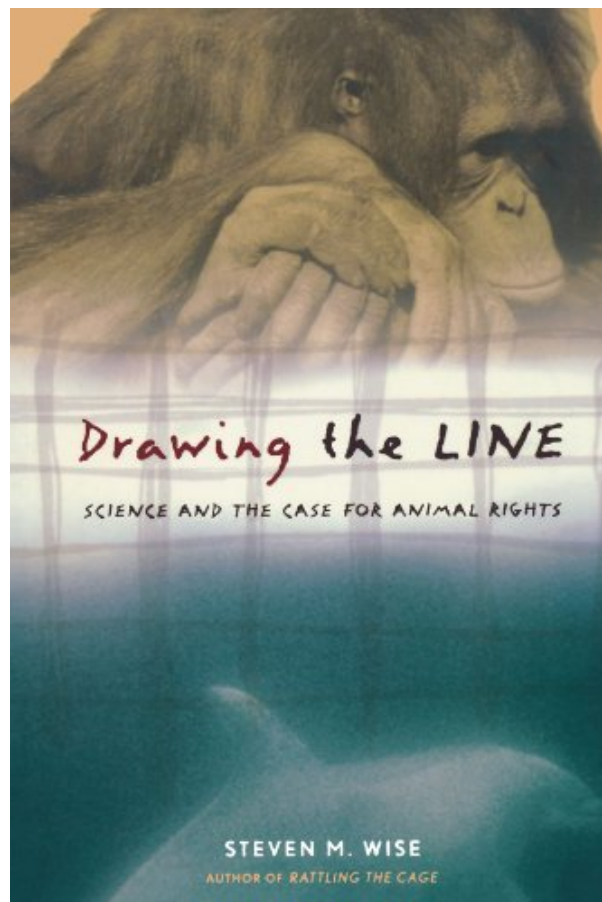
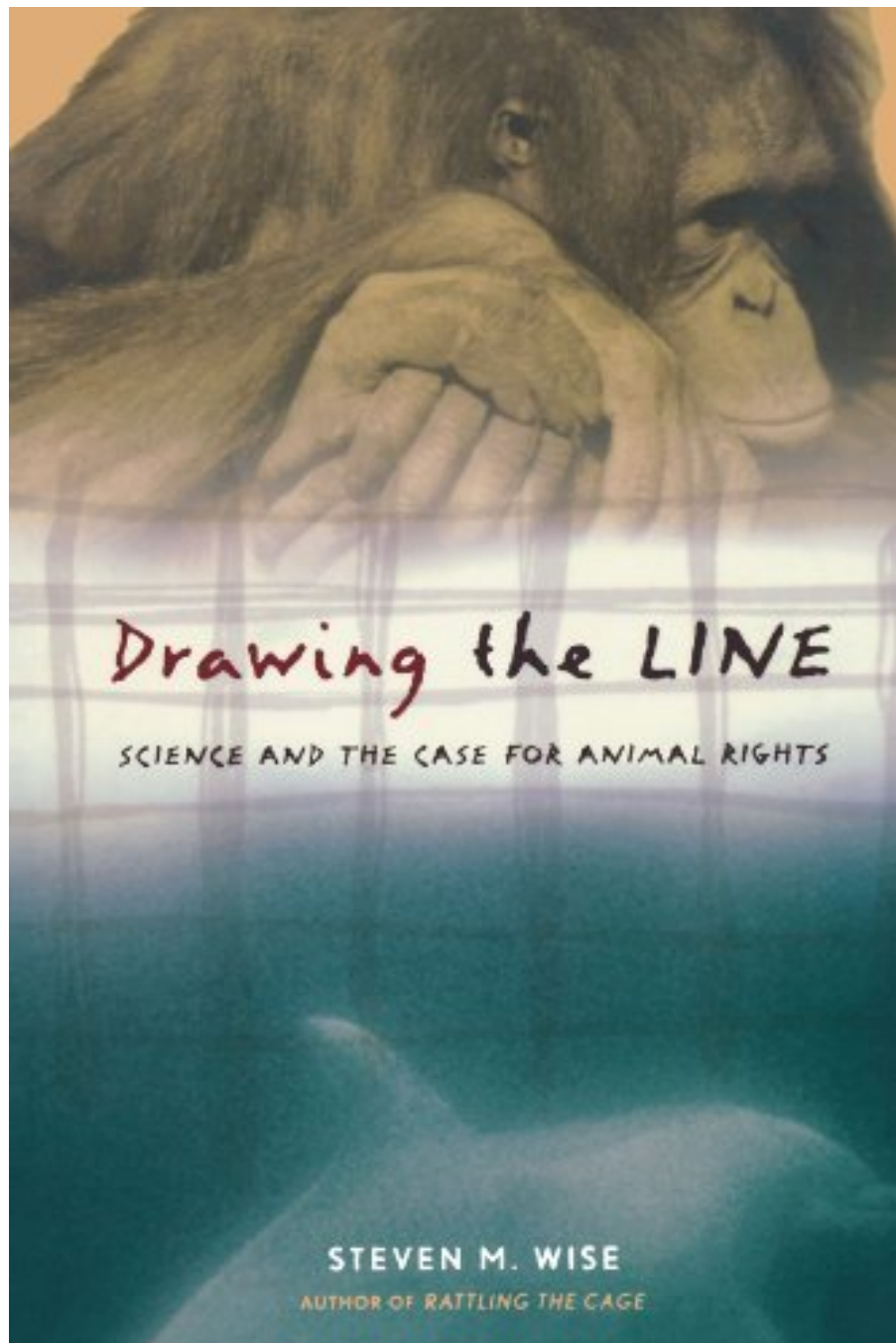


DRAWING THE LINE: SCIENCE AND THE CASE FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS BY STEVEN M. WISE



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Are we ready for parrots and dolphins to be treated as persons before the law? In this unprecedented exploration of animal cognition along the evolutionary spectrum—from infants and children to other intelligent primates, from dolphins, parrots, elephants, and dogs to colonies of honeybees—Steve Wise finds answers to the big question in animal rights today: Where do we draw the line? Readers will be enthralled as they follow Wise's firsthand account of the world's most famous animal experts at work: Cynthia Moss and the touchingly affectionate families of Amboseli; Irene Pepperberg and her amazing and witty African Grey parrot, Alex; and Penny Paterson with the formidable gorilla Koko. In many cases, Wise was able to sustain an extended conversation with these extraordinary creatures. No one with even a shred of curiosity about animal intelligence or justice will want to miss this book.

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Most helpful customer reviews

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Fascinating exploration of nonhuman animal cognition

By S. Nemati

Wow, this book was really fascinating. I was so glad I purchased it! I'll admit, I had my inhibitions about it. The book, I knew, was about judging animal's cognitive abilities in order to grant them 'personhood' and rights so I figured the author was a more elitist type who would look down on the more 'unintelligent' animals. I was pleasantly mistaken. I have a lot of admiration for the author. He is definitely an ardent animal rights advocate and he actually practices what he preaches. I strongly admire his goal to gain 'personhood' for nonhuman animals. You will see when you first start the book that his stance on scrutinizing the status of animals in society via their intellectual capabilities is the most appropriate way to gain rights for animals at the present time.

So onto the book: it explores the cognitive abilities honeybees, dogs, parrots, dolphins, elephants, orangutans, and gorillas. I had always wanted to read these kinds of books. I have known about Alex and Koko but books about them have been difficult to find! I found myself really drawn into it. Some of the intellectual feats of the animals just have you going 'wow'... they will boggle your mind. One thing to note is that not all of the information is cut and dry. Some of the concepts and tests of the mental abilities are complex. Wise goes through Piaget's child development stages and you have to recall the stages to grasp some of the abilities he describes in regards to the different animals.

The only gripe I had was that I pondered how the author would grant rights to different animals considering the circumstances. He makes an excellent case for why we should, the obstacles involved, but not how to do it... perhaps another book? Still all in all it was a superb, fascinating book. I really wish everyone would read it. :)

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Yes, Virginia, your puppy does have a soul!

By Michael Wells Glueck

In *Drawing The Line*, animal-rights attorney and law professor Steven M. Wise reprises and extends the arguments he presented in his highly successful first book, *Rattling The Cage*, on behalf of the legal personhood of chimpanzees and bonobos to that of gorillas, orangutans, dolphins, parrots, elephants, dogs, and honeybees, comparing their abilities to think, reason, remember, deceive, and play-act with those of his precocious four year-old son, Christopher. His goal is simply and modestly stated: "Shifts occur only after people come to believe that something is possible. Making the argument that at least some nonhuman animals should have basic legal rights and be recognized as legal persons is the first step toward informing policymakers, judges, and the public about what is known, and, therefore, attaining the goal." In the process, Professor Wise both confirms with scholarly and scientific citations what the reader intuitively expects - namely, that primates are more intelligent than other forms of animal life - and avoids such excesses as advocating vegetarianism which have too often vitiated the polemics of activists in the field. Like *Rattling The Cage*, *Drawing The Line* is highly readable, informative, educative, and entertaining. As Milton said, "A good book is the life blood of a master spirit," a classification to which the learned Professor Wise himself clearly belongs.

13 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

Succeeds brilliantly

By Malvin

Steven M. Wise's "*Drawing the Line*" presents a compelling argument for recognizing the rights of "nonhuman" animals. As a lawyer who has taught at Harvard and has championed animal rights for over twenty years, Mr. Wise directs our attention in this book to some of the recent scientific studies pertaining to animal intelligence. The evidence strongly suggests that at least some species qualify for dignity rights and other legal protections.

Mr. Wise provides introductory chapters that succinctly defines the struggle for animal rights. The author compares the historic practice of slavery with today's plight of nonhuman animals. Deep-rooted socioeconomic practices conspired to keep slavery alive for most of human history; today, animal slavery is fueled by longstanding cultural and economic forces. Consequently Mr. Wise approaches the daunting task of animal liberation with eyes wide open. He has written this book as a strategic move to further our understanding and with the hope of advancing the struggle.

To that end, I would have to say that Mr. Wise has succeeded brilliantly. The author employs a sound methodology to persuade us of the merits of his case. Mr. Wise rank-orders the intelligence of nonhuman animals by utilizing Piaget's well-known theories pertaining to the study of early childhood development. Consequently most of the chapters in the book are devoted to the study of specific animals (such as Koko the gorilla) who might represent the innate abilities of their respective species. You will be intrigued with how

Mr. Wise utilizes Piagetian measures such as mirror self-recognition tests in order to compare animal performances with human intelligence.

I think that nearly everyone who reads this book with an open mind will be persuaded that at least a few species do indeed display the characteristics of "practical autonomy" that should assure them of rights under the law. Mr. Wise visits with leading researchers to demonstrate the mental acuties of specific animals; in many cases, we come to appreciate the unique personalities of these remarkable animals. The power of Mr. Wise's writing is such that the notion of subjecting these animals to cruel scientific experiments and the like seems unthinkable, and liberation suddenly appears to be a quite reasonable and humane thing to do.

In short, I highly recommend this compassionate, original and thought-provoking book to everyone who cares about animals. While the legal system may not yet have recognized the validity of Mr. Wise' argument, this book will no doubt help the good lawyer secure a favorable ruling in the court of public opinion.

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