production line and, not unlike the stuffing and mounting of the dog Sorrow in Irving's *The Hotel New Hampshire*, they are assembled and manipulated by human hands. All written animals are, in the same vein, human constructs and, the author, just as the protagonist has it explained to him, "descend[s] to the elephant factory floor beneath [his] consciousness and buil[ds] an elephant with [his] own hands without ... even knowin'" (268). The writer assembles the animal for the reader to deconstruct, directions not included.

In "The Elephant Vanishes", the narrator discusses not the absurdist assembly of an elephant but the mysterious disappearance of one: "For an elephant to disappear all of a sudden one day – there's no precedent, no need for such a thing to happen. It doesn't make any logical sense" (322). The elephant's disappearance is the central act of the story but is the only magical component in an otherwise realistic narrative. It is as an example of Murakami's anti-establishment perspective in the way the structure of the city fails to contain an elephant within its jurisdiction, and anti-rationalism, making a point through the sheer size and improbability of the conceit of a vanishing elephant. He relates that the night before the elephant vanished there was a change: "In size. Of their bodies. The elephant's and the keeper's. The balance seemed to have changed somewhat. I had the feeling that to some extent the difference between them had shrunk" (325). For the narrator the difference has diminished but it remains. The balance is altered but anthropomorphism is not taking place. Animality is being weighed against humanity, as on a set of scales, but is not being shifted towards it. A secondary character counters that her

cat disappeared: “But still, for a cat to disappear and for an elephant to disappear – those are two different stories” (326). The narrator agrees that they are different stories: “There’s no comparison. Think of the size difference” (326). Size, of course, is not the only or most significant element of difference. A wandering cat is an everyday event. Not so a vanishing elephant. In the initial placement of the elephant in an inner urban setting and its ensuing disappearance, a degree of absurdity is evident. However, attention is being drawn to the enormity of an elephant. As a non-speaking animal it is unable to explain itself, representative of the unconscious animal-like workings of the human mind.

In *Hear the Wind Sing*, the narrator writes: “Even if I could write, say, about elephants, I probably couldn’t have written a thing about elephant trainers” (5). Elephants for Murakami, while large and unwieldy, are animal rather than human. He can write about elephants but elephant trainers, with the complications, complexities and clutter of their human condition, are another matter. The animal nature of humanity is manageable, the human dimension, less so. All thinking with animals and writing and reading of animals demands projection and conjecture. Murakami’s elephants are not anthropomorphic. They do not seem to have much in common with humans in the way that Irving’s bears, the Sheep Man, Superfrog or the Shinagawa monkey do. However, like these animals, they are integral to the departure of the narrative from representational realism into the magical. The elephants of Murakami’s fiction are not anthropomorphic and they do not speak but they still link animal and human, magic and real. Furthermore, the elephants play a role in his criticism and challenging of structures, such as late-stage capitalism, as especially well-instantiated in the Kafkaesque elephant factory in “The Dancing Dwarf”. The elephants do not speak and are not fore-grounded anthropomorphic characters. They have little in common with

Irving's more anthropomorphic animals. However, like the zoo animals in Irving's *Setting Free the Bears*, Murakami's elephants are not so much individual characters as representatives of a species, which in turn, represent concepts such as alienation and commoditization in late-capitalism or Freudian psychoanalysis of the manufacture of unconscious memory. The elephants, like the beasts and INKlings are neither individualized nor anthropomorphic nor are they even animated.

In contrast, Murakami's cats are lively and anthropomorphic and, because of their domesticity, relate closely to humans. He variously employs them to examine the existence and nature of a soul in animals and humans and also to portray instinctive drives shared by humans and other animals, such as libido, carnivorism, predation and wanderlust. A lost cat starts Toru on what becomes a metaphysical journey in *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*. The loss of the cat signifies chaos and confusion until its eventual return. There is scant reference to the missing cat but his absence permeates and his return signifies a restoration of order. The cat comes back. Human-animal relations and balance are restored. Domestic normality resumes. Kumiko writes: "Take good care of the cat. I can't tell you how happy I am that he is back...He was always a symbol of something good that grew up between us. We should not have lost him when we did." (603). The cat's human name is replaced with an animal one, Mackerel. Similarly, in *A Wild Sheep Chase*, the wellbeing and naming of the cat, Kipper, is treated as a matter of considerable importance, the giving of a name allowing for an animal to be addressed, while employing a kind of trans-species transference in using the name of another non-human animal. This serves to retain animality and a more equal relationship between cat and human. The characters, and Murakami, both live and think with cats, alongside them as equals, rather than as "owners" and "pets".

Vanishing cats are a recurring motif in *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*, *Kafka on the Shore*, *Sputnik Sweetheart* and “Man-eating Cats”, which opens with a newspaper article about an old woman who died and was eaten by her cats. The narrator’s friend tells a story about a nun who asked the new pupils what they would do if they were shipwrecked with a cat and limited food: “Should you share your meagre supply of food with the cat? No, you should not...You are all precious beings, chosen by God, and the cat is not. That’s why you should eat all the food yourself” (111-2). Cats and people are not seen as equals. The nun’s dogma sees cats Cartesianly. For her, a cat has no soul, in contrast with *Kafka on the Shore* where cats have souls, which Johnnie Walker collects through vivisection, evoking consideration of predation and carnivorousism as animal (including human) lusts. Johnnie Walker can be read as an anthropomorphic manifestation of capitalism feeding on the hearts and souls of the cats, which can be read as representing living beings exploited by the capitalist machine. Murakami is also employing animals to challenge the traditional dogma of the nun and what is presented as the regressive reasoning and structure behind it. He is acting as a kind of defender of cats against dogma as well as against capitalism. His personal affiliation with cats is evident.

The wanderlust of cats, and humans, can be seen as libidinous. In “Man-eating Cats” and *Sputnik Sweetheart*, the narrator tells a story of a cat disappearing up a tree. As a child he could not understand. Before vanishing herself, Izumi offers a possible explanation: “Cats often disappear like that. Especially when they’re on heat. They get overexcited and then can’t remember how to get home ”(120). This is a credible explanation based on animal instincts equally applicable to humans. Libidinous “animal” drives, such as sexuality, can cause humans to act outside their usual patterns and, as Doniger asserts, animalize them. In *Kafka on the Shore*,

similar reasons are given: "Cats are creatures of habit. Usually they live very ordered lives. What might disrupt this is either sex or an accident...sometimes when a cat's on the prowl for sex it might wander" (51). Similarly, in attempting to describe sex drive to adolescent Yuki in *Dance, Dance, Dance*, the narrator likens it to a bird's need to fly. In line with Doniger, Murakami draws on the "beast beneath" to think with animals about sexuality in particular as well as other lusts shared by humans and animals. As with Irving's later novels, animality is not simply equated with sexuality but is complicated and linked to a broader range of libidinous instincts and drives as can be seen in Susie the bear's aggression, sexuality and identity issues or Murakami's recurring motif of the wandering cat.

Like Susie, the cats in *Kafka on the Shore* talk. Divergence from realism is first indicated when the talking cats are dropped in. Cats are portrayed as equal to human beings, fellow animals under a Darwinian model. In line with Faris's descriptors of magical realism, the "narrative appears...as fresh, childlike, even primitive" (177). The spoken communication between human and animal is presented naturally as in children's literature such as *The Wind in the Willows*. Fudge's comments on those stories also apply here: "This is anthropomorphism at its most extreme, and, paradoxically, at its most invisible. We forget that the animals are animals" (72). This is uncommon in adult fiction and Murakami has been cited for taking "faux naivete to the next level" (Loose). An urban wasteland is the physical setting for the dialogue between the cats and Nakata, an appropriate "no man's land" for species to meet in and think with one another. Nakata is outside of conventional human society. Inter-species speech aids direct comparison between humans and animals. The talking cats are both magically real and anthropomorphic. They are accessed through Nakata, an elderly man with special intellectual abilities, a kind of cat-whisperer.

Nakata's first encounter with a cat presents their dialogue as completely within the realm of normality. In fact, it is the cat that expresses surprise that they are able to talk. Nakata introduces himself. Again, the anthropomorphism inherent in the granting of a name in human language is apparent. The cat has no name: "I had one, I know I did, but somewhere along the line I didn't need it any more. ...We go by smell, shape, things of this nature" (48). Nakata responds, highlighting the human-animal difference: "People don't work that way" (48). He names the cat, just as Mackerel and Kipper were named. Modern urban humanity has become distanced from the animal world. For many people, the animals they live and think with are pets, that they name, which anthropomorphizes them. Fudge argues that "whether you live with a pet or not, thinking...always takes place with an animal in mind" (*Pets* 12). Nakata reunites humans with their missing pet cats. Somewhat zoomorphic, he operates, like many of Murakami's magically real animals, as a link between human and animal, real and magical.

The cats' nemesis is a human corporate spirit personified, illustrating Murakami's anti-capitalist sentiments. Johnnie Walker is a "surreal cameo role" (Myers), a bizarre Blofeld-esque Machiavellian villain. He explains why he "gather[s] and kill[s]...cats. I'm killing them to collect their souls, which I use to create a special kind of flute. And when I blow the flute it'll let me collect even larger souls. Then I collect larger souls and make an even bigger flute. Perhaps in the end I'll be able to make a flute so large it'll rival the universe. But first come the cats" (151). For him, unlike the nun, cats clearly have souls. Cats, as Murakami portrays them, are free-spirited, potentially representative of human freedom of the individual. The top-hatted Johnnie Walker can be read as a representation of the capitalist machine devouring individual freedom as represented by the nomadic autonomy of wandering cats. He performs vivisections, swallows the beating

hearts, and, quoting *Macbeth*, taunts Nakata into killing him. In a scene allegorical of war, the cat-catcher forces Nakata to act, to have a role in determining the outcome for the cats. It is a war between Cartesianism and Darwinism. For Johnnie Walker, cats are lesser and different. For Nakata, they are fellow creatures, similar. While Nakata is a benevolent finder of lost cats, seeking to unite them with their human partners, the capitalist cat-catcher Johnnie Walker is a diametrically opposed force for evil, seeking to enslave and exploit free spirits. Magic realism is a medium suited to confronting traditional forms and structures and, in *Kafka on the Shore*, Murakami creates magically real characters, in the brought-to-life Johnnie Walker and Colonel Sanders figures, for the purposes of his challenging of late-stage capitalism. The Johnnie Walker character is engaged in the capturing of souls and the Colonel Sanders character is involved in the commoditizing of sexuality, both of which are negative aspects of late-stage capitalism. Johnnie Walker and Colonel Sanders are not animals but they are two-dimensional real-world human-animal figures who are animated and anthropomorphized through magic realism similarly to animal characters such as the Sheep Man or Superfrog.

Irving's bears and Murakami's cats are the most human-like of their animals. *Kafka on the Shore's* cats are especially human-like. Language, both in speech and human-given names, is a major element in their anthropomorphism as well as challenging archetypes and individualizing the animals, as with Irving's bears. The similarities with humans are accentuated and the differences down-played. For Murakami, a professed felinophile, cats are the animal with which we most readily identify, their ubiquity as domestic companions leading to heightened familiarity. For Irving, the most readily empathy-engendering animals are bears, whose morphology facilitates anthropomorphism. Bears and cats are familiar to human animals but for different reasons. Bears

are similar in form and familiar through children's stories while cats are familiar as pets. We are most fascinated by the paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference evident in these most familiar animals. Murakami's magically real animals provide a further paradox, that of being simultaneously magic and real. By talking, they link human and animal and real and magical. Moreover, they are helpful in facilitating the criticism of human hegemonic structures by virtue of their place outside of humanity, while at the same time, animals' inherent furriness makes them advantageously ambiguous, free of human clutter, and allows for a wealth of unprescribed interpretations enhanced by their diversity and versatility. They are complex and multi-dimensional.

In attempting to define, describe and explain role of animals in Murakami's fiction, I am reminded of a description in *1Q84* of the daunting task Tengo faces in editing the magically real *Air Chrysalis*: "Wouldn't this be tantamount to giving a butterfly a skeleton?" (66). Insofar as such a skeleton is able to be pinned down, I would define the main functions of Murakami's animals as, like Irving, using anthropomorphism to play on the human fascination with simultaneous human and animal similarity and difference, but also linking realms, challenging human hegemonic structures and operating outside human national boundaries.

Conclusion: Reading Animals in Irving and Murakami

In concluding my discussion of Murakami's magically real animals, I borrowed his metaphor of "trying to put a skeleton on a butterfly" to describe attempting to apply a definitive analytical framework to a creative work of both fiction and fantasy (1Q84 66). I wanted to acknowledge the difficult and complicated nature of the task and the importance of ambiguity in the employment of animals, which allows for openness in interpretation. Revisiting another Murakami animal metaphor, he describes his stories as "a cardboard box crammed full of monkeys. I'd take the monkeys out of the box one at a time...and send them scurrying off into the fields. I never knew where they went from there" (*Pinball* 1973 6). Where the animals go, or are taken by the reader, both the animals in the stories and the stories themselves, is beyond the author's control. Irving and Murakami provide the monkeys or the bears for the reader to set free. In *The World According to Garp*, a comment of Garp's describes a chapter on lust in his famously asexual mother's novel, *A Sexual Suspect*: "It's like listening to a plant describing the motives of a mammal" (180). Similarly, a human can only attempt to represent the thinking of animals. Butterflies don't have skeletons. Monkeys will go where they will. Animals are liable to a broad range of human interpretation. However, despite these interpretive challenges and bearing in mind that animals will always remain open to paradox, ambiguity and a multitude of meanings, my thesis has nevertheless discovered and presented, via textual analysis, certain important points about animals in the fiction of Irving and Murakami.

In the introduction to this thesis I began by referencing the work of Berger and of Daston and Mitman regarding anthropomorphism, animals in literature, and human-animal studies. I examined some of the assertions of Fudge and Doniger and mooted some conceptual models as

potential analytical tools. I noted that an abundance of animals was a commonality of my two focal novelists' work but that they operated differently. Fudge argues that speech is all-important in the process of anthropomorphism. I would widen that to include other aspects of use of language, such as the giving of names which places animals in the human domain. Similarly, I find that Doniger's succinct and simplistic proclamation that "sexuality makes humans into animals; language makes animals into humans" (25) requires complication and expansion. Sexuality is only one of many "animal" drives that make humans more readily seen as animal. Sexuality is highly complex and cannot be simply equated with animality. As Irving's writing develops, we see how he embarks on a more sophisticated engagement with the complicated connections between animality and sexuality. My analysis finds that, the more closely writers focus on both language and sexuality, the sharper their sense of both the similarities and differences between humans and other animals becomes. Writing is obviously unavoidably anthropocentric and therefore entails projection and conjecture. Anthropomorphism encompasses a degree of anthropocentrism which has at times in the past been viewed as undesirable although recent thinking, for example that of Mitman, Fudge and de Waal, tends to view recognizing the degree of similarity between human and animals as a positive step. Similarly, to describe humans behaving "like animals" is not necessarily a derogatory observation: animal advocacy, for example, often stresses the similarities between humans and animals.

Animals feature prominently in the fiction of John Irving and Haruki Murakami. We are led to think with them differently from how we read and identify with human characters. As posited by Berger and by Fudge, we human animals are fascinated by the paradox whereby we are both animal and not animal. Standing outside the human domain, animals can reflect our strengths and foibles and because paradoxically animals also have so much in common with us, they can also

represent us directly. This paradox, along with the ambiguity inherent in animals in fiction, allowing for a wealth of potential interpretations, contributes to their being good to think with. Without the complicated clutter of spoken language and the individuating detail of human characterization, animals are more open for interpretation.

Transmorphism plays a role in enabling some animals to be read more directly. Anthropomorphic animals, such as Irving's bears or Murakami's Superfrog, engender empathy partly because of their similarity to humans and foster further fascination on account of their concurrent difference. On the other hand, zoomorphic Susie can be seen to evoke empathy and interest because she transcends language, bearishly conveying a range of concerns wordlessly while she is employed to explore arguably "animal" sexuality alongside recovery and revenge. Irving's transmorphic bears are blended animal-human characters at large in a wholly plausible, albeit at times bizarre, fictional universe. Their animal dimension expands their *modus operandi*. With Murakami's magically real hybrid characters the extent of possibility is even greater. Like the White Rabbit, they open doors to a whole new world. Animals are other and exotic but not usually alien or too fantastical. The talking cats in *Kafka on the Shore* are examples of "conventional" magically real animals. Cats are familiar as pets and a cat who talks, linking magical and real and further linking human and animal, is more immediately accessible and more readily accepted than fantastical beings, such as the mythologically-based INKlings.

In my first chapter, I argued that animal advocacy and anthropomorphism can be complementary concepts as evident in Irving's *Setting Free the Bears*. The literal freeing of the bears and the underlying theme of liberation reflects the liberationism of the nineteen-sixties when the novel was written. By back-grounding the social and historical context of *Setting Free the*

Bears relevant to Irving's employment of animals and his playing with anthropomorphic techniques, I found that Irving uses anthropomorphism in a positive way, using the similarities between humans and animals to engender empathy while at the same time using difference to inspire fascination and signpost an inability to understand completely. For Irving, language is a positive catalyst in the anthropomorphizing process, whether it be "spoken" by animals, projected onto their thinking or applied in nomenclature. Language, in accordance with Fudge, anthropomorphizes Irving's bears and other animals, making them more accessible and consequently easier and therefore better to think, read and write with. The inherent propensity for anthropomorphism in the taxonomy and morphology of bears, as instantiated in a wealth of children's literature, also assists in engendering empathy. This is heightened in Irving's novel by the invitation it offers for the reader to identify with the minority-representing animals persecuted at the hands of O. Schrutt. In short, Irving's bears, basically human-shaped, educe empathy.

Moving from bears to oryx and deer, this chapter explored the role of animals as symbols of arguably "animal" sexuality in the representation of human behaviour. Irving embraces this supposedly animal dimension of human nature, in a way that reveals the significance of Freudianism in his work. Regarding animals requires us to think about the extent of our conscious responsibility for our "animal" sexuality. The ambiguity of humans being both animals and not animals is again an asset while "denying the animal" can be seen as detrimental. For Darwin and Freud, and for Irving, animality underlies humanity.

However, there are times at which distinctions between human and animal can be seen as preferable, such as the outcome of the unnatural release of wild animals into an urban environment, as occurs at the end of *Setting Free the Bears*. The result of the zoo busts, both

historical and fictional, can be read as evidence that the human and the animal realms may be better kept apart, as suggested by both Cartesian thinking and animal advocacy; at any rate the intersection of the realms during the freeing of the zoo animals proves disastrous. The resulting blood-bath arises in part from an excess of anthropomorphism or the wrong kind of anthropomorphism, as part of the arguably well-intentioned but perhaps misguided and over-idealistic counter-cultural liberationism of Hannes and Siggy, representative of the zeitgeist. Some animals survive, however, and the novel and the initial chapter of this study close with a nod to adaptability as a key to survival: we “expect to hear great things of the Rare Spectacled Bears” (340).

My second chapter also concerned bears. I exploited the opportunity for more direct contrast and comparison between features and functions of anthropomorphism and zoomorphism as offered by the two bear characters in *The Hotel New Hampshire*, anthropomorphic State o’Maine/Earl and zoomorphic Susie. I also looked at how and why, as according to Doniger, language contributes to anthropomorphism and sexuality is a component in zoomorphism. I further complicated these assertions, expanding on “language” to include speech, thought represented as speech, and human-like names, and identifying that the relationship between sexuality and animality is a highly complex one, with sexuality being only one “animal” drive among many at work in zoomorphism. In fact, I argued that much of the treatment of sexuality in *The Hotel New Hampshire* deals with more human rather than animal concepts, such as rape, incest and pornography. “The Pension Grillparzer” supplies a useful ursine element for analysis as Irving builds a more anthropomorphic bear character, to be further developed in *The Hotel New Hampshire’s* State o’Maine/Earl and then supplanted by the human-in-a-bear-suit, Susie. Freudianism resonates through both stories. Bears become simultaneously symbols of sexuality

and the fairy-tale nature of the novel, extending their ambiguity, which enables an even greater breadth of interpretations. Irving also develops a motif of a “smart bear” and a noble beast. Rape is identified as a human aberration of animal sexuality. Again our human role as both “us” and “them” in relation to animals is utilized as an insightful tool in exploring the complex concept of rape. Rapists are sometimes termed “animals” or “beasts”, yet perhaps this term is unjust to animals. Here, again, Irving’s use of animals requires us to think about the politics and ethics of human sexuality, and in this case sexual violence. Animals assist in analyzing the “beast beneath”.

In addition to bears, *The Hotel New Hampshire* features Sorrow the dog, who presents an opportunity to explore human manipulation of animals, in this case, literally by means of taxidermy. Irving thereby explores non-linguistic modes of animal communication, such as posture, sound and smell. Similarly, in the case of the human characters, John and Franny, the complex interconnectedness of maturation, sexuality, scent, sound, lust and other drives and perceptions further informs us about zoomorphism and the animals that we humans are. Sound and smell are shown to be modes of communication for humans as well as animals. These observations about Irving’s animals and the underlying animal instinctive behaviours of the human characters in developing fascination with similarities and differences build the case for writing with animals. Irving’s animals are multifunctional, paradoxically both “us” and “them”, usefully ambiguous and transcendent of language, evocative of empathy, and instinctive, in the Freudian sense, with regard to sexuality and other drives of the libido, such as aggression or bloodlust and other modes of communication such as posture and smell. In *The Hotel New Hampshire* there is a pleasing symmetry between the anthropomorphic State o’Maine/Earl and the zoomorphic Susie whereby the humanity of animality and the corresponding animality of humanity are able to be explored within the same text.

In Chapter Three I conducted a broader examination of animals throughout Murakami's fiction and found that Murakami's anthropomorphic animals perform the functions that are evident in Irving's bears but their magically real nature also leads to three further roles. Firstly, they connect realms including human and animal, magical and real, conscious and unconscious. Murakami uses a metaphor of a switchboard in connection with the Sheep Man, to suggest that the links are intricate and inter-connected. Secondly, Murakami's magically real animals also draw on both traditional Japanese stories and a range of modern and Western influences, uniting local and global concerns, eroding cultural and national barriers and broadening appeal. Thirdly, Murakami uses magically real animals in ways that challenge conventional human hegemonic structures, late capitalism in particular.

After identifying these three further functions of Murakami's magically real animals, I looked at the nature of magic realism and the role of animals within that genre and the Japanese tradition before turning to an analysis of the use of animals in the texts. The Sheep Man, Superfrog and the Shinagawa Monkey provide evidence of all of the functions suggested. The beasts and the INKlings in *Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* operate somewhat differently as they are mythologically based and neither connected to real-world animals nor anthropomorphic. Operating in the unconscious and the subterranean respectively, they metaphorically represent that which underlies humanity more than that which links it to real-world animality. Furthermore, the encryption of the animals within the coded construct heightens the ambiguity, inviting a greater breadth of interpretation. Murakami's elephants are also different from the more "conventional" human-animal hybrid characters as their treatment is especially absurdist and they are not anthropomorphic. The third chapter finishes by looking at Murakami's more "conventionally" magically real cats and other anthropomorphic figures in *Kafka on the Shore*.

These cats fulfil the anthropomorphic functions such as are found in Irving's bears as well as performing all of the further functions identified in Murakami's other magically real hybrid characters such as Superfrog or the Shinagawa monkey. Familiar as pets and further linked to humans by talking, the cats represent a more holistic employment of animals in a magically real context than the elephant factory or the INKlings and are more fully fleshed-out characters.

Like the cats, the Sheep Man fulfils some facets of the role played by Irving's bears, bringing together human and non-human within one character. However, in other ways the role of Murakami's animals is quite different. Magically real characters such as the Sheep Man are more like Carroll's White Rabbit, signifiers of a deviation from conventional realism. Whether zoomorphic or anthropomorphic, the magic realist conceits of shape-shifting and spiritual possession in *A Wild Sheep Chase* allow further developments of these altered states of being. Suspension of disbelief opens the floodgates of potential plausibility. The specific role of sheep in Japanese twentieth-century expansionism suggests that the sheep motif can be read as giving rise to a challenge of late-stage capitalism.

Human hegemonic structures are also confronted in "The Dancing Dwarf", in which Murakami combines human and animal in an elephant factory, a Kafkaesque and Marxist metaphor which explores the dehumanizing alienation and commodification inherent in the capitalist mode of production. An elephant factory metaphor is also employed in *Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* but in a Freudian representation of memory and consciousness rather than a Kafka-esque confrontation of hegemonic structures. "The Elephant Vanishes" explores the balance between human and animal. Murakami's elephants do not speak and nor are they anthropomorphic. Consequently, they do not function in the same way as Irving's or some of Murakami's animals do in highlighting similarities and differences between human and

animal. Like Murakami's other magically real animals, though, they assist in facilitating the anti-conventional stance of both the content and the genre of Murakami's magic realism, in linking magical and real, and in broadening reader-identification outside cultural specificity.

Cats are to Murakami as bears are to Irving. They are the favourite animals, the most human-like, the most multi-dimensional and the most widely-featured. Humans live and think with cats. In Murakami's fiction, talking cats enable inter-species communication and human-animal comparisons; they embody and provoke critiques of human social and political structures such as late capitalism. Meanwhile they also perform a meta-fictional function, challenging the dominance of realism in literature.

In summary, I have found that there are certain features that Murakami's and Irving's animals have in common. These include the fascination engendered by the paradox of simultaneous similarity and difference, diversity, versatility, powers to evoke empathy and the furry ambiguity I have referred to often and see as a positive quality. A little like Rorschach ink-blot, animals are open to a wide range of readings but, unlike ink-blot, they have a easily recognisable shapes that evoke archetypes, associations and schemata. Moreover, paradoxically, Irving's and Murakami's animals are able to transcend language because of these cultural archetypes and personal associations and schemata that readers bring. In both writers' fiction, sexuality and other arguably "animal" behaviours contribute in a complicated way to zoomorphism. Correspondingly, language, notably speech and the giving of human names to animals, is a crucial component in anthropomorphism. Both zoomorphism and anthropomorphism play on the paradox of

simultaneous similarity and difference. Freed from the confines of plausibility, Murakami's magically real animals are yet more diverse and versatile than Irving's, performing important further functions in uniting traditional Japanese animal tropes with international and contemporary influences, in confronting conventional human hegemonic structures and in linking both magical and real and human and animal.

In all these ways, rather than attempting the impossible and taxonomically unsuitable task of putting a skeleton on a butterfly, this thesis has attempted to chart the flight path and movement of Murakami's and Irving's butterflies, and the patterns on their wings.

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