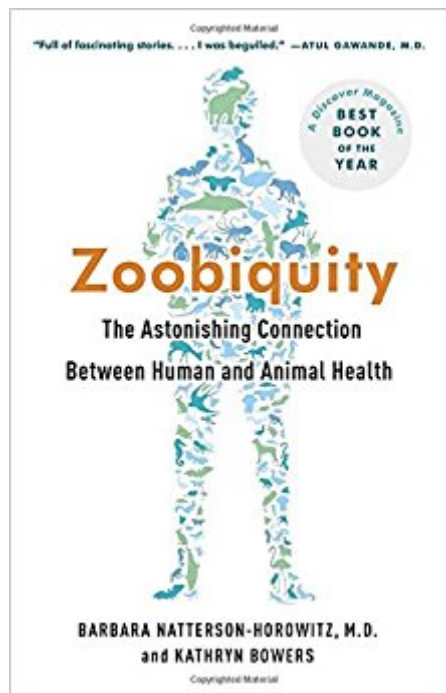




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# Zoobiquity: The Astonishing Connection Between Human And Animal Health



## Synopsis

New York Times Bestseller • A Discover Magazine Best Book of 2012 • An O, The Oprah Magazine Summer Reading Pick • Finalist, 2013 AAAS/Subaru SB&F Prize for Excellence in Science Books

Do animals overeat? Get breast cancer? Have fainting spells? Inspired by an eye-opening consultation at the Los Angeles Zoo, which revealed that a monkey experienced the same symptoms of heart failure as her human patients, cardiologist Barbara Natterson-Horowitz embarked upon a project that would reshape how she practiced medicine. Beginning with the above questions, she began informally researching every affliction that she encountered in humans to learn whether it happened with animals, too. And usually, it did: dinosaurs suffered from brain cancer, koalas can catch chlamydia, reindeer seek narcotic escape in hallucinogenic mushrooms, stallions self-mutilate, and gorillas experience clinical depression. Natterson-Horowitz and science writer Kathryn Bowers have dubbed this pan-species approach to medicine zoobiquity. Here, they present a revelatory understanding of what animals can teach us about the human body and mind, exploring how animal and human commonality can be used to diagnose, treat, and heal patients of all species.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A Look Inside Zoobiquity

"Full of fascinating stories. . . . I was beguiled." —Atul Gawande, M.D., bestselling author of

Complicationsâ œProvocative. . . . Itâ™s exciting to watch a doctor discovering just how much the animal kingdom has to teach her.â • â "Carl Zimmer, *The Daily Beast*â • â œIlluminating . . . [and] difficult to put down. . . . Reading *Zoobiquity* gave this reader a totally new perspective on his furred and feathered neighbors.â • â "Dennis Rosen, *The Boston Globe*â • â œ[A] pacy, readable, and entertaining manifesto for a zoobiquitous approach to health and wellbeing, to be welcomed by vets and other human animals.â • â "The Observer (London)â • â œNot only [have the authors] presented a very credible argument for collaboration between disciplines, but she has done so in a most entertaining and beautifully written manner.â • â "New York Journal of Booksâ • â œ[The authors] make a convincing case. . . . You will find the argument hard to resist. Plus you will have some killer dinner party gems.â • â "New Scientistâ • â œTremendously interesting and beautifully written. . . . At once entertaining and respectful of the readerâ™s intelligence.â • â "Winnipeg Free Pressâ • â œProfoundly illuminating. . . . As clarion and perception-altering as works by Oliver Sacks, Michael Pollan, and E. O. Wilson.â • â "Booklist (starred review)â • â œThe book features countless intriguing anecdotes. . . . After finishing, youâ™re guaranteed to never look at your dog, cat, or any other animal the same way again.â • â "Publishers Weeklyâ • â œThe authors provide solid evidence that humans are not as far removed from the rest of the natural world as we might have thought. Engaging [and] useful.â • â "Kirkus Reviewsâ • â œThis beautifully written book is loaded with fascinating material that makes a compelling case for viewing human health and disease comparatively. We have more to learn from other species than I had ever suspected. Gripping and memorably engaging, it belongs in the hands of anyone with an ounce of curiosity about the biological sources of the human condition.â • â "Stephen Stearns, Ph.D., Edward P. Bass Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Yale Universityâ • â œFascinating reading about the similarities in both the physiology and behavior of people and animals.â • â "Temple Grandin, Ph.D., author of *Animals Make Us Human*â • â œThe connections we share with the rest of life on our planet are a source of beauty and, in Natterson-Horowitz and Bowersâ™ luminous new account, the inspiration for an emerging and powerful approach to human health.â • â "Neil Shubin, paleontologist and author of *Your Inner Fish*â • â œThis important book shatters barriers between disciplines and professions. . . . A â^must readâ™ forâ students interested in animals and evolution who are considering careers as biologists, ethologists, physicians, veterinarians, nurses, dentists, psychotherapists, nutritionists and many others.â • â "Marc Bekoff, author of *Minding Animals* and *The Emotional Lives of Animals*, and co-founder with Jane Goodall of Ethologists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

I wrote once 'Sick? Go to a Vet' because veterinarians take a holistic approach, don't get bogged in dialogue with patients but attend to symptoms, care less for fancy disease names and more for practical cures, and, after all, physicians are limited in treating only one species of animals. In 2007 in East Lansing, MI, at my alma mater MSU, the respective presidents of the American Medical Association (AMA) and American Veterinary Association (AVMA) met and laid out a campaign to raise physician & public awareness of the very thin line between human and animal medicine. It didn't reach much further than the city limits. It's a fact that veterinarians as part of continuing education study human cases but the opposite is rarely true. Today I read an exciting exception in Discover Magazine's Book of the Year Zoobiquity: The Astonishing Connection Between Human and Animal Health by Barbara Natterson-Horowitz. The author is a cardiologist and psychiatrist who moonlights at zoos. She noted over the years the similarities among species including us two-legged ones and has collected oddball case histories. Some are a bit detailed for the layman since, after all, it's written by a physician, however the strange parallels are worth the read. The second chapter on 'Feint of Heart' draws on about robins and generals fainting in the heat of battle, the third chapter is 'Jews, Jaguars & Jurassic Park', and in the fourth 'Roar-gasm' we learn that stallions at stud farms are allowed three stands to get the job done and then they're kicked out, just like the johns facing alarm clocks on Times Square. Ensuing chapters on 'Fat Planet' and so on offer hundreds if not a thousand examples of how human and animal health relate. We all get diseases, and for most of the 'civilization diseases' that comprise 80% of a physician's practice the author intimates that it's indeed better to go see a vet. I give this book four 'stars' to a physician and fine author for the courage to rear on her hind legs and point out to colleges and readers the benefits of studying animal medicine to cure ourselves. One drawback is the book follows what I call the 90-10 rule which so many genius-crackpot offer that 90% of the evidence cases presented are false comparisons while the other 10% are astonishingly refreshing insights. It's up to the reader to distinguish which is which.

This book deserves many more than 5 stars. It is unquestionably one of the most fascinating books I've ever read. Further, it has changed my outlook and worldview in several areas, and reinforced some ideas I've been incubating for some time. Even as an RN of 30 years' experience, I found new learning on every page. You should know that it doesn't take a science background, however, because of the clarity of her writing. Dr. Natterson-Horowitz covers so many areas boldly and unabashedly, including sex and STDs, heart disease and obesity. To review this book chapter by

chapter would be to ruin all the fun, though. The overwhelming message(s) are that we are more like animals than we realize (and vice versa), and that this connection cries out for substantial increases in research about the animal-human connection. Just to learn that anorexia nervosa is found in the animal kingdom, as is obesity and heart disease, tells us we've been needlessly missing the mark in research. Well, I could go on and on, but you need to get a copy of this book and read it. Your worldview, your understanding of our world, of animals and each other will be inevitably changed. That is a growth devoutly to be desired.

I just finished reading my copy of *Zoobiquity*. It is a ground-breaking book and essential reading for anyone interested in the connections between human and animal medicine. Readers familiar with "One Health" concepts will find in the book vivid examples of the convergence of human, animal, and environmental health in emerging infectious diseases and animals as sentinels of toxic and infectious hazards in the environment. Yet, it is worth focusing on some of the truly innovative aspects of this book. First, *Zoobiquity* boldly asserts that by neglecting its comparative medicine roots, clinical medicine itself has gone astray and the medical profession needs to use the perspective of clinical science that spans different species to get back on track. We need to understand mental health problems such as addiction and self-destructive behaviors in the context of evolution and environment, just as naturalists and veterinarians strive to do, and use this perspective to design new treatment and prevention approaches. Similarly, we need to use the same tools of evolutionary and environmental understanding to rethink our approaches to chronic diseases such as obesity and cancer. Second, *Zoobiquity* builds the strongest case to date for greater development of clinical knowledge of animal health using techniques that are driving evidence based medicine such as randomized trials and large observational cohorts followed over time in order to glean important information useful for both animal and human health. Third, the concepts in *Zoobiquity* are presented so clearly and documented so extensively that they appear to have struck a chord in both the general population and the medical community that propels the discussion of human animal medicine linkages to a whole new level. Overall, *Zoobiquity* throws a gauntlet out to the biomedical scientific and clinical community, urging it not to delay further, but instead to set up an effective research and development infrastructure to pilot and test new hypotheses and clinical approaches using this enhanced comparative model. It will be fascinating to see who comes forward to accept this challenge.

Each chapter could have been summarized in a paragraph or two. A little too wordy and repetitive.

The message is interesting.

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