

point of view, are fully justified in scorning it. They must retain their objectivity at all costs if they are to make meaningful explorations into the animal world. But this is not as easy as it may sound.

Quite apart from deliberate decisions to use animal forms as idols, images and emblems, there are also subtle, hidden pressures working on us all the time that force us to see other species as caricatures of ourselves. Even the most sophisticated scientist is liable to say, 'Hullo, old boy' when greeting his dog. Although he knows perfectly well that the animal cannot understand his words, he cannot resist the temptation. What is the nature of these anthropomorphic pressures and why are they so difficult to overcome? Why do some creatures make us say 'Aah' and others make us say 'Ugh I'? This is no trivial consideration. A vast amount of our present culture's inter-specific energies are involved here. We are passionate animal lovers and animal haters, and these involvements cannot be explained on the basis of economic and exploratory considerations alone. Clearly some kind of unsuspected, basic response is being triggered off inside us by the specific signals we are receiving. We delude ourselves that we are responding to the animal as an animal. We declare that is it charming, irresistible, or horrible, but what makes it so?

In order to find the answer to this question we must first assemble some facts. What exactly are the animal loves and animal hates of our culture and how do they vary with age and sex? Quantitative evidence is required on a large scale if reliable statements are to be made on this topic. To obtain such evidence an investigation was carried out involving 80,000 British children between the ages of four and fourteen. During a zoo television programme they were asked the simple question: 'Which animal do you like most?' and 'Which animal do you dislike most?' From the massive response to this inquiry a sample of ix,000 relies to each question was selected at random and an: ysed.

Dealing first with the interspecific 'loves', how did the various groups of animals fare? The figures are as follows: 97-i5 per cent of all the children quoted a mammal of some kind as their top favourite. Birds