



Association of Companion Animal Behavior Counselors
An International Membership and Certification Organization of
Companion Animal Behavioral Specialists

The Behavior Counselor Newsletter
Spring/ Summer 2004 Issue

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Association of Companion Animal Behavior Counselors
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Board of Directors

Keeping looking forward, but don't forget your past...

We are all looking forward to a tremendous summer in 2004! There are so many advances in the pet product fields, from new dietary products, to new alternative and complementary medicines and practices, to new books and articles on the benefits of having a pet. In addition, we keep learning about new theories and methods of training and behavior counseling, from well-respected long-time behaviorists and trainers, to the up-and-coming future stars of the animal behavior consulting and training world (you could be next!). Many of us may find that our clients, family and friends are becoming more literate and more aware of the newest toys, drugs, aromatherapy products or training books. This is definitely good news for all of us, and especially the pets that will certainly benefit from their more-educated owners.

However, in the midst of all the new products, veterinary advances, updated behavior theories or new training practices, we try not to lose sight of what is at the core of what we do – to help people and their pets to live together in a healthy, happy way. And we should never lose sight of the basic principals of how we do what we do. Client-pet observations, detailed histories, tried and true (humane) behavioral modification methods, knowledge of fundamental animal behavior principles – these are tools that we always have on hand to help us and the people and pets we serve. These tools help us reach, and keep the high standard of service that we would want for our own pets.

So, as you encounter questions about the use and effectiveness of the latest drug or natural therapy product, why Rover isn't friendly with other dogs, or how to get the new cat to stop marking everything in sight, take confidence that you have the fundamental training and counseling tools that have always served you well in the past, and will continue to do so for many years to come.

Regards,
Daniela Sharma, Ph.D.

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Association of Companion Animal Behavior Counselors
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Board of Professional Certification

Two New Credentials Offered by the Board of Professional Certification (BOPC)

In an effort to better serve animal professionals and the general public, the Board of Professional Certification has created two new credentials for professionals in the field of applied animal behavior. One is above and one is below the current Canine Behavior Counselor (CBC) credential, the applied professional standard for our Association.

The Certified Dog Training Instructor (CDTI) credential will be awarded to professionals who have completed a BOPC approved practical course in dog training and instructor skills development by an Approved Education Provider. An internship is also required with a BOPC mentor. These individuals will be qualified to train family dogs in basic obedience, teach obedience classes as an instructor, and work with families to modify normal but unwanted behavior. The Associate Dog Training Instructor (ADTI) will be offered in lieu of the CDTI for individuals with less than three years experience in the field. Satisfactory documentation in the field must accompany applicants for the CDTI credential.

The Board Certified Companion Animal Behaviorist (BCCAB) credential will be awarded to professionals who have completed a Masters degree or higher with a minimum of 24 credits in behavioral science and required courses in the following subject areas:

Learning

Ethology, comparative psychology or animal behavior

Physiological psychology

Family counseling

A general small business practice/ethics course

Experimental psychology or research methods

Introduction to Statistics

9 credit hours in a minimum of three (3) companion animal species (e.g. canine, feline, equine, avian and reptilian) or equivalent

A minimum of three years of practical training and experience in applied companion animal behavior

The BCCAB credential is intended for those who will practice applied companion animal behavior and/or teach applied animal behavior theoretical courses and workshops in academic, clinical and other practical settings.

It is the hope of the BOPC that these new credentials will increase the group of peer-reviewed professionals in the field and provide credentialing for dog trainers who have not yet completed academic training in the behavioral sciences and for academic instructors who will teach these individuals.

Robert DeFranco, MS, CBC

Chairperson, Board of Professional Certification

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From The *Editor*

From the Editor: Joanne Randolph

Thank goodness it is finally SPRING! Despite a tough winter of slogging through the slush to my “day job”, there have been a few bright spots during the past few months. These include the adult dog training classes and Puppy Kindergarten for pets adopted from our shelter. It is great to see pet owners who are willing to work with their pets and who are eager to learn how to speak “dog.” I wish more of the people who adopt from us would take advantage of these classes. We have seen some of the highest adoption numbers in our history in the past few months (when winter adoptions were once few and far between). And I'd like to think that it is due to the core of volunteers and staff who attend the weekly training classes with our dogs. We are teaching manners, basic obedience, and a few special tricks. These better-behaved dogs are much more likely to be accepted into a family's home. Another highlight has been the clicker-training course I have been taking this past month. A person is only limited by their creativity when it comes to training with the clicker it seems! We are implementing a “Clicking in the Shelter” program (so things like clicking for silence, or for a dog sitting quietly at the front of the cage, etc.). It will be interesting to see if it will work and if we can get enough volunteers to participate.

We have a great issue for you this spring. Check out the BOPC and the Committees sections to see what's new with the Association for Companion Animal Behavior Counseling! Many thanks to all who submitted articles— we couldn't do this without you. For those of you who did not submit this time, don't be shy! Your fellow members want to hear from you! We all have unique perspectives and experiences that could benefit the other people who work with companion animals. The newsletter will only be as useful and successful as we all make it.

Hope you enjoy the issue. Comments, suggestions, and submissions are always welcome.

See you in the summer!

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Association Update

New Association Logo:

The Association's new logo has been incorporated into this newsletter and is just about ready for the web. Look for a site revamp to sport the new logo. An announcement will be made regarding information about how to obtain a link to copy/paste the new logo into your business's website. Please do not pull the logo from this newsletter.

Association Benefits:

The Association is proud to partner with DentalPlans.com Inc. to offer current members a 35% discount off the internet retail price on all plans listed on the dentalplans website. Discount dental plans are not insurance plans, but savings plans.

I use the Unicare200 plan and saved over \$2000.00 for several root canals and 2 crowns! I also used the dentist I've been seeing for over 25 years. I hope you find the plans and the savings as beneficial as I have.

[Click Here](#) To learn more and to find out how to obtain one of the plans. You must use the code provided to the Association to receive the additional 35% discount.

Discount Health Plans

Coming Soon!

Digital Stack Library

The American Institute for Animal Science, (AIAS) is proud to announce the opening of its digital library for its current students. AIAS has graciously agreed to allow current ACABC members access to its *Digital Stacks* library. The Education Committee has agreed to assist in the maintenance of this library. If you have any suggestions or comments to help the library grow, please [Click Here](#) to use the form for the Education Committee. More information about how to access the Digital Stacks Library will be issued in May.

Committees:

Your committee chairs are working hard to continue to promote, develop and grow the Association. We are looking forward to a growth spurt this year because of the dedication and commitment of each of the chairs. I'd like to congratulate each chair for the hard work done so far!

The following committees are looking for members to assist with the various duties for each committee. If you wish to join one or a few of the committees, you will find a link to more information in the Members Lounge.

Or click this link:

[Join A Committee](#)

Public Relations:

Chair: Dorrie Wilson, CBC

Membership:

Chair: Alan Turner, ACBC

The Behavior Counselor Newsletter

Chair: Joanne Randolph

Education & Library

Chair: Chris Shaughness, ACBC

Board of Professional Counselors (BOPC)

Chair: Bob DeFranco, MS, BCCAB

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Sincerely,

Anne Palumbo, M.H.S.
Executive Director



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Chair: Bob DeFranco, MS, BCCAB

ACABC Executive Committee Minutes

April 5, 2004

RE: ACABC Executive Committee Minutes

Method: Teleconference

Agenda: To discuss and implement methods to increase membership and continue to promote the Association's visibility to the public.

Executive Chair: Anne Palumbo, MHS

Attendees:

Anne Palumbo, MHS, Executive Director

Bob DeFranco, MS, BCCAB, Chair BOPC

Chris Shaughness, ACBC, Chair Education & Library

Joanne Randolph, Chair, *The Behavior Counselor* newsletter

Dorrie Wilson, CBC, Chair PR & Membership

The following was discussed, voted unanimously and implemented:

PR & Membership:

The committee chair's responsibility is to increase membership and promote the Association's visibility to the public. It was agreed to form 2 committees; Public Relations and Membership. The Executive Director will elect a chair for the Membership committee.

Public Relations:

Chair: Dorrie Wilson, CBC

1. Additional committee members will be selected to assist in project completions.
2. A media kit containing general Association content will be created.
3. A list of relevant magazines, newsletters, organizations, companies, etc. will be created to contact regarding publishing articles, press releases and other informative material to those in animal related professions.
4. Representation at workshops, seminars and other related events will continue.
5. Discussion concerning the efficacy of purchasing booth space at related events will continue at the next executive meeting.

Membership:

Chair: Alan J Turner, CBC

1. Additional committee members will be selected to assist in project completions.
2. Promote new membership.
3. Assists in obtaining renewals of lapsed membership.
4. Survey current membership for direction.
5. Discussion concerning additional responsibilities will continue at the next executive meeting.

The Behavior Counselor Newsletter

Chair: Joanne Randolph

1. Additional committee members will be selected to assist in project completions.
2. A committee member will be selected to obtain content for each of the categories listed on the navigation bar.
3. The newsletter will be created in Acrobat Reader format. Each new issue will be downloadable by members via the member lounge with a link to the archived issues. The Executive Director will email current members when new issues are released.
4. This committee will also assist in preparation and disbursement of the media kit.
5. Discussion concerning growth of the Behavior Counselor newsletter will continue at the next executive meeting.

Education & Library

Chair: Chris Shaughness, ACBC

1. Additional committee members will be selected to assist in project completions.
2. The American Institute for Animal Science will provide access to its library to current members.
3. Contributions by current members and other professionals, approved by the committee chair, will be added to the library via each appropriate category.
4. Educational opportunities to current members will be implemented via workshops and seminars presented by current members or others in related professions.
5. A list of eligible organizations, companies, businesses, individuals will be created to solicit recognition as an education provider. A package of material will be created to present to those eligible.
6. Discussion concerning growth of the education and library features will continue at the next executive meeting.

Board of Professional Counselors (BOPC)

Chair: Bob DeFranco, MS, BCBC

Mr. DeFranco discussed the feasibility and creation of 2 additional levels of certification. More about these certification levels can be read in the next release of the *Behavior Counselor* newsletter.

Executive Director:

Anne Palumbo, MHS

Ms. Palumbo discussed acquisition of additional benefits, features and services for current members.

1. A dental discount plan will be available at a 35% discount for all plans offered by the company. Current members will be able to access a coupon code to use via the member lounge. Members will also be provided instructions regarding how to use the coupon code. A health insurance discount plan is also in development.
2. The American Institute for Animal Science, (AIAS), will be opening its library to its current students. AIAS has graciously offered access to all current Association members. An announcement will be made when access is available.
3. A new Association logo and a new site revamp will be released with the next *Behavior Counselor* newsletter or shortly thereafter.
4. Current members will be able to fill out a form for each committee(s) they wish to serve on.

The next teleconference for the executive committee is scheduled for May 5, 2004

Sincerely,



Anne Palumbo, M.H.S.
Executive Director

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The Human-Animal Bond

Taking the Good with the Bad

By Daniela Maina, Ph.D.

As trainers, behavior counselors and other companion animal professionals, we have all had experience with the human-animal bond more than once in our practices. I'm not talking about the wonderful, productive relationship that can develop with good training and understanding between the pet and owner. I am speaking instead of the "darker" side of this bond. There is sometimes a less useful relationship that develops between pets and owners. As professionals, we need to be aware of this and prepare for it.

Some of you may have already dealt with or experienced an owner whose pet can do no wrong, and that they certainly know more about training than you do. Despite your studies, experience and life-long learning credentials, your advice is not what they need to hear. This is especially true if you are younger than the client (or perhaps look younger than the client) and sometimes if you are of the opposite gender.

What sometimes happens is that the person objectifies their pet, whom they love very much, and they begin to relate their self-worth with the pet's behavioral expressions. For example, if you, as a professional tell someone that they really need to work on getting Rover not to jump on people, this person will take it as a serious personal offense. The behavior, indeed every action of their dog, has become a link to their own worth as a pet owner, as a keeper of animals, as a trainer, and in extreme cases, as a person.

It becomes unfortunate that if this type of reaction keeps the owner away from seeking good training or behavior modification techniques. The pets may lose out on experiencing the positive aspects of training or the benefits of being better behaved. The owner loses, because they forego the opportunity of learning how to better communicate with and understand their pet. Also, especially in urban situations, society in general can lose out. How many times would simple training or behavior modification prevent unfortunate accidents?

Two years ago, one of our own ACABC members had an experience with an older gentleman who had a lot of trouble taking advice from her. Any advice she offered was construed as an unwelcome criticism of his worthiness as a trainer of the dog he had owned for many years.

It's not all gloom and doom, though. If you are sensitive enough to realize that the "hard-headed" person is really just bonded to their pet in a very personal way, then you can modify the way you deal with that person. It's another aspect of pet ownership, a different manifestation of the human-animal bond. You can hopefully use their existing personal bond with their pet to strengthen that other, more useful bond that will lead to a better-behaved pet and a happier pet-owner relationship.

This poem puts it all in perspective:

When I Got My New Dog

I asked for strength that I might rear him perfectly;
I was given weakness that I might feed him more treats.
I asked for good health that I might rest easy;
I was given a "special needs" dog that I might know nurturing.
I asked for an obedient dog that I might feel proud;
I was given stubbornness that I might feel humble.
I asked for compliance that I might feel masterful;
I was given a clown that I might laugh.
I asked for a companion that I might not feel lonely;
I was given a best friend that I would feel loved.
I got nothing I asked for,
But everything I needed."

(Author unknown.)

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Companion News

No Kill In NYC By 2008 - © 2004 Animal News Center, Inc.
by Lacy Stephens

Death took a holiday for many New York City shelter animals in early February. The New York Animal Care & Control centers held mass adoptions on February 1 and 2 to counteract the overpopulation in city shelters.

"Our weekend goal was to adopt (out) 100 pets. The final count is 246 adoptions and 40 placements, for a grand total of 286 placements," said Ed Boks, executive director of AC&C, who credited the New York Daily News for helping get the message out.

The weekend events signaled a significant step toward the AC&C's goal of no kill in New York City by 2008. If achieved, New York will be the first major metropolitan "no kill" community in the U.S.

"If we do it in New York, we will rob every other community in the United States of their excuses," Boks said.

Animal Care & Control's three facilities took in over 50,000 stray animals last year. Fewer than 10 percent of these animals were adopted.

A "no kill" community would mean life for every adoptable animal in New York City shelters.

Ed Boks shares his vision with other influential New Yorkers. Mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg and lawyer Jane Hoffman formed the Mayor's Alliance for New York City Animals in 2002.

"Our hope is that at some point we can save them all," said Hoffman, now president of the Mayor's Alliance.

There are currently 50 organizations in the alliance, all working to increase shelter animal adoptions and spay/neutering, and decrease euthanasia.

The Mayor's Alliance held five adoption events at city parks last year where over 300 shelter animals were adopted. Dates for the 2004 park adoptions are already planned:

Central Park (May 23)
Clove Lake Park (Sept. 25)
Prospect Park (June 20, Oct. 24)

Edwin Sayres, president of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), hopes to help New York become a "no kill" city by reducing its animal euthanasia rate by 10 percent every year.

"With Ed Boks here and with what Jane Hoffman is creating with the Mayor's Alliance, and with what I bring to the table, it feels like the planets are all in their right alignment," said Sayres.

The ASPCA has increased its spending in the city from \$12.5 million last year to \$15.5 million this year. These funds will be aimed at increasing adoptions and providing animal behavior training lessons to pet owners.

Dr. Jay Kuhlman, a veterinarian for over 30 years, stresses low-cost spay/neutering as imperative for a long-term solution to high euthanasia rates.

"We, the people, have done this. And we can decrease it," said Dr. Kuhlman.

Ed Boks sees hope in the future for New York City shelter animals because he has faith in New Yorkers.

"This was a historic weekend in New York City animal welfare and demonstrates what a community can do when challenged to end the killing," Boks said.

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Companion News

Helping Dogs, Cats And Babies To Get Along

by Charlotte LoBuono

Introducing a companion animal to a new baby takes work, but with a little effort on their guardian's part, animals can adapt well to being part of a growing family. To help make the transitional period smoother, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and americanbaby.com recently offered a few practical tips:

Before the baby arrives, take your furry family member to the veterinarian for vaccinations, a routine examination, and if necessary, sterilization. Sterilized companion animals have fewer health problems and are less likely to bite. Behavioral problems such as anxiety should also be addressed before the baby is born.

To accustom the animal to the sights and smells associated with baby, sprinkle baby oil or baby powder on your skin.

Before the baby comes home from the hospital, allow your dog or cat to sniff an article of clothing worn by the baby or a blanket that the baby was wrapped in.

It is also a good idea to turn on a mechanical infant swing, if one is available, and use a rocking chair. You can also play a recording of baby-related noises, such as a baby crying.

The Albuquerque, NM, company Blessings Unlimited recently released a CD, "Preparing Fido," that was created specifically to help animals acclimate to the sounds made by an infant.

The recording features tracks such as "Crying Baby" and "Cooing Baby." The CD costs \$16.99 plus shipping and handling. More information can be obtained by calling (505) 730-1118 or visiting www.preparingfido.com.

Upon your return from the hospital or birthing center, have someone take the baby into another room, and greet your furry friend with a warm welcome.

Cats are unpredictable by nature, so discourage your feline from approaching the baby. Cats should observe the baby from a distance.

When introducing your dog to the new addition, have someone restrain him or her on a leash while you sit and hold the baby on your lap. Covering the baby's head with your hand shows protectiveness towards the baby and prevents your dog from nipping at the baby's ears.

You may allow your dog to see and sniff the baby, if the dog does not display any aggressive behavior. The dog should not lick the baby, because licking may be a prelude to biting and is unsanitary.

It is wise to keep your dog on a leash when he is around the baby for the first three weeks. This will allow you to observe the dog's behavior.

Finally, spending quality time with your furry companion every day will reassure the animal that he or she is still your 'baby' too - and it will relax you as well.

Sources

News Press

www.news-press.com/news/lifestyle/040115kidsandpets.html

Create a home where baby & pet can live under the same roof

Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

www.hsus.org/ace/13946

Introducing your pet and new baby

American Baby

www.americanbaby.com/ab/story.jhtml?storyid=
templatedata/ab/story/data/1241.xml&catref=cat2760004

Building a relationship between pet and baby

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Association of Companion Animal Behavior Counselors
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Legislation

'Animal Law' Comes Into Its Own

by Patricia Collier

Ten years ago, one would have been hard pressed to find even a reference to "animal law."

These days, animal law has become a viable legal specialty, with an increasing number of attorneys forming entire practices dedicated to animal issues.

Animal lawyers don't just handle legal challenges for endangered species or prosecute severe abuse cases. In response to a growing interest in protecting all animals, animal practices now represent many kinds of issues, including animal cruelty, companion animal custody during divorces, legal provisions for animals in case of the guardian's death, hunting limits, lab testing of animals, wildlife conservation regulations, even definitions of terms such as "pain" as they relate to animals, and much more.

The sheer number of animals cared for by humans has a lot to do with the increase in animal-related legal services. According to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, animal guardianship has increased nearly 19 percent in the last ten years.

The amount of money spent on those animals has nearly doubled during the same period of time, going from \$17 billion in 1994 to around \$31 billion in 2003.

The more people value their companion animals, the more they are demanding laws to protect them.

Because of this, animal law has taken center stage with many state bar associations, and at several law schools across the country. More than 30 law schools, including Yale and Harvard, now offer at least some animal law courses, including 'pet custody.'

"Animals can't speak for themselves, so people need to speak for them," said Barbara Gislason, a Minneapolis attorney who chairs the recently-formed Animal Law Bar Association committee.

According to many attorneys, another reason animal law is gaining strength is that people today are more aware than they were a decade ago of the fact that animals have emotions and need protection from abuse and exploitation.

"Most of this stuff has not been closely analyzed. Now people are questioning it," said David Wolfson, a New York City attorney who has handled some animal cases and has taught animal law at Yale University.

"Many people consider a pet as a family member," Gislason said. "But there's nothing in the law that reflects the role of a pet in the family."

While the field is expanding, progress is slower than many attorneys would like, mainly because most animal cases haven't gone past the district court level, making them difficult for lawyers to find and cite in their cases.

Help may be on the way.

Carolyn Matlack is an attorney and the president and managing editor of Animal Legal Reports Services (ALRS), which offers reports co-authored by attorneys to keep everyone -- from lawyers to schools to the media to corporate managers -- aware and up to date on what's happening with animals in the courts.

"Our mission is to uplift the status of animal law and therefore animals around the world," Matlack said.

The reports will be published on a regular basis and will help the reader quickly locate information, including animal-related cases and articles and recent developments that directly impact legal practices.

Animal law will also play a part as current laws are challenged by the public, such as how much to allow for damages in a veterinary malpractice suit. Currently, animal guardians can receive 'fair market value' of their animal, but many think they should be compensated more.

"What's happening now is a real interesting shift in the law in how we recognize animals as having value," said Lee Scholder, who serves as vice chair of the Minnesota Bar Association animal law committee.

Wolfson said on the law books, companion animals are viewed as personal property, much like a living room sofa. Using the property reference makes things difficult in veterinary malpractice suits, he said, because damage awards are given based only on the 'monetary value' of a companion animal, and ignore the 'emotional value' of the non-human companion.

"...These cases point to a larger trend. This area of the law needs to change to reflect that people do form special bonds with their pets," Wolfson said. "If someone carried around a rock and felt an attachment to it, that would not be acceptable. But a pet is different. The law needs to start changing its terms."

With more than 160 million animal guardians in the United States -- a figure that continues to grow daily -- animal law promises to be a positive -- and busy -- force in the future of protection for our non-human companions.

"We spend an increasing amount of time with our pets in today's world and form deep relations with them," said Nancy Peterson of the Humane Society of the United States.

"Pets are sometimes the one constant in our lives." Peterson pointed out.

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On Behavior

AGGRESSION – HOW TO TREAT IT

by Pia McGovern, BS, CPDT



As a professional dog trainer and behavior counselor I deal with many behavior problems. Aggression is the most common reason why dog owners call me, whether it's aggression directed towards a person or another animal, usually towards other dogs.

There are many varieties of aggression: pain elicited aggression, hormonal (e.g. testosterone – inter-male aggression, labor or maternal aggression) aggression over resource acquisition, aggression due to physical/psychological stress, territorial aggression, schedule induced aggression, and predatory aggression, to name a few.

Unless a dog is poorly bred (too much in-breeding), has a neurological or organic disorder, or is bred specifically for its aggressive tendencies, the most likely reason for aggression is fear – fear of the unknown. The dog is lacking the skill and experience to know how to handle or cope with certain situations, other dogs or people. The behavior – the fear aggressive response – is most commonly caused by under-socialization, a traumatic experience as a youngster when the dog had little or no "padding" of good experiences, and mishandling of the situation by the owner. It takes at least ten good experiences to counter one bad. Dogs, at a very young age, need to have tons of exposure, or socialization to a variety of different things. These include other dogs (perhaps through off-leash puppy pre-school classes) children, men, men in hats, old ladies walking with canes, and people in wheelchairs. It is also important to plan trips to the vet and groomer, if for no other reason than getting a treat.

This socialization has to take place early on, from day one. Before you get your new puppy, the breeder has the responsibility of giving the pups good initial "padding" to life in a human world, starting with handling, exposure to different household sounds, children playing and laughing, car trips, etc.

Trainers often talk about socialization periods and critical or "fear" periods. Because different breeds develop at different speeds there may not be just one critical period. As a general rule I tell clients that the fear imprint stage can be from 9 to 11 weeks, but it can start at 7 weeks and continue thru 12 weeks. The *general* socialization period is from birth to 20 weeks. If you, during this time period, make sure your dog gets exposed to all the different facets of the human world, you will have a well-rounded, well adjusted dog that can cope with what life throws at it, *without* becoming aggressive.

There is also a second fear period – the "fear of the familiar" stage that can appear anywhere from 6 months to 12 months. This is the period when your well-socialized puppy walks out the door one day and the mailbox that has been just outside your door everyday of the dog's life with you, suddenly becomes a huge scary monster. Here is where traditional trainers would insist that the owner force the dog to cope with it" by coaxing or forcing it to get closer to the object. We need to back up and give the dog some time to come out of this phase, approach and investigate on its own time with lots of encouragement and positive reinforcement, and we will have much better adjusted adult dogs.

So how *should* we deal with aggression? The "old-school" way of dealing with aggression of any kind was to punish it out of the dog. Unfortunately there are still many trainers that use punitive methods when training, not only for aggression, but also for basic obedience. The problem with this method is that it usually only makes an aggressive behavioral problem worse. Yes, while a well-timed leash correction on a choke chain or prong collar, may interrupt and suppress the unwanted behavior momentarily, it doesn't teach the dog what we want, which is to be *okay* and not become reactive to another dog. In fact, the next time your dog sees an unfamiliar dog his reaction will be stronger due to the association that now has taken place. The "strange dog" is scarier because it now also predicts physical pain or discomfort.

Let's look at how dogs learn . . . the first way dogs learn is by association, which is involuntary, the dog doesn't really have to think about it, it just happens. It's also called Classical Conditioning or Pavlovian learning. A common example of associative learning in dogs is their reaction to the leash. They love it! Or the sound of the can opener. Dogs and cats come running to that sound! Humans learn by association, too, but dogs rely on this learning far more

than we do. The ecstatic reaction to the leash is because the dog has learned that the leash predicts something fun – the walk, and most dogs love walks! The dog *associates* the leash with the walk. Fear is learned by association as well. For instance, you are standing with your dog on the sidewalk outside your house. A woman pushing a stroller walks by in close proximity just as somebody sets off a firecracker. The dog gets really scared and tries to hide, and he whimpers and trembles. You manage to calm the dog and a minute later the woman with the stroller walks by again just as another firecracker blasts off. The dog got even more scared this time. Chances are very high – especially with a young dog or puppy – that the next time a woman pushing a stroller walks by your dog, your dog will be afraid of it, *without* the presence of the firecracker. The dog has formed, in this case, a bad association between woman/stroller and firecracker, it now equals fear. If handled incorrectly, you could easily end up with a dog that is fear-aggressive towards women with strollers, and women separate from strollers and just strollers. Handling this situation incorrectly would be to punish the dog's behavior when it barks or growls – which is the only way dogs know how to get rid of something they are afraid of, something that poses as a threat. The added on discomfort to an already scary situation, will increase the dog's fear-aggressive response!

The second way dogs learn is by consequence. Example: dog barks at the door, you let the dog in. Dog barks at the door again, you open the door, dog gets out. The dog has learned that if he barks he can *make* you open the door. He has learned that he can operate on the environment to make things happen. This is a conscious and deliberate action on the dog's part. It's also referred to as Operant Conditioning or consequence learning. Operant conditioning is based on B.F. Skinner's research where the animal's behavior (usually a rat or pigeon) predicts whether or not it is rewarded or punished.

So, our dog-aggressive dog needs to be desensitized and counter conditioned. Desensitization means the presentation of a stimulus (in this case another dog) at a level of intensity that elicits little or no response from the animal. Counter conditioning means the presentation of a conditioned stimulus (the other dog) with an unconditioned stimulus (in this case FOOD!) that is different from and more powerful than the original one (the other dog) so that it comes to supersede it. In other words, we need to teach our dog that seeing another dog, something he doesn't like, now predicts a good thing (the food) and he doesn't have to become defensive or aggressive. In fact, eventually what will happen is that our dog can't wait for a strange dog to appear because it predicts something great – NOT additional discomfort, pain or fear, like punishment.

We will, in a controlled setting, use classical conditioning initially and operant conditioning secondarily to "treat" the behavior. The prediction of "something good" has to be something the dog finds good! Not what we think should be good to the dog. I use food because I know dogs love food. Not just any food, like kibble or milk bone cookies, GOOD, high value food, like hot dogs, raw meat, cheese, chicken, etc. The dog needs to do a "double take" when he is presented with it! This food should only be given to the dog when he is in the behavioral training. Something good to the dog could also mean play or going for a walk or car ride. But using food is, in my opinion, more practical because it can be dispensed quite rapidly, and it also allows for more consecutive repetitions of trials.

When a dog is actively aggressive, with barking, growling and lunging, he is in an "emotional state", a fight/flight response, he is not really "thinking" about what he is doing. So, through classical conditioning we will get the dog to understand that the presence of something he doesn't like predicts something he *does* like. We are going to change the dog's *emotional* reaction to whatever it is he doesn't like.

In a controlled setting (using other people and dogs that are a part of the program, NOT someone on the street that just happens to walk by) a typical training scenario of classical conditioning would look like this: Our dog is placed at a safe away distance from what he is reactive (aggressive) to – meaning our dog should be far enough away from the stimuli (strange dog/person) that he can visualize it but *not* become reactive, we should stay *below* the dog's threshold. When stimulus appears our dog gets food, continuously, until stimulus disappears, at which point food dispensing will cease. Stimulus appears again, dispensing of food will take place again, and so on. If our dog becomes reactive we will STILL keep dispensing the food, but will quickly turn around to increase the distance to the stimulus further.

The operant conditioning part of the "treatment" will look like this: the dog can see the stimulus at a below the threshold distance, since the stimulus is being visualized by our dog, he now has to do something – look at the other dog, look back at you, and maybe even sit – in order to get the food – he gets reinforced based on his behavior. He has to make a choice – look back at owner, sit and get the treat. If he doesn't, he gets nothing. If he becomes reactive then we have to increase the distance again.

Once your dog is comfortable at a certain distance, we very gradually decrease it, getting him slowly closer and closer to what he doesn't like, making sure to stay below threshold. It's very important to understand that you have to move slowly. You don't want to cause your dog stress and/or anxiety. Depending on how severe your dog is in his reactivity, these issues are by no means solved over night. Some take longer than others, some will progress surprisingly fast. And, as usual when working with animals, there is no guarantee. The only thing that I can guarantee here is that by using this method, instead of physical or verbal punishment, it will NOT get any worse. And in my 10 years plus experience, I know it usually tends to, in fact, get better!

© 2003 Pia McGovern is a certified dog trainer and a certified canine behavior counselor with a specialty in fear and aggression based behaviors. She is the behavior consultant and staff trainer for Planet Pooch doggie daycare in Redwood City and also serves on the Shore Dogs Board as an advisor. Besides teaching dog owners about behavior and training, she also does freelance writing for the Swedish dog magazine "FIDO". Pia owns **K-9 Insight™ Obedience, LLC**, www.k9insight.com in Redwood City where she offers a variety of different level classes, including dog-to-dog aggression – "Grumpy Pup" – management classes. Pia can be reached at her office: 650-596-WOOF (9663), by her cell: 650-218-PAWS (7297) or via e-mail: pia@k9insight.com

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Association of Companion Animal Behavior Counselors
An International Membership and Certification Organization of
Companion Animal Behavioral Specialists

Members Speak



Hanson 1st Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner for Animals in United States

For Immediate Release

Thursday, April 22, 2004

Contact: Don Hanson
Green Acres Kennel Shop
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[Bangor]— Don Hanson, co-owner and Director of Behavior Counseling and Training at the Green Acres Kennel Shop in Bangor, Maine, has qualified as a Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner (BFRP), specializing in animals. He is one of ten such specialists in the world and the first in the United States. The Bach Flower Essences help resolve emotional and behavioral problems with animals.

Over the past 18 months, Hanson has completed classes under the direction of the Dr. Edward Bach Foundation in Boston and at the Natural Animal Centre in Mayfield, East Sussex, United Kingdom. Class work involved studying the normal and abnormal behavior of several species (dogs, cats, and horses), their means of communication (vocalizations and body language), their emotional responses, and each of the 38 flower essences developed by Dr. Bach. In order to qualify as a BFRP, Hanson had to pass written and oral exams, and successfully complete a series of case studies, and a field study on a client's pet. His inclusion on the Foundation's Register indicates he has attained a worldwide agreed standard of competence, and has committed to the highest standards of professional practice.

The Bach Flower Essences are all natural, dilute herbal preparations developed in the 1930's by Dr. Edward Bach. They help restore health by balancing one's emotional state. While originally developed for use with people, today they effectively treat many behavioral problems with animals. Hanson has found the Bach Flower Essences are especially beneficial when treating problems involving fear or anxiety.

Hanson always works under veterinary referral when recommending the use of Bach Flower Essences with pets. He finds that most pets respond best to a combination of behavior modification protocols and treatment with flower essences. Hanson has found that the number of behavior modification sessions often decreases when a pet is also receiving flower essence therapy. The essences help to calm and relax the pet, thus making them more receptive to learning and modification of their behavior.

Active in the pet community, Hanson is a member of, and on the Board of Directors of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT). He is a past President and remains as a Director on the Board of the Bangor Humane Society (BHS). Hanson is a certified evaluator for Therapy Dogs International (TDI) and the American Kennel Club's (AKC) canine good citizen (CGC) program. He is a member of the International Alliance for Animal Therapy and Healing (IAATH), the Association of Companion Animal Behavior Counselors (ACABC) the Animal Behavior Society (ABS), and the American Boarding Kennel Association (ABKA).

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Association of Companion Animal Behavior Counselors
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On Behavior



“Appropriate Dog Play”

Behaviors in the Local Dog Park

by Pia McGovern, BS, CPDT

When dogs get together at the local dog park or day care facility there is bound to be a lot of excitement with running around, barking, growling and mouthing. Sometimes it even looks and sounds like the dogs are fighting. Are they...? Somebody asked me a while back what “appropriate” dog play is, what should it look and sound like?

Let me start by saying this ... A dog should be properly socialized by its owner, playing with many different dogs since early puppyhood – first its siblings and mother and then playmates carefully picked by the owner, so that the pup only has positive experiences. Dogs MUST have that socialization, or they do not learn how to relate to or communicate with other dogs. This is also true with regard to socializing to humans, objects, places and sounds. You *gradually* add on more difficult situations.

The *general* socialization period is from birth to 20 weeks and the fear imprint stage or “critical” period is usually from 9 to 11 weeks, but it can also start at 7 weeks and continue through 12 weeks. Because different breeds develop at different speeds there may not be just one “critical” period. You also have what I call the “second fear period”, which is the “fear of the familiar stage” that can appear anywhere from 6 months to 12 months. This is the period when your well-socialized puppy walks out the door one day and the fire hydrant that has been just outside your door everyday of the dogs life with you, suddenly becomes a huge scary monster.

Different breeds play differently, thus some dogs might not necessarily get along once the play starts. Bull breeds – Boxer, Mastiff, Pit Bull/Am Staff, Rottweiler, to name a few – tend to do a lot of “body slamming”, meaning they run in hard and almost knock the other dog off its paws. These dogs can also sound really “bad” with deep growling and/or barking and when they bite, they do it pretty hard. Herding breeds – Australian Shepherd, Shetland Sheepdog (Shelti), Border Collie, Corgi, etc., like to do a lot of chasing and nipping at the back legs of other dogs, all while usually barking in a high-pitched fashion. Retrievers like Labrador, Golden, Flat-Coated, like to do a lot of “wrestling” and “head play”, laying around on the ground biting and mouthing each others faces (when they are not chasing after a ball of course...). Labs, like the bull breeds, also tend to play pretty rough and do a lot of “body slamming”. Terriers are very tenacious, bred to be fearless and aggressively go after rodents in borrows. This will be reflected in the way the Terrier plays and acts with other dogs.

As dog owners we need to know what our dogs were originally bred for, so that we know a little more about what to expect from our dog’s behavior as well as understand our dog’s special “personality”! Some breeds have even been deliberately bred for high aggression and fight drive. We also need to train our dogs to listen when we ask for their attention. And perhaps most important, when we are in the park, WE need to pay attention to what our dogs are doing and be sensitive to other owners and their dogs!

So what is “bad” and what is “good” play behavior? It’s kind of difficult to describe dog-dog interaction in an article like this, but what I don’t like to see is too much escalation of the intensity in the play, i.e. the growling gets louder and fiercer with quick lunges, bearing of a lot of teeth and rapid snapping. Or several dogs in fast chase after one dog, doing laps around the park.

This can quickly lead up to, and trigger a fight and needs to be stopped. The dog, or dogs, can “tip over” from play to a fight. Break it up and let the dogs cool down for a minute or two before they are allowed to play again. Don’t yell and scream, simply take your dog by its collar, or physically interrupt by stepping in front of the dog and give it a

verbal cue, like “uh, uh”, meaning, “I don’t approve of that behavior”, and separate the dogs. We also need to prevent our dogs from “harassing” another dog – don’t let your dog *keep* chasing and “bullying” another dog who is clearly afraid or wants to get away. Be alert to what your dog is “telling” you. Learn to read your dog’s stress cues, e.g. yawning, licking of the lips, smacking (like if something was stuck in the roof of the mouth) lifting one leg, fast shallow panting, the “worried” look in the eye, tail tucked. Is he/she continuously hiding between your legs or jumping up on you to get away? Or is he/she running for the gate, trying to get out? If the other dog’s owner is doing nothing to intervene and you can’t stop the dog’s behavior, take your dog and leave. Your dog will thank you! One really bad experience for your dog can have disastrous consequences and lead to such behaviors like fear aggression later in life. We have to understand that some dogs are just not suited for dog park playing. Some are too fearful and some are too aggressive. Having said that, it is important to also give the dogs a fair chance to figure each other out. After all they ARE dogs, and believe it or not, most of the time they do know more of what is going on than we do. However, if a meeting or interaction doesn’t seem to work, let your dog know that you don’t approve of its actions. Do not use physical correction and intimidation. Rather, teach the dog what “behavior and consequence” is. This means that if your dog does something you don’t like, put him or her on a leash and leave the park — i.e. give a “time out” — you have taken *AWAY* from the dog what it wants most . . . to play. You have shown the dog that when it displays a certain behavior this is the consequence – all the fun stops! You may have to repeat this a few times before the dog “gets it”.

Let’s take a look at how dogs learn. Dogs learn like all animals, including us, by *association* and by *consequence*.

Learning by association is also referred to as Classical Conditioning or “Pavlovian” Learning. Learning by consequence is also known as Operant Conditioning. The animal has learned that it can “operate” on the environment to make things happen. Operant conditioning is based on B.F. Skinner’s research where the animal’s behavior (usually a rat or pigeon) predicts whether or not it is rewarded or punished.

It’s important for owners to understand, however, that dogs do not have language the way we do, and they do not have the ability to relate behaviors with consequences when these things are separated by time. Dogs live “in the moment”. Dogs relate consequences to whatever they were doing right *before* the consequence occur.

Learning by association means that an animal notices a relationship between two *unrelated* stimuli over the course of multiple pairings. The association could be a good one, or it could be a bad one. Whatever the case, the association has nothing to do with what the animal is actually doing. For instance, the first time you take your puppy for a walk, you get out the leash and attach it to your dog’s collar. Your puppy doesn’t know what’s going to happen yet, so he doesn’t react to the leash one way or the other. After a few walks though, your puppy has noticed the relationship between the leash being put on and the subsequent walk – and fun! Now when your puppy sees the leash come out, he starts to act very excited and happy! All of this had absolutely nothing to do with what he was doing, but learning has taken place – an association has been formed.

Another example is the way both dogs and cats respond to the sound of a can opener! They usually come bounding to it! They have learned to associate the sound of the can opener with food.

Now, let’s say the only time you put the leash on your dogs is to restrain him so you can administer medication, like ear drops. Pretty soon your dog will show signs of dread and avoidance when the leash appears! The leash equals something very uncomfortable. Again, it has nothing to do with what your dog was doing.

Learning by association is very powerful, and we must be very careful not to accidentally form negative associations for our dogs.

Learning by consequence, on the other hand, has everything to do with the dog’s behavior *prior* to the consequence and what type of consequence occurs. The most important thing to keep in mind is how the consequence is perceived by your dog, not *how* you *think* the consequence should be perceived by your dog!

Behaviors will either increase or decrease in frequency depending on how your dog perceives consequence. I advocate providing positive consequences when the dog performs a desirable behavior (*positive* reinforcement – positive in that you are *adding* something the dogs likes or wants, and reinforcement because it serves to *increase* behavior, the dog sits because he wants the cheese). To deal with unwanted behaviors like barking at you for attention or begging at the table, I advocate *removing* something good as a consequence, like withholding a treat or removing oneself from the dog. This is called *negative* punishment – punishment in that it causes a *decrease* in behavior, and *negative* because you are *removing* something good.

Using this method of training makes for a much better relationship between you and your dog as opposed to using physical aversives. Positive reinforcement training is:

- user friendly
- it decreases aggression
- creates a desire to perform
- it speeds up learning
- it doesn’t hurt
-

Using aversives when training will create:

- anxiety
- fear
- distrust
- avoidance/escape
- aggression
- decrease in learning

Getting back to dogs playing ... “Good” play is when both dogs appear to really enjoy each other, they leave each other plenty of room and space and there is not a lot of loud growling. They move around a lot. Ears are relaxed, tails wagging, not tucked and even though it at times may appear rough, both (or several) dogs keep going back for more! You want to see an exchange in play behaviors. Sometimes one is on top or the one chasing; sometimes it’s the other one. Some growling, barking, biting or showing of teeth while playing doesn’t mean that those dogs are not playing “appropriately”. Play biting and growling *is* normal dog behavior.

We shouldn’t be prejudiced and immediately “accuse” certain breeds for “bad” or “inappropriate” behaviors simply because of the way some dogs are portrayed in movies or because that’s what we have heard somebody else say. Again, we need to look at the different breeds and know what is characteristic for each individual. As dog owners it’s our responsibility to learn about dog behavior and how to interpret the body language, so we know what to look for and when to intervene ... or not. This is very important!

Something else to consider while in the park is that toys play a huge role in how some dogs will deal with each other. Some dogs are more possessive and/or dominant than others and will “demand” to be the only one to have a certain toy. It usually happens over that “one toy” – it becomes “high priority”. Either remove that toy altogether or make sure that the dominant dog has it for the duration of his or her stay. Don’t try to make a more dominant dog “share” its toy with other dogs, it’s asking for trouble and more times than not, a fight. Physically punishing that dog and grabbing its toy away will increase the aggressive behavior, as the dog will feel it has to guard its toy more next time and could decide to become more aggressive, to gain control over “its” toy faster. Remember, dogs are NOT little kids in a playground. More dominant dogs also tend to interfere with dogs that are playing, acting like the “referee”. This is also normal dog behavior, but may not be appreciated by other dog owners and should definitely be discouraged by the owner. Consider playing with that dog a “safe” distance away from the other romping dogs so that the dog can’t practice that behavior. Some dogs – neutered or not – will try to mount (“hump”) other dogs while playing. This is dominance behavior, and should be interrupted. The dog mounted could easily take offence, and a fight will ensue. If your dog keeps mounting, you should go to a different area of the park or leave.

Food – a HUGE trigger for fights between dogs – especially very tasty food like a chicken sandwich! *Do not bring food of any kind into a dog park.*

Female dogs in season, or “heat”, can inadvertently *cause* dogfights. If your dog is in “heat” do not bring her into the park!

A picnic table (and sometimes even a chair) is another area where dogs can display territorial aggression to other dogs and potentially get into fights. A dog standing on top of the table is physically elevated over other dogs; it gives that dog more clout, which quite often results in displays of aggression. A dog underneath the table tends to want to protect “its” space, often growling and snarling at other dogs that get too close. The same often happens when a person picks a dog up in his or her arms, it gets really aggressive, growling and snapping at other dogs that come over to investigate. This is because the dog being held could feel more vulnerable (it’s trapped in your arms and there is no chance for escape), or it now gets “back-up” from you, or it feels it has to protect itself *and* you – too much responsibility!) Picking up a dog and holding it in your arms also make other dogs very curious and they tend to jump up. Let your dog stay on the ground, unless for emergency reasons you *need* to pick a dog up.

Crowding around the entrance to the park also creates a situation where fights can easily break out. If a dog feels crowded by several, perhaps unknown dogs, it has no room for escape and perhaps feels that it has to protect the owner or itself, it might very well get into a fight. When you are in the park make sure to keep your dog away from the entrance when other dogs are entering, and when you get to the park, unleash your dog in the double-gated area *before* entering and move quickly and confidently away from the gate encouraging your dog to follow you! *Do not keep your dog on a leash inside the park.* It creates tension and stress between the dogs and will put your dog at a tremendous disadvantage if something goes “wrong”. Choke chains and prong collars should also be removed before you let your dog loose in the park. Other dogs can get their teeth caught in the collar during play and panic when stuck, causing injury to themselves and the dog wearing the collar. A prong or pinch collar may also get caught up on a fence and will be painful if pushed into the dog’s neck during play, potentially causing a fight because of perceived “wrong signals”.

Barrier or fence fighting is something I see quite frequently in dog parks. Usually dogs in the small park section keep running up to the fence barking, growling and “attacking” dogs that are on their way in or out. Some owners seem to actually enjoy this behavior in their little dogs. Most people certainly would not accept this display of aggression from a large dog. Regardless of size, it is definitely a behavior that should be interrupted and discouraged by all dog owners. Letting a dog keep practicing this behavior can easily lead to some serious behavior problems, not just at the park.

Though some of the behaviors we see in our dog parks may seem inappropriate to humans, they are usually normal and “appropriate” to most dogs. After all, dogs are just doing what they are doing because they are dogs! As responsible owners we need to understand what they are and what the *consequences* of those behaviors are, and set appropriate and reasonable limits for our dogs.

© 2000-2003 *K-9 Insight™ Obedience, LLC*. Pia McGovern is a certified dog trainer and a certified canine behavior counselor with a specialty in fear and aggression. She is the behavior consultant and staff trainer for Planet Pooch doggie daycare in Redwood City and also serves on the Shore Dogs Board as an advisor. Besides teaching dog owners about behavior and training, she also does occasional freelance writing for the Swedish dog magazine “FIDO”. Pia owns **K-9 Insight™ Obedience, LLC**, www.k9insight.com in Redwood City where she offers a variety of different level classes, including “Little Paws” drop-in socializations classes and dog-to-dog aggression – “Grumpy Pup” – management classes. Pia can be reached at office: 650-596-WOOF (9663), cell: 650-218-PAWS (7297) or email: pia@k9insight.com

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A Dog's Got Personality: A Cross-Species Comparative Approach to Personality Judgments in Dogs and Humans

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This research offers a blueprint for how a cross-species comparative approach can be realized empirically. In a single design, parallel procedures and instruments were used in 2 species, dogs (*Canis familiaris*) and humans (*Homo sapiens*), to test whether personality differences exist and can be judged in dogs as accurately as in humans. Personality judgments of humans and dogs were compared on 3 accuracy criteria: internal consistency, consensus, and correspondence. Results showed that, on all 3 criteria, judgments of dogs were as accurate as judgments of humans. These findings are consistent with the evolutionary continuity hypothesis and suggest an important conclusion not widely considered by either personality or animal researchers: Personality differences do exist and can be measured in animals other than humans.

“A dog's got personality and personality goes a long way.” So said Jules Winnfield, a gangster from the movie *Pulp Fiction*. Fictional gangsters are not the only ones concerned with personality in nonhuman animals. Robert Fagen, a professor of Biometry, used the personality traits “irascible, irritable, manipulative, and grumpy” to describe Suzy June, a brown bear he had observed for several years (Aschenbach, 1995). Although scientists such as Fagen are beginning to apply personality constructs to animals, a systematic empirical evaluation of such personality judgments has yet to be performed. In this report, we focus on personality judgments of domestic dogs, directly comparing them with personality judgments of humans.

Animal models have played a central role in much psychological science (Domjan & Purdy, 1995). Yet, although scientists widely accept the idea that the anatomy and physiology of humans show considerable continuity to other mammals, most have been reluctant to ascribe emotions and personality traits to animals. As

a result, there are few systematic studies on animals and cross-disciplinary bridges between personality psychologists and animal-behavior researchers are virtually nonexistent (Gosling, 2001). Most questions about animal personality remain untested, and a field of animal personality remains to be developed.

However, there is nothing in evolutionary theory to suggest that only physical traits are subject to selection pressures. Indeed, Darwin (1872/1998) argued explicitly that emotions exist in both human and nonhuman animals, including primates, cats, and dogs. Similarly, personality traits like Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Agreeableness may not be as uniquely human as once was thought (Buss, 1988; Gosling & John, 1999; Hogan, 1996). In this article, we examine a core issue for animal-personality research: whether differences in personality traits exist and can be measured in animals.

To show that personality traits exist in nonhuman animals, assessments of animal personality must be proven accurate. A small number of studies have reported reliabilities, but systematic efforts to examine the accuracy of assessment methods have been rare (see Gosling, 2001, for a review of the studies available). This dearth of studies may reflect the challenges of assessing creatures that cannot speak to us and may not have the mental or physical faculties (e.g., conceptions of self, autobiographical memory) required by the tests of personality developed for humans. However, there is one method that may be suited for use in animals—judgments made by informants who are well acquainted with the target individuals. It should be noted that this *personality-judgment approach* (Funder, 1999) is far from a method of last resort. As Hofstee (1994) noted about personality in humans, “The averaged judgment of knowledgeable others provides the best available point of reference for both the definition of personality structure in general and for assessing someone's personality in particular” (p. 149). Thus, many human-personality researchers consider judg-

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ments by knowledgeable informants or observers the sine qua non of personality (Funder, 1995; Kenny, 1994; McCrae, 1982; Wiggins, 1973), making such judgments a logical candidate for studies of animals. We thus propose to extend the personality-judgment approach to research on animals; specifically, we test whether personality traits exist and can be judged in one particular nonhuman species, dogs.

Introducing a Cross-Species Comparative Approach to Personality

How should such research be performed? The logic of comparative research suggests that multiple species should be examined, preferably using at least one well-studied species. Such cross-species designs are useful because they provide researchers with a benchmark against which to evaluate results for a newly examined species. Given that we know more about the personality of humans than of any other species, humans should be one of the species included.

What should the other species be? Animal-personality research is most likely to be conducted in research facilities, zoos, farms, and animal shelters, on species such as rhesus monkeys, chimpanzees, sheep, and dogs. We focus on domestic dogs (*Canis familiaris*) because (a) they are widely owned, making them a readily available source of subjects, (b) they can safely and naturally engage in wide array of behaviors, (c) their behavioral repertoire is well understood by a large pool of observers, and (d) they can travel safely to research sites without specialist care. Together, these reasons make them a manageable species for research purposes (cf. lions, elephants), especially in the nascent stages of research on animal personality.

Domestic dogs are found throughout the world, living alongside humans, an association traced as far back as 14,000 to 20,000 years ago. The evolutionary origins of domestic dogs are still subject to debate (Nowak, 1999). Some authorities have suggested that modern dogs were derived from one or a few wolf subspecies and then spread throughout the world in association with people (Nowak, 1979). Others have suggested that domestication occurred at different times and different locations with humans domesticating whichever local species of canid happened to be around (Coren, 1994). In any event, many of the modern morphological and behavioral characteristics associated with modern domestic dogs have been selected within the context of human–dog relationships since domestication (Hare, Brown, Williamson, & Tomasello, 2002).

Criteria for Evaluating Accuracy

If we are going to use human judgments as data for animal-personality research, these judgments need to be subjected to the same rigorous accuracy evaluations as judgments of human personality (Funder, 1995). Although the specific criteria and how they are labeled vary somewhat from theorist to theorist, human personality judgments have been evaluated with respect to three major accuracy criteria: internal consistency, consensus, and correspondence (e.g., Kruglanski, 1989; Robins & John, 1997). Internal consistency reflects the degree to which judgments about an individual's personality are consistent across observations or items thought to reflect the same behavioral dimension (Robins & John,

1997; Wiggins, 1973). Consensus implies agreement among independent informants or observers, and is often considered the hallmark of accuracy (e.g., Block, 1961; Funder, 1995; Kenny, 1994; Kruglanski, 1989; McCrae, 1982). Correspondence refers to the extent to which judgments predict an external criterion for "reality" (Kruglanski, 1989); perhaps the most valuable external criterion is independent observations of behaviors (Funder, 1995; Kenny, 1994). In the present research, we use these three accuracy criteria, developed in human research, to evaluate the accuracy of personality judgments of dogs. For each criterion, we compare the dog findings with parallel findings from humans. If personality traits do not exist in dogs, then judgments of dogs should fall short on these criteria when compared with judgments of humans.

The most knowledgeable informants about dogs are typically their owners, who have extensively observed the animals in their care, across both situations and time. Therefore, we focused our judgment approach on how the personality of dogs is judged by their owners. To estimate *consensus* between the owner and an independent judge, we obtained judgments of the dogs by a second person familiar with the target animals (a "peer"). *Internal consistency* was studied in the judgments of both informants (owners and peers). Finally, we tested the *correspondence* of the owner's judgments by comparing them with the dog's behavior rated by independent observers in a local dog park.

Judgments of dogs, just like judgments of people, may be based on physical and appearance characteristics, rather than actual behavior. Thus, we also took photographs of the dogs, permitting us to obtain personality assessments on the basis of appearance alone; these data allowed us to test the extent to which assessments of dogs are affected by breed and other appearance stereotypes. In addition, we controlled for such other background characteristics as sex and age that can influence personality judgments.

To implement a cross-species comparative approach, we obtained personality judgments not only of the dogs but also of their human owners. In this cross-species design, we used parallel procedures, instruments, and constructs for both dogs and humans, allowing us to compare dog findings directly with human findings within the same study.

Lessons Learned From Previous Research

Studies of animal personality are isolated and few and far between. Reports are scattered across a multitude of disciplines and journals, ranging from veterinary medicine and zoology to agricultural science and psychology (e.g., Capitanio, 1999; Fairbanks, 2001; King & Figueredo, 1997; Sinn, Perrin, Mather, & Anderson, 2001). With few systematic attempts to assess personality in dogs and other nonhuman species, comprehensive evaluations of the accuracy of personality judgments have not been possible. Nonetheless, a number of useful lessons can be learned by surveying the limitations of the few studies that do exist. These lessons have guided the design of the present research.

Previous studies of personality in dogs have not been comprehensive in their coverage of relevant traits (e.g., Murphy, 1995) and behavioral domains (e.g., Cattell & Korth, 1973), even though the importance of examining a broad array of trait dimensions is now widely understood in the human literature (John & Srivastava, 1999). Another important reason for examining multiple traits in the same study is to address discriminant validity. Are personality

ratings on multiple dimensions independent and valid, or do they simply reflect a single evaluative dimension, such as “like–dislike”? To address this possibility, human research on personality judgments has assessed multiple traits simultaneously, permitting an evaluation of each dimension while controlling for judgments of the other dimensions. The same now needs to be done with personality dimensions in dogs.

In some cases, previous studies of dogs have assessed personality dimensions using only one item (e.g., Murphy, 1995; Slabbert & Odendaal, 1999). Single items are problematic because they provide less reliable measurements than do multiple indicators and do not permit the assessment of internal consistency (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, *in press*). Thus, personality dimensions should be estimated using multiple items.

Moreover, research on dogs has focused on only one accuracy criterion at a time, rather than systematically testing all the important aspects of accuracy. For example, there may be internal consistency, or there may be consensus, but if judgments reflect only shared stereotypes about breed, then there may be little correspondence. Similarly, if consensus is low, correspondence might be severely underestimated. Thus, all three accuracy criteria need to be tested in the same study.

Most previous studies of dogs have been done in applied contexts where the behavior of dogs is of interest in and of itself (e.g., Slabbert & Odendaal, 1999; Svartberg, 2002). By focusing on one species, rather than taking the comparative approach proposed here, these studies make it difficult to evaluate the broader significance of the findings. Should a consensus correlation of .40 be considered large or small? Some kind of benchmark is needed against which the findings from dogs can be evaluated. The accuracy of personality judgments has been studied most extensively in humans, making them the most appropriate benchmark species.

One limitation of some of the previous research is that it has examined dog breeds globally, rather than judgments of individual dogs (e.g., Coren, 1998; Hart & Miller, 1985). These studies have shown good consensus among experts in judging breed-typical characteristics; however, they do not address the accuracy of judgments of individual dogs. To illustrate this point, consider that judges might well agree about the stereotypical traits associated with the peoples of England, Hong Kong, and Germany, yet relying on these national stereotypes may be of little value for judging the personalities of particular individuals. Indeed, such national stereotypes may even lead judges to overlook the individuating behaviors of the individuals. Nonetheless, the previous work showing personality differences among dog breeds is important for interpreting findings on differences among individual dogs; researchers must ensure that personality judgments indeed reflect real behaviors, rather than impressions based on breed differences or other stereotypes and biases (e.g., based on sex, age, size, or appearance).

In conclusion, to achieve a more complete understanding and evaluation of dog-personality judgments, research should: (a) include a comprehensive set of trait dimensions, (b) measure each dimension with multiple items, (c) evaluate multiple accuracy criteria, (d) assess two or more species in a comparative design, and (e) assess judgments of individuals (rather than groups or breeds) while controlling for the potentially biasing effects of stereotypes, such as those related to sex, age, and physical appearance. This kind of comprehensive species-comparative design has

not yet been implemented but is urgently needed if the field of animal personality is to emerge from its infancy.

Overview of Studies

Dog owners and their dogs were recruited in a local dog park to participate in three studies. In Study 1, each owner provided personality judgments of their dog as well as of their own personality. The owners also identified another person (a “peer”) who was familiar with both the target dog and the owner and could thus judge both their personalities. This cross-species design allowed us to compare (a) the internal consistency of dog and human personality judgments and (b) the consensus between owner and peer in judging either dog or human personality. In Study 2, owners brought their dogs to a field-testing enclosure located at a dog park, where the dogs’ behaviors were observed and rated by three independent observers in an observational field-testing session. To assess the correspondence criterion of accuracy, we tested how well the owners’ personality judgments of their dogs predicted the behavior ratings obtained in the field-testing sessions. In Study 3, photographs of the dogs (taken at the dog park) were rated by a new set of observers. These photo-based ratings allowed us to examine the effects of breed and appearance characteristics.

Personality Judgments by Owner and Peer Informants: The Five-Factor Model (FFM) as a Framework

Which personality dimensions should be assessed? Although several factor-analytic studies have identified dimensions of dog personality (e.g., Cattell & Korth, 1973; Svartberg & Forkman, 2002), no single model has been adopted by the field. Using the FFM as an organizing framework, Gosling and John (1999) summarized the structural findings from the factor analytic studies of dogs and 11 other species. One of the most striking findings to emerge was that Conscientiousness did not appear as an independent personality dimension in dogs; in fact, Conscientiousness appeared only in humans and humans’ closest relatives, namely chimpanzees (King & Figueredo, 1997). This pattern of findings suggests that Conscientiousness appeared as a distinct dimension of personality relatively recently in evolutionary history, long after canid ancestors diverged from hominid ancestors (Gosling & John, 1999).

These review findings, along with the results of a series of comprehensive trait studies (Gosling & John, 1998), suggest that at this point, a four-dimensional model is the most promising for personality traits in dogs. These four dimensions represent canine analogs of four of the five human FFM factors: Energy (analogous to human Extraversion), Affection (analogous to human Agreeableness), Emotional Reactivity (analogous to human Neuroticism), and Intelligence (analogous to human Openness/Intellect). Thus, we focused on these four dimensions, which currently provide the most reasonable, albeit provisional, model for organizing personality judgments of dogs. With no evidence for a separate Conscientiousness dimension in any species other than humans and chimpanzees, it would make little sense to assess this trait in dogs.

Study 1: Internal Consistency and Consensus

Method

Participants. Seventy-eight owners (67% women) rated their own personality and their dog's (50% female) personality, and returned their judgments by mail; peer informants rated the personality of owners and dogs and returned their judgments directly to the experimenter by mail. The owners reported the age and sex of the dogs.

Personality judgments. Judgments of humans were made using a standard FFM instrument, the Big Five Inventory (BFI; see John & Srivastava, 1999). For the dog judgments, the BFI was adapted slightly. Two experts reviewed each item on the human instrument to determine whether it was applicable to canine targets. Most items could be applied to canine behavior after minor editing. Care was taken to retain the original sense of the items. For example, the item "Is original, comes up with new ideas" was changed to "Is original, comes up with new ways of doing things." Only one item ("Has few artistic interests") could not be translated to a canine form, and was therefore omitted from both human and canine BFIs (the canine version of the BFI is available from the authors).

The judges indicated the degree to which each item was characteristic of the target (dog or human owner) on a scale ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*). There were eight items for Extraversion/Energy (e.g., "Is full of energy"), nine for Agreeableness/Affection (e.g., "Is cooperative"), eight for Neuroticism/Emotional Reactivity (e.g., "Can be tense"), and nine for Openness/Intelligence (e.g., "Is curious about many different things"). The variances did not vary across human and dog targets, with mean standard deviations of .76 and .78, respectively.

Results and Discussion

Internal consistency: Are personality judgments of dogs consistent across items? We computed Cronbach's coefficient alpha across the items on each BFI scale, and these values are shown in Table 1 for both human and dog targets. For humans, the alphas averaged .82 for the owners' self-judgments and .85 for the peers' judgments of the owners; these values are similar to previous research. How do the values for the dogs compare? The mean alpha was .83 for the owners' judgments of their dogs and .82 for the peers' judgments of the same dogs—values quite similar to those for human targets even though the BFI was derived in research on humans. In short, the personality judgments showed substantial internal consistencies for both species.

Consensus: Do owner judgments agree with peer judgments? To assess consensus we computed unit-weighted scale scores for humans and dogs for each of the four BFI dimensions. To provide

a human comparison standard, Table 1 shows the correlations between the owners' self-judgments and how they were judged by the peer informants. These human consensus correlations were strong, averaging .55, and quite similar to previous research on human personality (e.g., Funder, Kolar, & Blackman, 1995; McCrae & Costa, 1987). What about the dogs? Table 1 shows that the four consensus correlations for canine targets were all significant and averaged .62. That is, they were substantial in size and at least as large as those for human targets, suggesting that owners can judge the personality of their dogs with substantial consensus.

Could these substantial consensus correlations be due to non-behavioral characteristics of the animals? That is, one possible artifactual explanation for consensus is that instead of making judgments on the basis of behavior, informants might have made judgments on the basis of such nonbehavioral variables as the dogs' sex or age. To find out, we estimated consensus using partial correlations. The partial correlations were essentially unchanged; averaged across the BFI scales, the partial consensus correlations controlling for sex and age were .62 and .61, respectively—virtually the same as the mean zero-order correlation of .62. Thus, consensus cannot be attributed simply to judges relying on sex or age stereotypes about dogs.

A second possible explanation for the consensus findings is that judges did not actually discriminate among the FFM dimensions but formed only a single impression (such as like-dislike), and then made their BFI judgments on some inferential basis (e.g., Borkenau, 1992). If so, each of the four dimensions should be highly correlated with the other three. Thus, when controlling for the discriminant correlations by partialing out the other three BFI scales, there should be no unique consensus left—the partial consensus correlations should all no longer be significant and approach zero. This was not the case, however, as the partial consensus correlations in Table 1 show. They averaged .56 for dogs, as compared with .52 for humans. Thus, our consensus findings cannot be explained by the intercorrelations among the BFI scales, neither for the humans nor the dogs.

Study 2: Correspondence

Probably the most important evidence for accuracy is whether personality judgments can predict external criteria. In the case of personality traits, the definitive test is whether personality judg-

Table 1
Internal Consistency and Consensus: Personality Judgments of Humans and Dogs

BFI scales	Internal consistency (Cronbach's α)				Consensus (owner-peer correlations)	
	Owner judgments of		Peer judgments of		Target judged	
	Human (self)	Own dog	Human owner	Dog	Human owner	Dog
Extraversion	.83	.77	.84	.81	.66* (.61*)	.76* (.76*)
Agreeableness	.81	.84	.84	.83	.47* (.43*)	.55* (.43*)
Neuroticism	.80	.89	.86	.86	.45* (.43*)	.57* (.51*)
Openness	.83	.81	.84	.75	.58* (.60*)	.55* (.47*)
<i>M</i>	.82	.83	.85	.82	.55* (.52*)	.62* (.56*)

Note. Numbers shown in parentheses are partial correlations remaining after all discriminant correlations have been controlled. BFI = Big Five Inventory.

* $p < .05$.

ments predict behaviors. How should such behaviors be assessed? Funder, Furr, and Colvin (2000) observed that most measures of social behavior in psychological research have two major limitations: (a) from an ecological point of view, the behaviors examined are often intrinsically uninteresting (e.g., response latencies to stimuli), and (b) measures typically focus on an extremely small number (usually just one) of the many specific behaviors an individual actually emits. Thus, Funder et al. (2000) recommended focusing on behavioral assessments that are “psychologically meaningful and relevant to individuals in behavioral interaction, but that would also require a minimum of subjective interpretation on the part of the coders” (p. 454). This midlevel analysis is above that of narrow molecular units but below the level of broad cross-situational behavioral trends. Thus, in the context of the behavior of dogs, rather than attempting to measure the frequency of head shakes, the velocity of a scamper, or the amplitude of a tail wag, a midlevel approach would require that observers rate, for example, whether a dog performed *shy* behaviors or *nervous* behaviors in a specific situation.

The midlevel approach is well-suited to the study of dog behavior because it permits the measurement of situation-specific behaviors that are a priori related to the traits under study while retaining the breadth that allows multiple traits to be assessed in a naturalistic setting. We adopted this approach in the present research because we wanted to capture behavior relevant to all four of the trait domains we had examined in Study 1. Thus, correspondence in this study reflects the degree to which the owners’ personality judgments of their dogs correspond with trait-relevant dog behaviors rated by independent observers in a field-testing session.

Method

For the behavioral field-testing session, owners brought the target animals to a fenced-off region of a dog park. To elicit a broad array of behaviors, each animal performed several tasks: *getting acquainted* (owner went for short walk with the three observers), *express energy* (owner instructed to run with dog), *show affection* (owner encouraged to elicit affection from dog), *obedience* (performed basic obedience tricks, “sit” and “stay”), *social anxiety/stress* (stranger took dog for short walk and dog watched its owner walk another dog), and *problem solving* (dog shown small edible dog biscuit placed under plastic cup). Three independent observers who did not know the dog beforehand observed the dog’s behavior across all tasks and then rated its behavior in this field-testing session on three behavioral markers for each of the dimensions under study (e.g., *nervous* for Neuroticism, *shy* [reversed] for Extraversion; the full rating instrument is available from the authors). Unit-weighted scale scores were computed from these markers for each of the four dimensions.

Results and Discussion

Correspondence: Do owner judgments predict behaviors in a field-testing session? To test this accuracy criterion, we examined the correlations between owners’ personality judgments and independent behavior ratings in the field session. Significant correspondence correlations would be particularly impressive because the owner personality judgments and the behavior ratings represent different kinds of information (Block & Block, 1980): They were obtained from different sources (owner vs. independent observers), instruments (adapted human BFI vs. behavioral ratings), situations

(everyday behaviors vs. responses in a specific field-testing session), and time (separated by several weeks). In other words, these two reports shared little method variance, and significant findings would provide strong evidence for the existence of personality traits and the accuracy of the owner judgments.

There are surprisingly few trait-behavior studies on humans that could serve as an appropriate benchmark comparison for our correspondence correlations in dogs. The closest equivalent in the human literature would seem to be the so-called zero-acquaintance studies, which show rather small correspondence correlations for most FFM traits (e.g., Norman & Goldberg, 1966; Watson, 1989). However, unlike our study of dogs, most of these studies provide very little behavioral information about the targets. One exception is a study by Paulhus and Bruce (1992), in which personality judgments were made about humans in a similar task, namely a single-session group interaction, in which four to six observers rated the behavior of each human subject who had also provided self-judgments on the FFM dimensions. In this study, the mean correlation between personality judgments and behavior ratings was .22, a finding typical in the human literature. For comparison purposes, Table 2 presents these human correspondence correlations.

What about the dogs? Their correspondence correlations were at least as strong as the human ones. As shown in Table 2, all four correspondence correlations for the dogs were significant, and averaged .27. As in the case of consensus, correspondence could not be explained by nonbehavioral attributes; after controlling for the dogs’ sex and age, the mean correspondence correlations were .28 and .27 (both $ps < .05$), respectively. Moreover, even when the effects of the other three scales were partialled out (i.e., controlling for all discriminant correlations), correspondence remained significant, averaging .26 ($p < .05$), still as strong as the values found in the human literature (comparable partial correlations were not reported in Paulhus & Bruce, 1992).

Study 3: Ruling Out Breed and Appearance Effects

The correspondence correlations obtained in Study 2 seem impressive. However, human observers were needed to translate the

Table 2
Correspondence: Zero-Order Correlations Between Owners’ Personality Judgments and Behavior Ratings in the Field-Testing Session (and Partial Correlations After Controlling for Discriminant Correlations)

Big Five scales	Target judged	
	Human ^a	Dog
Extraversion	.35*	.32* (.34*)
Agreeableness	.01	.33* (.24*)
Neuroticism	.25*	.21* (.24*)
Openness	.27*	.23* (.20*)
<i>M</i>	.22*	.27* (.26*)

Note. Numbers shown in parentheses are partial correlations remaining after all discriminant correlations have been controlled.

^aData from Paulhus and Bruce (1992, Table 4), comparing self-reports with observer ratings. Comparable partial correlations were not available. * $p < .05$.

behavioral conduct of the dogs in the field session into quantitative ratings of trait-relevant behaviors. Thus, it is possible that nonbehavioral variables influenced the behavior ratings. One possible type of confounding variable is represented by variables like the age and sex of the dogs; we ruled out this possibility in Study 2.

Another possibility involves commonly held beliefs about dog breeds. Dogs have been domesticated for thousands of years during which humans have applied selective breeding techniques to create many distinct breeds that differ systematically in their morphological and behavioral traits (Coren, 1994). Thus, certain breeds or groups of dogs can be associated with certain behaviors. One possibility, therefore, is that the observers based their ratings on commonly held beliefs about breed characteristics rather than on the actual behaviors of the individual dog they observed in the field sessions. For example, they might have rated a golden retriever as high on the behavioral items related to Affection and a pit bull as low, regardless of the individual dogs' performance on the behavioral tests. Or these shared breed stereotypes might have influenced how the observers interpreted the dogs' behaviors, leading observers to interpret ambiguous behaviors in ways consistent with breed stereotypes.

Only 51% of the dogs assessed were pure breeds. However, even for mixed-breed dogs it is often possible to make a reasonable guess about which breeds have been mixed. So breed stereotypes could affect observers' ratings of dogs of mixed heritage, too. Moreover, observers could rely on general appearance stereotypes not necessarily tied to specific breeds, such as large versus small size, smooth versus long hair, or pure versus mixed breed. Therefore, the goal of Study 3 was to examine the hypothesis that the correspondence correlations in Study 2 may be due to observers' use of appearance-based impressions. Thus, we recruited a new sample of observers to obtain appearance-based ratings of the likely behavior of each of the dogs rated in Study 2.

Method

Each of the dogs from Study 2 had been photographed alone. In subsequent laboratory sessions, the photographs were projected onto a screen and a new set of 6–11 independent judges rated their impressions of each dog. Using exactly the same behavior rating form as the observers in Study 2, the judges rated their impressions of the dogs' likely behavior on the three behavioral markers for each of the BFI dimensions. Thus, the design of Study 3 matched the design of Study 2, with the one difference that judges in Study 3 did not observe the dogs' actual behaviors in the field session and thus had to base their impressions purely on the physical appearance of the dogs.

Results and Discussion

We first tested whether the appearance-based impressions were systematic—that is, did the judges exposed only to the photos of the dogs show agreement in their impressions? Coefficient alpha reliability ranged from .69 (Openness) to .84 (Extraversion), with a mean of .76, showing that the judges did indeed agree about the likely behavior of the dogs.

Next, we tested whether photo-based ratings correlated with the behavior-based ratings. As shown in Table 3, the mean correlation was small but positive (.18), with significant correlations between the photo ratings and the behavior ratings for Agreeableness and Neuroticism. There are two alternative interpretations of these

Table 3
Correlations Between Photo Ratings and Field Behavior Ratings and Correspondence Correlations After Controlling for Appearance Stereotypes

BFI scales	Correlation between photo-based ratings and behavior ratings	Correspondence controlling for appearance
Extraversion	.17	.28*
Agreeableness	.20*	.33*
Neuroticism	.30*	.21*
Openness	.04	.23*
<i>M</i>	.18	.26*

Note. Correspondence correlations are partial correlations between the owners' judgments of their dogs and the field-test behavior ratings from Study 2, controlling for the appearance-based impressions from the photo judges. BFI = Big Five Inventory.

* $p < .05$.

correlations. One possibility is that the photo judges were using their knowledge about real breed differences to make valid inferences about the dogs' likely behaviors, and the dogs indeed manifested these real breed differences in the field-testing session. A second possibility is that both the photo judges and the behavior observers were biased by the same stereotypic beliefs about the dog breeds.

In either case, the question remains whether the significant correspondence correlations obtained in Study 2 could be explained by appearance-based impressions alone. We thus computed partial correlations between the owner judgments and the field behavior ratings from Study 2, controlling for the appearance-based impressions from the photo judges in this study. If the correspondence correlations could be explained by the field observers' reliance on breed or appearance-based stereotypes, then the partial correlations removing these effects should no longer be significant and should approach zero.

This was not the case. Instead, the partial correspondence correlations in Table 3 (mean partial $r = .26$) were almost identical to the zero-order correlations (mean $r = .27$). Thus, the correspondence between owner judgments of personality and behavior ratings in the field session cannot be attributed to shared beliefs on the basis of the dogs' appearance. These findings further solidify the evidence for the accuracy of owners' judgments of their dogs' personalities.

General Discussion

Taken together, these studies show that personality traits can be judged in dogs with impressive levels of accuracy. Our two-species comparative approach made it possible for the first time to interpret the animal findings in direct comparison with findings based on human participants. We were able to show that the consistency, consensus, and correspondence of dog personality judgments were not only significant but also as substantial in size as those found for humans.

By taking an integrative approach to issues examined previously in piecemeal fashion, this research represents a departure from the past. As such, we suggest that this research can provide a blueprint, or prototype, for conducting species-comparative studies of per-

sonality. Specifically, this research examined a comprehensive array of dog-relevant personality dimensions, thus permitting comparisons across traits, and tests of discriminant validity with partial correlations. In addition, we included controls for nonbehavioral variables, such as sex and age, that could have influenced the judgments. We used multiple indicators to measure each dimension, allowing us to test the internal consistency of the judgments. Moreover, we evaluated personality judgments according to a comprehensive set of accuracy criteria. To provide a benchmark against which the accuracy criteria could be tested, we implemented the cross-species comparative approach, simultaneously examining two species, including the species (humans) and personality trait model (the FFM) upon which most research on personality judgment so far has been based. Finally, in an additional study, we controlled for the potentially biasing effects of breed and appearance-based stereotypes on personality judgments of individual dogs.

The findings emerging from this research are important because they suggest a conclusion not widely considered by either human-personality or animal-behavior researchers: Differences in personality traits do exist and can be measured in animals. This conclusion also converges with another newly emerging line of research indicating that behavioral traits in nonhuman animals are heritable (e.g., Weiss, King, & Enns, 2002). The time has come, we suggest, to extend Darwin's argument of cross-species continuity to the domain of personality. Below we discuss some directions that such extensions might take.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our findings suggest that the personality judgment approach can be applied successfully to nonhuman populations. Nonetheless, the boundary conditions of these effects, obtained here in a sample of domestic dogs and their owners in an urban dog park, still need to be established. Future research should examine whether these findings generalize to other contexts and populations. One extension would be to conduct studies with seeing-eye dogs or bomb-sniffing dogs whose personalities could be judged by their trainers or handlers. Other types of criteria could then be used to evaluate the correspondence criterion of judgmental accuracy, such as performance in standardized working-dog trials or subsequent on-the-job success as a working dog (e.g., Goddard & Beilharz, 1983; Slabbert & Odendaal, 1999; Svartberg, 2002). Such work is important because it could open the way for obtaining judgments by trainers and handlers in controlled studies of dog personality.

Even more important from the perspective of the cross-species comparative approach, this work needs to be extended to other species. There is some encouraging evidence that the findings for personality judgments of dogs may indeed generalize to some other species of mammals, at least on some accuracy criteria. In terms of correspondence, for example, the pioneering studies of Stevenson-Hinde (e.g., 1983) found that personality judgments of rhesus monkeys (e.g., on aggressiveness) corresponded with behavior observed in specific situations. In terms of consensus, a study of spotted hyenas showed consensus for traits related to four of the human FFM, such as active, aggressive, fearful, and imaginative (Gosling, 1998).

An additional limitation of the present work was our reliance on the midlevel assessment of behaviors (Funder et al., 2000), in

which we used behavior ratings rather than detailed codings or frequency counts of specific acts. Our multidimensional approach necessitated the use of these midlevel assessments because fine-grained recordings of behaviors are extremely time-consuming and thus would have been prohibitive in a study of more than a few traits. Nonetheless, future studies should examine other kinds of correspondence criteria. Work in ethology suggests that naturalistic observation and coding techniques may be used to assess correspondence in nonhuman animals. For example, in piglets, behavioral records of vocalizations, nose contacts, and location in the pen can serve as behavioral markers for a personality dimension akin to human sociability (Forkman, Furuhaug, & Jensen, 1995). Studies of these new species and new criteria should be a top priority for the next generation of studies.

Implications and Conclusions

Broadly, this first cross-species personality study represents a necessary and fundamental step toward bridging the gap between personality and animal research. To illustrate the benefits of a comparative approach to personality, we briefly consider its potential impact on personality research in genetics and development.

Progress in personality-assessment procedures for nonhumans opens the way for new interdisciplinary partnerships between genetics and personality researchers. Although genetic studies on humans are essential, animal-personality research provides an avenue of research that offers important advantages (Gershenfeld & Paul, 1998). Compared with humans, many laboratory animals have brief intergenerational periods and are inexpensive to maintain. More extensive and intrusive manipulations are possible in studies of animals than would be permitted with humans, so animal studies could be used to test specific hypotheses derived from human research. In addition, transgenic methods and new cloning techniques (e.g., Wakayama, Perry, Zuccotti, Johnson, & Yanagimachi, 1998; Wilmut, Schnieke, McWhir, Kind, & Campbell, 1997) could provide novel opportunities for animal research to further our understanding of the genetic influences on personality (Flint et al., 1995). Among the many possibilities, one can foresee expanded twin studies in which, instead of using pairs of identical human twins, a large number of genetically identical cloned or inbred animals are raised in systematically varied environments to examine the interaction of genetic and environmental influences on personality. The present findings suggest that personality judgments can play a part in such studies.

The present findings also bode well for animal studies of personality change. Typically, the most useful information on personality change is derived from longitudinal studies. In some respects, animal studies provide an ideal situation in which to investigate personality development. Many captive animals are observed almost every day of their lives and biological, environmental, and social events that are hypothesized to influence personality change can be recorded, or even manipulated experimentally, to test hypotheses about environmental influences. For example, cross-fostering studies in rhesus monkeys have already shown that infants' responses to separation from their foster mothers is best predicted from their inherited levels of emotional reactivity, rather than from their foster mother's level of reactivity or care-taking style (Suomi, 1999).

In sum, animal studies provide unique opportunities to elucidate the dynamic interaction of biological, genetic, and environmental effects on personality, and to study personality change, links between personality and health, and even processes in personality perception. The use of accurate personality judgments by owners, handlers, and observers would make collecting animal personality data so much less cumbersome and time-consuming, thus opening up research opportunities with vast potential. Moreover, the present evidence for the existence of personality traits in mammals paves the way for personality researchers to incorporate animal studies into their research programs, and for animal researchers to include personality constructs in their studies. Thus, the present approach should help enrich both personality and animal research, and will lay the groundwork for fruitful collaborations between the two disciplines. Indeed, as our opening quote suggests, even in animals, personality goes a long way.

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