

Caelyn McCarthy

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Professor Jesse Miller

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Reconsider the Lobster

People have long thought that animals may have a consciousness comparable to the human intellect. The study of animal consciousness and cognition is a relatively new field in science, but the question has been around for centuries. Some humans want to answer the question purely for the advancement of the field, but others want to know because they do not want to eat anything that has a consciousness like a human does. For whatever reason, animal cognition has fascinated humans for a long time. Many authors, journalists and essayists have tried to capture this conflict between do they or don't they in the past. Most well-known is David Foster Wallace and his *Consider the Lobster* essay. Others have followed, including Hal Herzog of *Utne Magazine* and Ross Andersen for *The Atlantic*. These authors have tried to capture the ethical dilemma of how we interact with animals in words so the rest of us can better understand. **I NEED A THESIS. SOMETHING ABOUT ANIMAL CONGNITION MAYBE.**

In his controversial essay *Consider the Lobster*, David Foster Wallace asks the reader to do just that. He asks the reader to think critically and consider the way the lobster is treated in our society, like a commodity, when in reality it is a living, breathing animal. People have been campaigning for decades for other humans to stop consuming meat and instead let the animals

we eat live long and happy lives, running free. Wallace is no different. *Consider the Lobster* is an in depth look at the way we treat these animals that we claim to “love”. Wallace covers many different things in his essay, including the different ways that lobsters are killed for consumption. From boiling alive to plunging a knife between the eye stalks for a quicker kill, humans have tried nearly everything to justify eating these animals. Wallace tries to “humanize” lobsters in a way, stating “the lobster, in other words, behaves very much as you or I would behave if we were plunged into boiling water”. This quote eludes to the idea of lobsters having a consciousness and feeling pain like you or I would. An important question to ask when considering cooking lobster is do lobsters possess the “neurological hardware required for pain-experience”, as Wallace puts it himself. Supporting this idea later on in the essay, it is stated that “lobsters do not... appear to have the equipment for making or absorbing natural opioids”, meaning they are more susceptible to pain than humans are, because they have no way of mitigating it. **(Not finished yet)**

Humans see animals in strange ways. We love animals, we also kill and consume animals. Some people kill animals for fun, others keep animals as pets in cages that are too *small to contain them*. Hal Herzog, author of *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat*, sums up the way we think of animals in one sentence... “The way we think about other species often defies logic”. In his article *Animals Like Us*, Herzog tells stories. His article provides plenty of anecdotal evidence about the strange way we interact with animals in our world.