

Do animals help resolve existential questions

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Abstract

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This research is of a qualitative nature, employing fourteen open unstructured interviews. Participants were comprised of undergraduate students and non-academics currently symbiosing with domesticated cats and dogs. The research question is " Do animals help resolve existential questions?" The research uses the existential writings of Jean-Paul Sartre as a foundation. The analysis employs the systematic discourse analysis techniques formulated by Potter & Mulkay (1985), and Potter & Wetherell (1989). The discussion focuses on the linguistic construction of Sartre's concepts of being, and the positioning role of language as used in interpersonal relationships. The findings from this research indicate that other animals do play an important role in aiding us to resolve existential questions, but we give them little in terms of reciprocal payment for these services. Therefore, should we be employing other animals in our search for answers to our own personal existential questions at all? As this is an existentialist piece of research, and also coming from a social constructionist viewpoint, there is an undercurrent of consciousness raising flowing throughout it.

Keywords: Jean-Paul Sartre. Existentialism. Animals. Interpersonal relationships. Social constructionism. Linguistic positioning. Other. Symbiosis.

Subjects: [Specific Sciences: Psychology/Psychiatry](#)

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