

An Exploration of Animal Subjectivity from Animals' Inner Worlds in Jane Smiley's Fiction

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Received 25 October 2023; accepted 29 November 2023

Published online 26 December 2023

Abstract

This paper delves into the depiction of animal subjectivity in Jane Smiley's novels *Moo* and *Horse Heaven*. Through an examination of animal characters like Earl Butz, Eileen, Epic Steam, Justa Bob, Limitless, and Froney's Sis, this study expounds on their unique desires, emotions, memories, and perspectives. It highlights how Smiley opposes anthropocentric biases by presenting animals as focalizers with their own individual voices, breaking away from traditional human-centric narratives. By revealing the complexity of animal minds and emotions, her narratives challenge the anthropocentric viewpoints and emphasize the importance of recognizing the subjectivity and intelligence of all species, fostering a more inclusive understanding of consciousness across different beings and advocating for a reevaluation of animals' cognitive and emotional capacities.

Key words: Animal subjectivity; Animals' inner world; Minds and emotions; Animal focalizers; Jane Smiley

Wu, L. M. (2023). An Exploration of Animal Subjectivity from Animals' Inner Worlds in Jane Smiley's Fiction. *Canadian Social Science*, 19(6), 79-85. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/13272>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/13272>

1. INTRODUCTION

Subjectivity is a key philosophical concept concerned with consciousness, agency, personhood, and has different

definitions. As to animal subjectivity, there is much debate over whether animals have subjectivity and moral agency. Under the influence of Cartesian mechanism, the fact that animals have minds and emotions has long been denied or ignored. Rather, animals are regarded as automata lack of reason, thought, feelings, and intelligence. An oversimplified and biased standpoint hinders an access to animals' inner world. The wisdom in their reactions and behaviour is often misunderstood as mere instinct. As for this, Val Plumwood criticizes that "it is well past time we abandoned the sado-dispassionate scepticism about animal minds and the anthropocentric Cartesian double standards that insist that the mindfulness we can airily assume for humans must be rigorously 'proved' for non-humans" (p.61)

Jane Goodall writes in the foreword of Marc Bekoff's book: "In 1960 I began my own battle to gain scientific acceptance for concepts that were shocking in academia at that time: that animals had personalities, minds, and emotions" (x). Bekoff explains why he entitles the book *Minding Animals: Awareness, Emotions, and Heart*—"I use the phrase 'minding animals' in two ways. First, 'minding animals' refers to caring for other animal beings, respecting them for who they are, appreciating their own worldviews, and wondering what and how they are feeling and why. The second meaning refers to the fact that many animals have very active and thoughtful minds" (xvi).

Jane Smiley, in her fiction, describes vividly the inner world of different animals to show their thinking and feeling. Animals are no more machines or undifferentiated masses but individuals with active minds and rich feelings. This paper will dig out the exhibition of animal subjectivity through Smiley's depictions of animals' inner worlds—their minds and emotions in her two novels *Moo* and *Horse Heaven*.

2. EARL BUTZ'S INNER WORLD IN *MOO*

In many Smiley's fiction, animals become focalizers and have the chance to show their points of view. *Moo* is one

of her works to present the reader animals' perspectives. They are no more background-like objects or allegorical puppets for human fables, but individuals with their own thoughts. What's more, the depictions of animals in Smiley's works are based on real observations of and close contact with them rather than an unrealistic fancy of them. This way of characterizing animals is highly recommended by Josephine Donovan: "In such literature animals are conceived as particular creatures of value in their own right and not simply as vehicles of use to comment on human situations. Their viewpoint is not ignored as if it were nonexistent..." (214).

In *Moo*, numerous characters are interrelated with one another in several interweaving threads of stories. More than 70 characters are involved in the total 70 chapters of *Moo*, among whom over 20 are the leading characters, including a Landrace boar named Earl Butz. Following several key threads, all the stories take place in this land-grant agriculture university named Moo University. One thread is about the fate of the hog Earl Butz and his friendship with Bob Carlson, a work-study student assigned by Dr. Bo Jones with a task of tending Earl every day to see how big the hog might grow if allowed to eat at will for all of his natural lifespan.

Some critics regard Earl as an ironic symbol. For example, Cathleen Schine once comments: "As a metaphor for the intrinsic corruption of the modern university, not to mention society at large, a pig is about crudely satirical as you can get" (p.38). According to Neil Nakadate, Earl is the blissfully obvious embodiment of consumer capitalism: "The catastrophic fate of the Landrace hog—a disoriented, panic-stricken, indulgence-driven demise—is Smiley's representation of what awaits a bloated consumerist humanity" (p.135). One evidence is that the swine is granted with the same name "Earl Butz" as a former American Secretary of Agriculture whose policies favor large-scale corporate farming.

There is no denying that in the novel, such desires of getting more and achieving more no matter in what kinds of aspects are what Smiley intends to disclose: Dean Jellinek's strong desire to harvest reputation and profits on cows through bioscience; Chairman X's unquenchable sexual lust for young colleague Cecelia despite the fact that he already has two children with Lady X; and the nationally-well-known economist, Dr. Lionel Gift's greed to gain more and more money through cooperation with billionaires. On the surface, Earl seems to hold the similar image of greediness as those humans, for he eats all day long.

Nevertheless, Smiley defends the boar in a humorous way: "Earl's business, which was eating, only eating, and forever eating...Earl Butz was a good worker, who applied himself to his assigned task with both will and enjoyment" (Neil, 2009, p.4); and "At bottom, he was still the hog he had always been, the hog he was bred to be, and he was bred to eat. That was his genius and his

burden" (Neil, 2009, p.267). It's natural for pigs to eat, but humans often attach labels to animals simply according to their appearance and habits.

In effect, being the most important nonhuman character in the novel, Earl is by no means a mere symbol of greediness and consumerism serving for humans but a nonhuman animal on his own. He has his own opinions, emotions, desires, memories, dreams, and personality. He is an independent being in the world, whose rich inner world opens a window for readers to pierce into animals' mental world, revalue animals and humans. From the following two examples, Earl's active minds and rich emotions are clearly exhibited to us.

The first example is about Earl's thoughts and emotions during an accidental meeting with a stranger named Diane. Most of the time, Earl is alone in his pen except for a few times' visit per day by his caretaker Bob. Nevertheless, this regularity is broken accidentally by Bob's girlfriend Diane when after their evening's dating, she secretly follows Bob to the room in Old Meats building where Earl is kept. Diane's sudden intrusion disturbs Bob's work and disrupts Earl's nighttime routine. What's worse, her shrill voice upsets Earl in Bob's eyes. When Bob tells Diane that she makes Earl nervous, another voice comes in, which is from Earl himself:

That wasn't the half of it, in Earl's opinion. Lifelong solitude had made Earl an especially sensitive hog. An inborn preference for calm had blossomed, absent the hurly-burly of other porcine companions, into a decided disinclination toward any noise or disruption whatsoever. Diane carried disruption on her person. Her actions were quick and harsh, her voice was shrill, her very being was excitable. Earl was as sensitive to body language as any animal. It seemed important to him to put as much distance between himself and her as possible. And he didn't want to look at her, either. He looked at the wall in preference, and also let down a pointed stream of urine. (Neil, 2009, p.188)

Seeing Earl urinating, Diane's instant response is the same as her earlier response when she opens the door and smells the hog smell. The same word "Yuck" pops out of her mouth twice. In fact, Earl knows everything—"Diane said, 'Yuck,' just as if an intelligent animal like Earl couldn't hear and understand her distaste. He grunted" (Neil, 2009, p.188). But Diane doesn't believe that a hog has minds. She continues her disrespectful remarks—"God, he's so fat. I mean, look at the rolls!" (Neil, 2009, p., 188). In response to her comment, Bob says that she doesn't have to insult Earl, but Diane can't understand. "I don't have to insult a pig?" She laughed. That, Earl did not like at all" (Neil, 2009, p., 188).

Like Diane, lots of people take an anthropocentric view of animals. They weigh the other species via human scales while neglecting the other species' attributes and values. The intelligence of nonhuman animals is often underestimated or even denied in a society of human exceptionalism. Diane keeps on showing her disgust and dislike to Earl just in front of him while being deaf and blind to Earl's response. In this regard, she is

contemptuous, arrogant, and ignorant. By changing the point of view from human to animal, Smiley exposes the inner world of an animal to the reader, and hence Earl's opinions and feelings also find a way out. Feeling Diane's dislike and contempt for him, Earl doesn't want to have any contact with her either.

Cynthia Willett notes that "Indeed, those domestic animals, including chickens, pigs, and cows, maintained and slaughtered under disgusting conditions, show every sign of possessing capacities to struggle for their freedom, to think intelligently, to enjoy interspecies companionship—and also for some feelings of disgust of their own" (p.111). Diane doesn't know that Earl responds to her humiliating expressions of disgust with similar feeling of disgust too. Her ignorance of Earl's minds and emotions hinders her communication with him. In consequence, the relationship between Diane and Earl is hardly dialogical. It is the same with any people who hold an anthropocentric view of human-animal relationship. They turn a blind eye to animals' inner world and objectify animals as silent, passive, mindless, and emotionless. By denying animal subjectivity, humans ensure their privilege and superiority.

Another example is about Earl's thoughts and emotions during and after his meeting with another stranger. On Christmas Eve, Bob asks a guy to substitute for him to take care of Earl for two days. With the guy's slamming of the door in the morning, Earl realizes the difference at once. The spare hand does his work perfunctorily. In regard to this, Earl has his opinion—"Earl found the noise disturbing and the sight of his products flying around rather embarrassing. The guy did a haphazard job, too. Earl could have pointed out any number of spots that he'd missed, but clearly the guy was anxious to be off..." (Neil, 2009, p., 267) Therefore, when the guy comes to the room the second time that day, Earl doesn't want to see him any more: "And then he didn't wake up again until that guy was back, with another slam of the door. Earl stared at him through slit eyes, but maintained his deep breathing, as if asleep" (Neil, 2009, p.268). When the guy leaves the room, Earl gets relieved—"Good riddance, thought Earl" (Neil, 2009, p.268). Earl is observing the stranger and thinking accordingly the whole time. He remembers the routines of his usual caretaker Bob and finds the difference between the stranger and Bob. From the stranger's deeds, Earl knows the guy is in a hurry. Earl has his judgement and strategy. He'd rather pretend to be sleeping than get up to face the guy again.

After the guy's leaving, Earl is left in complete darkness, getting lost for a while, experiencing changing mood, and remembering the past. Smiley makes a comment on Earl's memory and his brain like this: "Of course it was all there—he had a brain the size of a grapefruit after all—and while it was somewhat lacking in the cerebral cortex division, Earl, like every other brain-owning individual, usually only bothered to use a small percentage of its intellectual capacity" (Neil, 2009, p.269).

It is not hard to find out that Smiley firmly believes in animals' intellectual capacity. For her, animals have memory, too. Leslie Irvine also states that "Animals may have no sense of today, tomorrow, and next week, but they do remember what happened to them in the past" (p.15). There are some vivid details about Earl's past life according to his memory. Earl was born in an ultramodern confinement complex with air conditioner and heater. The floor is a smooth grate. He drinks water from an automatic waterer and eats milled food laced with antibiotics, wormers, and growth enhancers. He is supposed to be stuck in his pen for all his life. Nevertheless, the farmer who breeds Earl finds that only three or four sows give birth to litters that late summer and the complex is rather lightly booked, so he lets the animals out in the yard every day to amuse himself. The outdoor life on that late summer, therefore, becomes the best memory for Earl:

The brown crackling leaves lay on the sunlit, moist grass, and the black branches of trees laced against a sky that day after day poured forth a light that Earl had never seen before or since... and Earl stored up a treasure of memories that only now, having set his work aside, he found the time to sift through...That green, that blue, that brightness. (Neil, 2009, p.270)

Earl gets nostalgic for the good old days. It is through his nostalgia that we reach the depth of Earl's heart. What he longs for deep in his heart is a return to nature—the cool, soft earth instead of cold grate; blue sky and green grass in the sunlight instead of metal slats in pitch darkness. No matter whether it is from tactile, olfactory, visual, auditory, gustatory, or kinaesthetic sensation, Earl has his preferences and requirements. Without Earl being the focalizer, we would never know his feelings and desires.

The description of Earl's reminiscences not only shows the reader that animals have thoughts, desires, memories, and emotions, but also criticizes factory farming as well as scientific research for depriving animals of a natural and healthy growth environment. Earl once knows the differences between being locked in a confinement complex and playing freely outdoors before he is sent to the laboratory in Moo University. Now for a scientific experiment, he is encaged again in a dark pen with metal slats. With no place to go and nothing to do, plus Bob's absence on Christmas Eve, all he can do now is to give himself up to his memories. Through the revelation of his memories, animals' emotions and thoughts come to the foreground. Actually, animals on factory farms and in scientific laboratories are not machinelike masses, but each of them is an individual with feelings, thoughts, memories, preferences, and desires, just like Earl.

3. EILEEN'S INNER WORLD IN *HORSE HEAVEN*

Eileen is an important canine character in *Horse Heaven*. She is a Jack Russell Terrier raised by Rosalind, a socialite

and connoisseur, whose husband named Alexander is a wealthy industrialist and owner of several Thoroughbreds. Eileen's inner world is vividly revealed through abundant descriptions of what Eileen is thinking about and intends to do in the novel. Generally speaking, Eileen's thoughts and intentions are exhibited via two ways—her initiative actions and a direct presentation of her opinions.

The first way of exhibiting Eileen's inner world is through her initiative actions to show her purposes. Different from the relationship between Eileen and Rosalind, the relationship between Eileen and Alexander is not harmonious at all. Most of the time, Alexander refuses to play with Eileen or even pay attention to her. One morning when Alexander and Eileen are all up while Rosalind is still sleeping, Eileen discovers a pinecone hidden behind the sink and picks it up with an idea—finding someone to throw that for her. The next thing for her to do is to make that idea come true. Since Rosalind isn't up yet, Alexander becomes the only choice. She drops the pinecone at his feet and backs up a few steps with her eyes boring into his. Her actions and gaze tell everything. Even though Alexander gets her point more or less, he rejects her invitation at once. Eileen doesn't want to give up. She strategically takes little steps backward and forward and then spins in a tight circle, gesturing at the pinecone with her nose. Meanwhile, she is careful not to make any sound. As a terrier, Eileen has terrier determination and resolves that Alexander will finally change his mind and throw the pinecone. Therefore, "she continued dancing, every few seconds picking up the pinecone and dropping it again. She was getting cuter and cuter. That was her weapon. Mr. Maybrick considered her a very manipulative animal" (Smiley, 2000, p.13).

By using her body language, Eileen transmits her intention to Alexander that she wants to play a game of throwing pinecone with him. She is intelligent enough to adopt some strategies for her reiteration and insistence. However, Eileen's active initiation doesn't receive positive response from Alexander, who continues ignoring her request. Eileen's agenda of desirable activities seems not suitable for Alexander. For Eileen, Alexander is more like a rival for the attention of Rosalind than a friend. What's more, he doesn't understand the nuances of meaning intended by the various locations of the fecal markers left by Eileen—"There was a language there. Any Jack Russell—any dog, even—could have easily read that language, but Alexander P. Maybrick chose not to" (Smiley, 2000, p.367). Alexander disdains to go deep into Eileen's inner world and pay attention to her wants and needs. He shuts his eyes to Eileen's expressive actions and shuns any interaction with her. For him, Eileen is an "animal" after all.

The communication between Eileen and Alexander is hardly smooth and effective, for "Eileen kept trying to make her point, Alexander P. Maybrick kept trying to make his" (Smiley, 2000, p.367). The result of

this miscommunication is that Eileen will be swatted occasionally and perform a ritual submission. When Eileen is left alone with Alexander, she will be put in her kennel for considerable periods of time, which is an offence in Eileen's eyes. As a consequence, Eileen takes revenge in her own way:

She took the opportunity presented by Alexander P. Maybrick's open closet door, and went in and defecated and urinated upon some of his shoes. The ones most strongly carrying his scent were to be preferred, for a statement was required, and, as a Jack Russell Terrier, Eileen never shrank from making a statement. (Smiley, 2000, p.368)

In her communication with Alexander, Eileen often takes initiative actions to show her purposes. No matter whether it is about the purpose of playing with Alexander or the intention of revenging him, Eileen knows well how to make her point clearly through her actions. She is by no means a passive pet or toy for humans to idle away time, but a unique existence with subjectivity equal to humans. Both her desire to interact with humans and her revenge after being offended show us that a dog like Eileen has high intelligence and rich mental activity. By zooming in on Eileen's detailed actions with her specific purposes, Smiley subverts the anthropocentric philosophy in which animals used to be marginalized and objectified. Animals are not puppets for humans to play or background for humans' stories any longer. They have their own ideas, wants and needs as well as their own way of expression.

The second way of exhibiting Eileen's inner world is through a direct presentation of her own perspectives. These thoughts reflect how Eileen, as a Jack Russell Terrier, sees the world and the other species. Eileen becomes the focalizer in these descriptions. The following are three examples to show how Eileen's inner thoughts are directly presented:

The first example is about a mole inside the burrow at the back of the yard. Eileen notices the mole but has no way to deal with him: "A mole, Eileen knew, went in and out of this burrow all day long, all night long. He had four ways in, four ways out. When he moved around inside that burrow, as he often did, Eileen could hear him mocking her, but she couldn't figure out how to foil him" (Smiley, 2000, p.368).

As a terrier, Eileen has an inborn desire to hunt. She is observant, intelligent and agile. Eileen is confident in her hunting skills and is capable of analyzing circumstances. She knows the strategy of catching that mole but cannot complete the task on her own. The whole description is from Eileen's perspective so as to exhibit her inner world directly to the reader. The direct presentation of her inner thoughts overthrows the traditional narration in which humans are always the focalizer. Such a narration with animals as the focalizer is undoubtedly anti-anthropocentric. Through such an anti-anthropocentric narration, animal subjectivity is confirmed.

The second example is concerned with Eileen's opinions about the racetrack and horses. She has a fondness for the racetrack where a Terrier like her receives most petting, respect, and admiration—"in Eileen's experience, just being a Jack Russell Terrier was a bonus at the racetrack. You never got petted and made much of and admired quite so much anywhere in the world as you did at the racetrack if you were a Jack Russell Terrier" (Smiley, 2000, p.371). What's more, Eileen has her own opinion of the horses there:

Horses, Eileen knew, were generally contemptuous of dogs. Horses in general, Eileen had noticed, held a very high opinion of themselves, and looked only to each other for approval and instruction. Jack Russells were like that, too, not like other dogs, who seemed to be willing to take humans as real top dogs instead of "as if" top dogs, which is what Eileen did. Perhaps this shared humoring of humans was why horses and Jack Russell Terriers admired one another. (Smiley, 2000, p.372)

Eileen is observant enough to notice the differences between Jack Russell Terriers' and the other dogs' attitudes towards humans. She also has an idea about horses' typical way of conducting things and their general attitude to dogs. The similarities between Jack Russell Terriers and horses are their self-assertion and self-confidence as well as their flexibility and wisdom in communicating with humans. Due to their similarities, Jack Russell Terriers and horses appreciate one another. Through indirect thought, free indirect thought, as well as free direct thought, Eileen's inner world is directly presented to the reader. Such an anti-anthropocentric description shows us how intelligent and individualistic she is. Animals have their own understanding of the world and of their relationship with the other species on the same planet, including humans. Their independent thinking and rich feeling speak for their individuality and subjectivity.

The third example is about Eileen's thoughts in Paris when Rosalind brings her there—"Wherever they were, Eileen liked it. There were dogs everywhere, little, interesting dogs with many many opinions that had to be corrected by her, Eileen, and there was no getting into bags or crates or being ashamed of oneself as a dog. Wherever it was they were, dogs were held in high esteem here" (Smiley, 2000, p.581). Eileen is very confident in herself. She shows concerns for dogs' status in society and how they are treated by humans. Wherever she is, Eileen is clever and observant enough to find the differences. In Eileen's opinion, Paris is a place where dogs are highly respected. However, there are some other places where prejudices against dogs still exist. Through Eileen's minds, Smiley reminds us that animals have their judgement, self-esteem, and feelings.

In sum, the above three examples are all concerned with Eileen's inner world. The descriptions are from Eileen's perspective. In other words, Eileen is the focalizer of the narration. Although the narrator is not

Eileen, it is mainly through Eileen's eyes to see the world in these descriptions, from which we can find that Eileen's inner world is as rich as humans'. She is self-confident, observant, intelligent, flexible and patient. Both Eileen's initiative actions with specific purposes and the direct presentation of her thoughts reveal that she is a unique individual. Like humans, animals also have their individuality and subjectivity, which refutes the anthropocentric ideas on animals as inferior to mankind for their lack of reason, intelligence, and emotions. Smiley's anti-anthropocentric philosophy can be found in such a narration with animals as its focalizer, as a result of which animals have a say in their own stories.

4. HORSES' INNER WORLDS IN *HORSE HEAVEN*

In addition to the canine character Eileen, *Horse Heaven* also contains abundant descriptions of other animal characters' minds and emotions. The equine characters' inner worlds are presented in vivid ways, which especially can be found from the equine characters Epic Steam, Justa Bob, Limitless, and Froney's Sis.

To begin with, Epic Steam is easily offended, unapproachable and even uncontrollable for humans. When going into Epic Steam's inner world, we will know better about him and the reasons behind. The reason for his being unapproachable derives from his growing environment and the main reason for his being uncontrollable is from his deep desires: "He expressed his love of running by rearing, bucking, bolting, veering to the left or right whenever his rider tried to rate him. He thought maybe if he got rid of the rider he would be able to run in his own way and for his own purposes" (Smiley, 2000, p.115). This is what running at the track means most to him. All those uncontrollable ways in humans' eyes are his expressions of a love of running. Through a revelation of his own thoughts, Epic has a chance to speak for himself. As a result, the reader can see the situation from different perspectives, not just from the groom's and horse trainer's angles, but from Epic's own angle. As a result, the scope is broadened by the diversity of voices from various species.

The second equine character Justa Bob is very crucial in the novel with many descriptions about him, some of which are about his inner world. One example is when he is sent to a new horse-trainer William Vance in Chicago after a long journey. The new environment upsets him: "He was tired from the long van ride. He was thirsty, but now that he had manured in his water bucket, he no longer cared to drink from it. He looked around. Everything was unfamiliar. He closed his eyes" (Smiley, 2000, p.300). His inner thoughts and feelings are revealed to the reader. He has requirements on many things, such as the smell of straw, the type of hay, and drinking water. The unfamiliar

sensory experiences increase his disappointment. Even when he is thirsty, he won't drink unpleasant water. The description presents the reader an individual with his unique personality. Doubtlessly, Justa Bob is a horse of character.

In addition, there is a detailed explanation on Justa Bob's sense of time and his memory: "In the first place, Justa Bob had only a hazy sense of time. The multitude of sharp pictures that constituted his memory were not sequential in the human sense. ...he could learn the difference between the past and the present. (Smiley, 2000, pp. 339-340) Due to a close contact with horses since her teenage and a large amount of reading about horses, Smiley often inserts what is true about horses in her writings, especially the knowledge concerning horses. The description well explains how equine memory works in connection with a present situation, and the difference between horses' and humans' sense of time. Despite the difference, animals like horses do have memory, and have the intelligence and ability to learn. They are by no means inferior to humans.

The third equine character Limitless is a bay colt who enjoys galloping around the pasture. After Farley becomes his trainer, Limitless wins several races. Limitless' mind is disclosed on his way back to the ranch after winning a race: "In addition to these basics, he recognized the landscape—hot, flat, golden-brown below and bright blue above. It was the landscape of freedom... And so he recognized the ranch as a place where he was happy, or at least almost entirely in the state of relief that comes from doing all the time what it is that you aim to do" (Smiley, 2000, pp. 504-505). Limitless has a genius for running. He is born a runner with a consistent desire of keeping on moving. He is intelligent enough to recognize the scenery along the road outside the window of the van. Furthermore, he has his own understanding of what the landscape means for him—freedom. In his eyes, the ranch is the best place for him to do what he wants to do and aims at doing all the time. Whatever he does, the most interesting thing for him is the free movement around the pasture. Limitless has his own preferences. The description is a part of Limitless' inner activities. It acts as an example to show his intelligence, preference, and mental activity, or in other words, his inner world.

The fourth equine character Froney's Sis is unsure of her identity due to a lack of mother's company and guidance during her growth. There is a part of description of her thoughts and feelings when she arrives at the training base after two months' relaxation on the pasture: "She was accustomed, as well, to the constant physical companionship of other fillies, ...In her new accommodations, she could see one filly on one side,... Her relationships, which had been endlessly palpable, had suddenly gotten abstract. (Smiley, 2000, p.117)" There is a sharp contrast between the life on a pasture

and the life in a stall. Froney's Sis misses the freedom on the pasture, and an intimate companionship of other fillies. The absence of mother's love at her young age increases her later longing for close relationship with other horses.

With respect to this growing desire for connection, Jane Smiley mentions in her nonfiction book *A Year at the Races*—"the young of each domesticated mammalian species require relationships to complete the formation of their brain structure and brain chemistry, that they suffer when these 'open-loop' relationships are faulty, absent, or disturbed, and that they are more or less eager to experience relationship throughout their lives" (Smiley, 2004, p.62). Being restricted to the stall, she cannot even touch the other fillies and be touched by them. Neither can she move freely in a spacious place. Deep in her heart, she longs for a totally natural state of being. Similar to Limitless, Froney's Sis also regards the pasture as her favorite place, especially with the company of other fillies. In the novel, Smiley keeps on mentioning equines' desire for freedom through their own perspectives. The horses have their own voices. Therefore, horses' subjectivity is recognized and respected in this way.

With regard to the depiction of animals minds in *Horse Heaven*, Alyson Bardsley argues that "Implied in the novel's effort to depict animal minds is a belief that while human cognition is importantly different, it is still best understood as existing on a continuum with that of other animals, rather than as that which separates humans from the rest of the animal kingdom" (p.262). I agree with Bardsley on that Smiley's presentation of animal minds implies humans' continuity with nonhumans, which helps to break the dualistic division of humans and animals, and paves the way for a further realization of animals' agency and subjectivity. Plumwood considers it as one of the communicative virtues for interspecies relationship—"recognising continuity with the non-human to counter dualistic construction of human/nature difference as radical discontinuity" (p.194). Obviously, Smiley's revelation of animals' inner world in her fiction recognizes humans' continuity with the nonhuman, and overthrows human exceptionalism prejudice against animals as well as Cartesian mechanism view of animals, which Bekoff criticizes as "it is narrow-minded to believe that we are the only species with minds or the only species that can think, make plans, and experience pain and pleasure" (p.87).

To sum up, *Horse Heaven* is narrated from the third person omniscient point of view. The focalizer keeps on changing from one character to another, from one species to another. In this way, the thoughts and emotions of all the characters are exposed to the reader. More importantly, the narration grants equal opportunities to characters of different species to exhibit what are in their minds and

hearts. The presentation of animals' minds and emotions to the reader speaks for their intelligence, individuality and subjectivity in an artistic way. By changing the focalizer in the narration, Smiley makes sure that each individual has a say. Furthermore, this anti-anthropocentric narrative way suggests the importance of hearing different voices from different species, not just humans.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, through the revelation of their active minds and rich emotions, a presentation of their inner world, Smiley breaks up the anthropocentric bias against animals, criticizes humans' ignorance of their rich mental world as well as rude underestimation of their intelligence and feelings. In effect, the diversity of animals' minds and emotions well manifests the individuality and subjectivity of animals.

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