

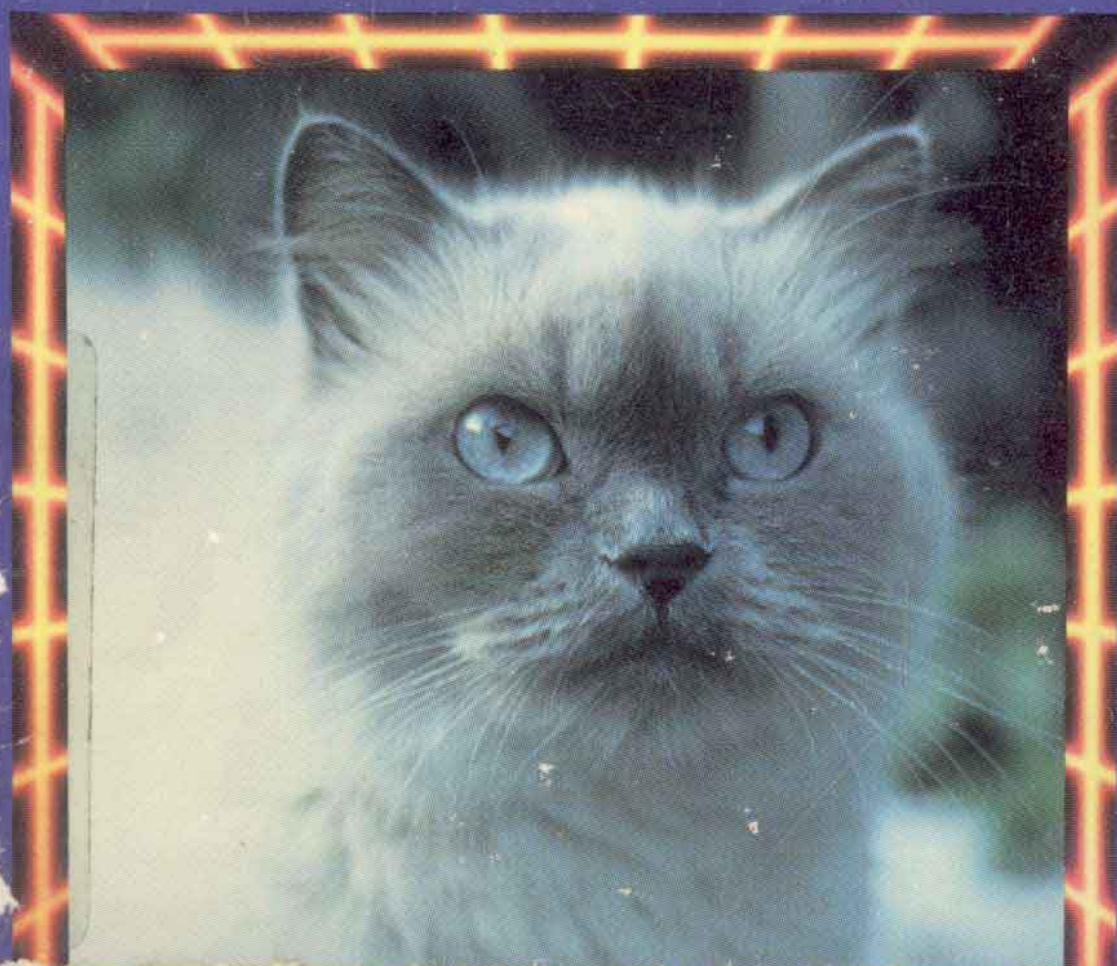
**Bill D. Schul**

Author of  
**THE PSYCHIC POWER OF ANIMALS**

# **ANIMAL IMMORTALITY**

## **Pets and Their Afterlife**

*Do animals have souls and  
a higher level of consciousness?  
Here is the astonishing truth.*



U.S. \$4.99

# ANIMAL IMMORTALITY

ASTONISHING REVELATION  
About Pets and Their Afterlife

藏书章

Bill D. Schul

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

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## **Awareness of Death**

Do animals have souls? Does something of the creature remain after death? What claim, if any, can it make on immortality?

There is a general assumption in our culture that only humans are blessed with souls and immortal life, that once an animal's brief span is spent upon the earth, it is gone forever except as its memory lingers on in the hearts of those who loved it.

Is this assumption true? Upon what facts is it based? What is the evidence to the contrary?

The reader is invited to explore these and many other questions pertaining to animal survival of bodily death, and in the pages which follow the greatest adventure of all will be undertaken: the journey to the world beyond this one. Is it really unknown? Does existing knowledge reveal that we share this odyssey with our fellow creatures? If animals survive death, what is their destiny? What is the purpose behind their lives, death, and going on to other states?

These are cosmic questions, ones entertained by man about himself since the beginning of time. Inasmuch as they remain, permeating every aspect of our lives, they continue to intrigue and haunt us. Is this curiosity and apprehension of death limited to the human species? Although we readily accept animal instinct for survival as nature's way of protecting life upon this planet, we have

not extended a knowledge of death to creatures other than ourselves.

We concede that humans share the instinct for survival, but we have assumed that our love of life and fear of death as the annihilation of ourselves is limited to our species alone. We understand that life is sweet but all too brief, and its pleasures are haunted by the spectre of death waiting in the wings to drop the curtain—perhaps without notice on ourselves and those we love. We witness the passage of time, the unrelentless erosion of age, and ponder the meaning of it all.

We harbor the thought that only we cling to life as a precious commodity. As a rule, we do not entertain the idea that other animals experience anxiety or fear of death. We imagine that, since they do not comprehend that life will end, death has no meaning to them.

While we cannot discuss this issue with animals, there are other ways we can reexamine the question. Investigation of animal behavior reveals some rather thought-provoking observations of animal response to and anticipation of death.

A sad but graphic illustration of an animal seeking death, seemingly because of grief and despair, is offered in the story of Tom, a seven-year-old collie that belonged to Harold Myers of Houston, Texas. Harold and Tom were inseparable and it was understandable that the dog was lost without his master when Tom left home to join the armed forces during the Vietnam War. But, although Tom obviously was not happy with Harold's absence and moped a great deal alone, he seemed to accept the separation with resigned patience.

When Harold was killed in action, and from that day (several days before the Myers family was notified), Tom exhibited a determination to end his own life. Three blocks from the Myers home was a railroad track. Tom stretched himself across the track, but before a train arrived two men spotted him from the crossing and pulled him from the rail. But the following day the big collie

stayed on the track until the train came. Did he somehow conceive that he would once again be with his master?

Tom's apparent suicide poses some interesting questions. If he had been killed on the first attempt, one could argue that the dog just happened to be on the track at the wrong time. Yet he was saved once, only to return. And if death was not his intention, he very easily could have moved out of the way. What understanding did Tom possess of life and death? He understood them clearly enough to choose one over the other. Was he too grief-stricken to go on? Did he believe he could join Harold on some plane of existence? And how did he know that Harold was dead? He made no attempts on his life until his companion was killed. Whatever our conclusions, we are faced with an understanding which allowed for choices.

Perhaps, as with people, death is an individual thing to be met by different animals in their own fashion. Some animals seem to be unaware of its approach, while others make preparations for the event. For example, certain dogs and cats search for places to be alone at the time of death, apparently aware that it is imminent.

Researchers have found that chimpanzees demonstrate a haunting fear of death. Dr. Adrian Kortlandt, who worked with primates in the Congo jungle for many years, found that chimpanzees will become quite frightened and draw back from dead animals. His provocative experiments will be described in a later chapter, but it might be noted here that chimpanzees not only demonstrate great fear of death but also do not handle well the death of a family member or companion.

In his account of the mountain gorillas of Kisoro, George Schaller relates how a young gorilla refused to leave the dead body of its adult companion. It was forced into the position of either escaping into the jungle in search alone for members of its group, a task for which it was not prepared, or clinging to the last vestige of its former happy group life, a dead leader who for the first time failed to protect it. The youngster was finally captured but died a short time later in the London Zoo.

One can compare this account with one by Robert Kastenbaum, co-author of *The Psychology of Death*, of an eighteen-month-old human child's first contact with death in the form of a dead bird. The child recognized it as a bird, "but he appeared uncertain and puzzled. Furthermore he made no effort to touch the bird. This was unusual caution for a child who characteristically tried to touch or pick up everything he could reach. David then crouched over and moved slightly closer to the bird. His face changed expression. From its initial expression of excited discovery it had moved to puzzlement: now it took on the aspect of a grief mask."

With both gorilla and human child we discover incomprehension of death at first contact with it. But a few weeks after David's first dead bird, Kastenbaum explained, he came across another, and his reaction to this was completely different. "He picked up the bird and . . . reached up toward a tree, holding the bird above his head. He repeated the gesture several times . . . accompanying his command now with gestures that could be interpreted as a bird flying." When putting the bird back in the tree several times failed to bring it back to life, the youngster accepted that this was not going to work. "He looked both sober and convinced" and then lost interest altogether.

Biologist Lyall Watson tells us in *The Romeo Error* that "no serious study has ever been made of death or death-awareness in any species other than our own, but there are anecdotal scraps and odd experimental findings that fit together to produce an astonishing pattern. As this picture takes shape, the notion of universal continuity begins to look less and less childish."

One of the first persons to breed chimpanzees in captivity, Rosalia Abreu, related to R. M. Yerkes, author of *Almost Human*, that upon the death of one of her female chimpanzees in a secluded enclosure, her mate, who was outside the park, began to scream. "He continued to scream, looking about as though he saw something." Later, when another chimp died, he did the same thing.

“He screamed and screamed and screamed,” Abreu said. “And he kept looking and looking with lower lip hanging down, as if he saw something that we could not see. His scream was different from anything I have heard at other times. It made my flesh creep.”

Watson notes that under some circumstances, animals seem to pay little attention to death but that there are some situations in which the ability to respond to dying has survival value. For example, after a lioness kills her prey and she and her group have eaten all they want, other animals move in to finish off whatever is left. Hyenas and jackals are most likely attracted to the site by sounds and smells, but Watson believes that vultures use some other cue and will locate a hidden corpse with great precision. Vultures have excellent eyesight and as soon as one spots food, others soon arrive, “but sometimes this just does not seem to be enough to explain their presence,” Watson states. “I have seen vultures arriving in the dark to sit like impatient pallbearers around an antelope that had been shot, and on those occasions there were no mammalian scavengers around to attract their attention.

“I am not suggesting that vultures are able to diagnose death at a distance, but I do believe that in some situations a signal goes out from a dying organism and that this alarm is particularly strong when the attack on it is sudden and violent. It seems likely that the signal began as a warning and was originally intended only for members of the same species, but in time and evolution it has turned into an all-species SOS. Depending on the circumstances and the species involved, this signal can simultaneously be read as ‘Help, I need assistance,’ ‘Look out, there’s a killer around,’ ‘Relax, he’s eating someone else,’ or ‘Come on, dinner’s ready.’ There is value in all these communications and economy in the fact that all are based on a single signal given by a single individual in trouble. I believe that there is now sufficient evidence to show that such a system does in fact exist.”

What does a knowledge of death imply? If a creature



is aware that the occurrence of death eliminates mortal life, it suggests that this creature can project into the minutes, hours, or days ahead with the knowledge that the lost one will not return. There is the determination, however arrived, that an irreversible change has taken place. An acquaintance with the finality of death has been displayed by other species. When I was a boy growing up on a Kansas farm, we had a neighbor, T. J. Randle, who raised horses. He understood the workings of those horses like some people today understand computers. He could gentle-break tough customers better than anyone I have ever known. This feat was recognized by everyone in the area and people would say, "Ol' T.J. must be part horse himself . . . he understands them and they seem to understand him."

T.J. allowed his horses to graze around his house and there was a gate at the entrance to his drive that had to be opened and shut when driving in and out of his place. When he died and the ambulance came to pick up his body, all of his horses were quietly standing around the house. But when the ambulance bearing T.J.'s body exited through the gate, the horses also stampeded through it and headed up the road with the ambulance. Not wanting to hit one of them, the driver drove slow. He stopped once to ask a neighbor, following behind in his car, if something should be done about the horses. "Naw," the neighbor said. "They'll get tired pretty soon and go back." They didn't. They galloped the five miles to town and surrounded the ambulance while T.J.'s body was being moved inside the funeral home.

The sheriff's department was called about the horses and the sheriff said he would get some deputies to round them up before they caused an accident. But he didn't need to bother, for when they were next spotted they were already on the road leading back to the ranch.

"Telling the bees" was an ancient custom of letting the bees know when their beekeeper had died. Some times the beehive was draped in black crepe. Following the custom of telling the bees, when Sam Rogers, a cob-

bler and postman of the Shropshire village of Myddle, England, died, his children walked around his fourteen hives and told the bees. According to the Associated Press, April 1961, the relatives of Rogers gathered at his grave and shortly after they arrived, thousands of bees from Rogers's hives more than a mile away came and settled on and about the coffin. The bees entirely ignored the flowering trees nearby. They stayed for approximately half an hour and then returned to the hives.

A cat paid his respects at the grave of his master, according to a story in the autumn 1963 issue of *Tomorrow* magazine. The correspondent stated that his grandfather and a cat named Bill were extremely close. The cat followed him by day and slept in his bed at night. The man was seriously hurt in a railway accident and for a week lay in a hospital several miles from his home. He died in the hospital and his body was taken from there to the church and then to the churchyard for burial. As the rites were finished, an uncle of the writer looked up and saw Bill approaching the grave. He moved with dignity to the grave, stood for a short time looking at the coffin, and having paid his respects, turned and headed home.

An understanding of life and death and what it would take to keep the one from becoming the other was demonstrated a few years ago by a dog in Ohio.

On September 23, 1979, Rae Anne Knitter and Ray Thomas were hiking near Cleveland, Ohio, when Ray stepped out on a shale ledge to take a picture. The ledge gave way and Ray fell eighty feet to the hard ground below. His body stopped, however, on the edge of a small stream and he lay facedown in the water.

Rae Anne's mongrel dog immediately broke loose from her leash and ran to the edge of the cliff. A moment later she, too, plunged to the rocks below. Somehow she seemed to realize that there was not time for other options. Woodie broke both hips in the fall but managed to drag herself by her front paws to Ray's side and nuzzle his head out of the water.

When Rae Anne arrived at the scene, Woodie was

keeping Ray's head out of the water and he regained consciousness long enough to tell his fiancée, "I'm broken all over."

Rae Anne tried to put her hand under Ray's head but Woodie pushed her away. The girl summoned help and rescuers carried Thomas to an ambulance. It was also necessary to carry Woodie, for she could no longer move.

Thomas spent nearly three months in intensive care from a torn spinal cord, three broken vertebrae, and a broken left elbow and right wrist. But he acknowledged that "if it wasn't for Woodie, I'd be dead."

In addition to the broken hips, Woodie sustained fractures of seven toes. It took three months to recover from her life-saving leap. And today, according to Rae Anne, "She can't do some of the things she used to do, like sit up or chase a Frisbee. But she's okay and, thanks to her, so is Ray."

For her heroics Woodie was named the 1980 Ken-L Ration Dog Hero of the Year. She was awarded a gold medal, a gold-plated leash and collar, a one-thousand-dollar bond, and a pastry doghouse filled with dog food.

How many of us would have the courage to perform Woodie's feat? She must have known the extent of the risk. Dogs do not jump from heights which their bodies can't handle. Instinct or some inner knowing provides this caution. Yet Woodie, with only a second's calculation, plunged to the ground below. Even then, badly broken, she managed to drag herself to Ray's side.

It has been said that a dog is the only creature who has seen his God. Do dogs, and certain other animals, have this kind of adoration for humans? What kind of love would prompt them to risk their lives for us? Can we demonstrate a greater love? How can we argue that they have no knowledge of death when they demonstrate the importance of saving life?

Perhaps one could propose that the heroic animal is serving as an agent of a higher force. This is implied in the statement of a minister's wife whose dog saved her life: "God works in mysterious ways."

If the animal is acting as an agent of God, does this shift the decision-making away from the animal? Couldn't the questions be equally applied to any human performing unusual and superior deeds? In any case, doesn't the ability to listen and the willingness to act say something rather profound for the understanding and character of the animal? This issue will be explored later.

As with many humans, some animals seem unable to surrender a loved one to death. Devoted to this love, they cling to its memory as long as they live. Perhaps, like humans, they await the time of a reunion. This seemed to be the case with a female collie and one of her offspring.

I used to delight in Albert Payson Terhune's stories of his Sunnybank collies, and I recall Jean, who, contrary to most animal mothers, paid special attention to one of her puppies long after he was grown. She brought him the tastiest bits from her dish, took him bones, and even though he was larger than she, daily washed him from his head to the tip of his tail. Wherever Jock went, Jean was not far behind.

Then Jock got distemper and had to be isolated. This was before the days of antibiotics and, despite the struggle by Jock to survive and Terhune to save him, the big collie died. During Jock's quarantine, Jean refused to eat.

Jock was buried in a field more than a quarter of a mile away. The following morning, Jean was released and immediately she started searching every inch of ground, looking for her "puppy" and occasionally giving a sharp little bark that had always brought him running.

Finally she raced back for Terhune, her tail wagging. She caught hold of his coat and pulled him along to the mound that was Jock's grave. Jean lay down on the mound, her tail still wagging, knowing that Jock was close. Every day until her death years later, regardless of the weather, Jean visited Jock's grave, often staying for hours.

“Her waiting had no grief in it,” Terhune explained. “It was full of gay hope.”

Mr. and Mrs. Robert King, their small daughter, Mrs. King’s elderly father, and a cat named Felix lived in the small town of St. Kildre in Australia. The old man died at the age of ninety and the cat couldn’t be consoled. It roamed the house and yard, searching and crying. They decided to take the cat for a ride in the hopes of distracting him.

Felix was quiet until they reached the outskirts of Melbourne when suddenly the hair on his back bristled, he trembled, and leaped through the car window and disappeared from sight in the traffic.

There was nothing the family could do but return home and hope that Felix would find his way on his own. The days passed and Felix didn’t return. Then Mrs. King and her daughter visited the cemetery with some flowers and there, pacing back and forth on the top of the grave, was Felix. The cat was highly joyful at seeing them and started playing with the little girl as she had with the grandfather. The cemetery was ten miles from their home and more than five miles from where Felix had leaped from the car.

Twice the Kings tried to take Felix home, but each time they got as far as the cemetery gate the cat leaped from the car and scampered back to the grave. They made arrangements with the custodian for the cemetery to feed and care for the cat.

When John Hethington interviewed the family for *195 Cat Tales*, he drove out to the cemetery and there was Felix fixed like a sentry atop the grave. Hethington wrote: “This story haunts me. Perhaps it’s because there are in it features that lie beyond the frontiers of human understanding.”

“We can hardly expect to find certainties in this nebulous realm,” Vincent and Margaret Gaddis told us in *The Strange World of Animals and Pets*. “Perhaps it is not so important what we believe as that we believe



something and keep testing our beliefs. But upon one conviction we stand—that man cannot assign a surviving soul to himself and deny it to his animal brothers; that man and animal are creatures of instinct and reason with the difference one of degree and not of kind; and that if consciousness does survive, it is a quality of life itself and not of Homosapians.’’

Interestingly enough, the farther we push the frontiers of human understanding, the more we suspect that what remains beyond the horizon far exceeds anything known. In a computer age of technological breakthroughs occurring daily, we breathlessly endeavor to form and cling to concepts, only to discover they are being hopelessly eroded by new research deluges even as we try to formulate them.

In no other area of scientific investigation is this more true than in the field of brain function, mind as something separate from the organic brain, and consciousness as a product of something other than neurological systems. The nature of awareness, its origins and extensions, can no longer be contained in the Procrustean bed of the old biological sciences. Both the rational and intuitive minds have escaped their dependency on the size and arrangement of the organic brain. Some scientists are even speculating that dependency is the other way around, i.e., the mind resides at a higher level of command and uses the brain as an instrument for information-processing and dissemination.

Not many years ago it was believed that intelligence could be determined by the size of the brain in comparison to body weight. When it was found that the human sometimes came in second in these comparisons, the theory was abandoned in favor of one that proposed that intelligence was determined not by the thickness of the cortex but on its folds and complexities. This schema of intelligence did rather well for a time until it was discovered that certain marine mammals held an edge over the human species in this department, coupled with findings

that large sections of the brain could be destroyed without impairing intelligence.

Today, science is not so sure what constitutes intelligence, reason, consciousness. Dr. Elmer Green of Menninger's has even stated: "All of the body is in the mind, but not all of the mind is in the body." And as the models have crumbled so have our restrictive dogmas and we are faced with the possibility that consciousness does not occur by any known scientific structure. As limitations have been stripped from the human mind, we are open to new questions as to the nature of awareness and are somewhat startled to learn that we must extend these questions to creatures other than ourselves. Further, if the mind is not dependent on the physical brain, then the demise of the brain doesn't imply the same fate for the mind. The continued existence of the mind may well apply to any creature, human or otherwise, that possesses this quality. In any case, it is a provocative thought and one we will continue to pursue in the pages ahead.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

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### **Beyond the Brain**

Anyone hesitant to assign reasoning abilities to Brutus, a suburb Chicago golden retriever/Irish setter mix, who found his way through busy city streets to get help from his veterinarian, may be resisting the facts.

Brutus had an earache and his owner, Barbara Barba of South Chicago Heights, took him to his veterinarian, Dr. Robert Mitchell of Steger, Illinois. The dog was treated for an ear infection and sent home with some medication. Ten days later, Barba took Brutus back for another treatment. These were the only times the dog had been to the clinic, and on both occasions he had been taken in a car.

Six weeks later, Brutus was put on his chain in the backyard, but one hour later Barba received a call from Dr. Mitchell, who told her that her dog was ready to be picked up. She told the veterinarian that it couldn't possibly be her dog as he was fastened in the backyard. A survey of the backyard, however, proved otherwise. She rushed to the clinic, to find Brutus waiting there for her, and was told by the waiting-room receptionist that the dog had entered the front door and had promptly sat down at the end of a long line of owners and their pets to patiently await his turn.

"Each time a dog went in to see the doctor, Brutus got up, moved over one place, and sat down again," the receptionist told news reporter Eric Brown. "He was so

good that I simply assumed that he was with a lady who came in just after he did.”

Dr. Mitchell explained that when he had finished with his last patient before Brutus he “went out into the waiting room to see who was next. Brutus walked right past me and went into the examining room. My mouth dropped open when I realized no one was with him. He cocked his head to one side, which is what dogs do when they have an ear infection.”

After he had treated Brutus, Dr. Mitchell checked the dog’s ID tag and called his owner. She told the veterinarian that she was not aware that her dog’s ear was still bothering him and that he had broken his chain in order to get help.

While not a great distance was involved, Brutus had to manage heavy traffic and find his way past hundreds of buildings in order to correctly select the Village Pet Clinic.

Veterinarian Dr. Michael W. Fox tells the story of a farmer friend who was keeping a pet coyote fastened in a kennel. The animal, nevertheless, became suspect when a number of chickens disappeared. One day, hiding out near the barn, the farmer saw the coyote take some of his food and some corn from a stored cache and lay them out as far from the kennel as its chain would allow it to go. Then it returned to its kennel to wait in hiding for its prey.

In the past, the coyote’s manipulative behavior would have been explained away simply as instinct. But today, cases of animal behavior are causing more and more scientists to rethink their positions. Reports of insects camouflaging themselves in order to approach their prey, ants giving complex orders to co-workers, wolves using group tactics to trap other creatures—these have inspired a great deal of discussion on animal thinking. The National Zoo in Washington, D.C., has held large and important symposiums on the subject.

The major question, of course, remains: Can animals