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Anthropology Reflection Paper

The notion that humans are superior to other animals has gained widespread acceptance across the world. However, when scholars study the aspects of being human which create the gap between humans and animals, much of what, as people believe, makes them unique does not stand the test. For instance, each of animal species is special in its own way and, as such, humans cannot base their claim of being different on this factor (Glock 109). Moreover, with the growing popularity of animal rights movements and the researches of functions in the animal brain, the argument that the mind is what sets humans apart is waning in strength. Kupsala et al. (3) found that people are now willingly accepting the fact that animals have minds as well. Such studies tend to narrow the gap between animals and humans, but some fundamental differences remain.

The most prominent contrast is that all human societies possess a highly sophisticated and distinct communication system known as language (Glock 130). This system represents a vital component of culture (Glock 130). This attribute sets humans apart because while animals may have rudimentary systems of communication, the latter are not as well developed. Moreover, their codes tend to be uniform regardless of where the animals exist in the world. Another critical characteristic of humans that differentiates them from other animals is that they are highly adaptable and can survive in virtually any environment in which they end up (Glock 130). This flexibility is, to a given extent, unique to humans because other animal species can only survive in specific habitats. The ability of humans to adjust and live in diverse environments is ascribable to their special cognitive powers. Moreover, these special powers allow them to create cultural heritages that can last up to centuries but can also change whenever necessary to align to prevailing circumstances.

Overall, humans are what they are because they have more complex thought processes that permit them to gather together and accomplish tasks that other animals cannot. Other animal societies may operate in ways similar to human ones, as they use their "language" to communicate and form groups. However, animals cannot identify their areas of interest and develop them to benefit their societies. An animal simply does what nature expects of it unless trained otherwise by a human. Humans, on the other hand, can develop virtually any skills they desire.