

Chapter 2

Beyond Biophilia: The Theory of Astrophilia

ABSTRACT

Chapter 2 expands the concept of biophilia to encompass an awe for the majesty of creation beyond the Earth's biosphere. Also treated in this chapter is the need for a new ethics that is more inclusive of the unknown, much as the Theory of Biophilia calls for more inclusion of the unrepresented. There will be a need to redefine awe and rethink companionship, as human explorers endure extended time away from reminders of home in the pursuit of endless discovery. This chapter will take the reader to where no theory has gone before.

INTRODUCTION

Astrophilia is the theory that takes over where the Theory of Biophilia leaves off – in other words, *Astrophilia* may be defined as “biophilia beyond the borders of our biosphere.” The Theory of *Astrophilia*, as it was submitted to the United States Copyright Office on January 1, 2019 (Markey, 2019) is rather mind-bending at first glance because it ventures unto the under-charted or lesser-charted territory of Space. It reads as follows:

The Theory of Astrophilia suggests that sentience as defined as a capacity to feel, perceive or experience subjectively, combined with awareness as defined as a recognition of what we are not, provide the means through which we

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are inextricably linked with, and innately motivated to seek out the “other” with whom we share the Universe (Markey, 2019).

The reader will recall that the *Theory of Biophilia* addresses the innate relationship that exists among all the species that share the biosphere on Earth. Since the idea of awe is not confined to the Earth’s biosphere, the Theory of Astrophilia proposes that a similar relationship exists among all sentient beings that share a common universe. Even beyond the familiar spheres confined to the gravity of the human species’ own world there lies a celestial sphere, one might say, with which all beings are inextricably linked, be they confined to gravity, or be they beyond its influence. Thus, a logical extension of the prior arguments of collaboration among the Earth’s kinds suggests that the same collaboration is vital far beyond current understanding.

Figure 1. The logo for the author’s Theory of Astrophilia™



CONSTRUCTING A NEW ETHICS: OUR PRIME DIRECTIVE

New ways of thinking about awe require new ways of thinking about environmental protection, and whether the societal indifference to the environment on Earth might accidentally translate to a similar indifference out in space. As you recall, the Theory of Biophilia posits that, when humans motives suggest they are undergirded by more noble ideas such as awe, reverence, respect, and empathy, both humans and whatever humans come into contact with have the ability to flourish. But when humans motives are ignoble, or are guided primarily by egocentrism, self-serving biases, devaluation, and the need to dominate whatever humans discover, the end result

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