

Science Behind Animal Behaviour Series:

TOPIC: THE STATE OF ANIMAL ASSISTED INTERVENTIONS: A NEW PARADIGM SHIFT FOR THE FUTURE



Dr. Aubrey Fine received his graduate degree from University of Cincinnati in 1982 and has been on the faculty at California State Polytechnic University since 1981. His leadership among faculty and teaching excellence earned him the prestigious Wang Award in 2001, given to a distinguished professor within the California State University system (23 Universities), in this instance for exceptional commitment, dedication, and exemplary contributions within the areas of education and applied sciences. Dr. Fine is also a licensed psychologist who opened his practice in Southern California in 1987. His practice specialises in treating children with ADHD, learning disabilities, developmental disorders and parent child relations.

Dr. Fine is the author of several books including the **Therapist's Guide to Learning and Attention Disorders**, *Fathers and Sons*, **The Total Sports Experience for Children**, and **The Handbook on Animal Assisted Therapy**. He also has had a featured monthly column in Dog Fancy Magazine on the human animal bond entitled the Loving Bond. He has been a guest on numerous national TV and radio shows including on programs on ABC, Animal Planet, Discovery Network, KTLA, and CNN.

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TOPIC: HEALTH BENEFITS OF COMPANION ANIMALS



Nancy R. Gee, PhD, is Professor of Psychiatry, Bill Balaban Chair in Human Animal Interaction, and the Director of the Center for Human Animal Interaction at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia, USA. The Center is situated in the School of Medicine and in addition to research and educational activities it also houses the “Dogs on Call” therapy dog program, which includes 90+ dog/handler teams who visit patients throughout the VCU health system.

Dr. Gee has extensive teaching and research experience and has specialised in the area of Human Animal Interaction (HAI) for the past 15 years. She served for five years as the HAI Research Manager for the Waltham Petcare Science Institute, located in Leicestershire, UK. In this role she managed a large portfolio of collaborative university-based research projects spanning multiple countries and topics, including; how companion animals impact the lives of older adults, or help students learn, or reduce the impact of PTSD symptoms in military veterans. Dr. Gee’s own program of research has focused primarily on the impact of dogs on aspects of human cognition, including working memory, executive functioning and physiological responses such as heart rate variability to interactions with dogs.

A recipient of multiple grants and awards, Dr. Gee has more than 50 peer reviewed publications specific to HAI and has edited and contributed to numerous books on the subject. Dr. Gee regularly delivers international presentations on a variety of HAI topics, serves on the editorial review boards of several peer reviewed journals and has actively promoted the field of HAI through participation on the boards of several HAI organizations.