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Children's Wild Animal Stories and Inter-species Bonds

Leesa Fawcett

Abstract

In this paper, I discuss the contemporary dilemma of animals disappearing from the minds and direct experiences of many human beings in Western culture, and the implications of this dilemma for the fields of child development, environmental education and biological conservation. As part of a larger research project, I explored Kindergarten and Grade Five children's (N = 177) ideas and stories about three common, familiar and wild, Canadian animals --- bats, frogs and raccoons. In the research process, I attempted to attend to the methodological decisions I made along the way. I reflect upon trends in the children's wild animal stories, and questions they raise about anthropomorphism, kinship and inter-species bonds.

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