



INTELLIGENSICUS

The Method

How a Wild Population Raises Its Own Intelligence

RESEARCH PROGRAM PROPOSAL

Imran Stanton Cooper

MARINE

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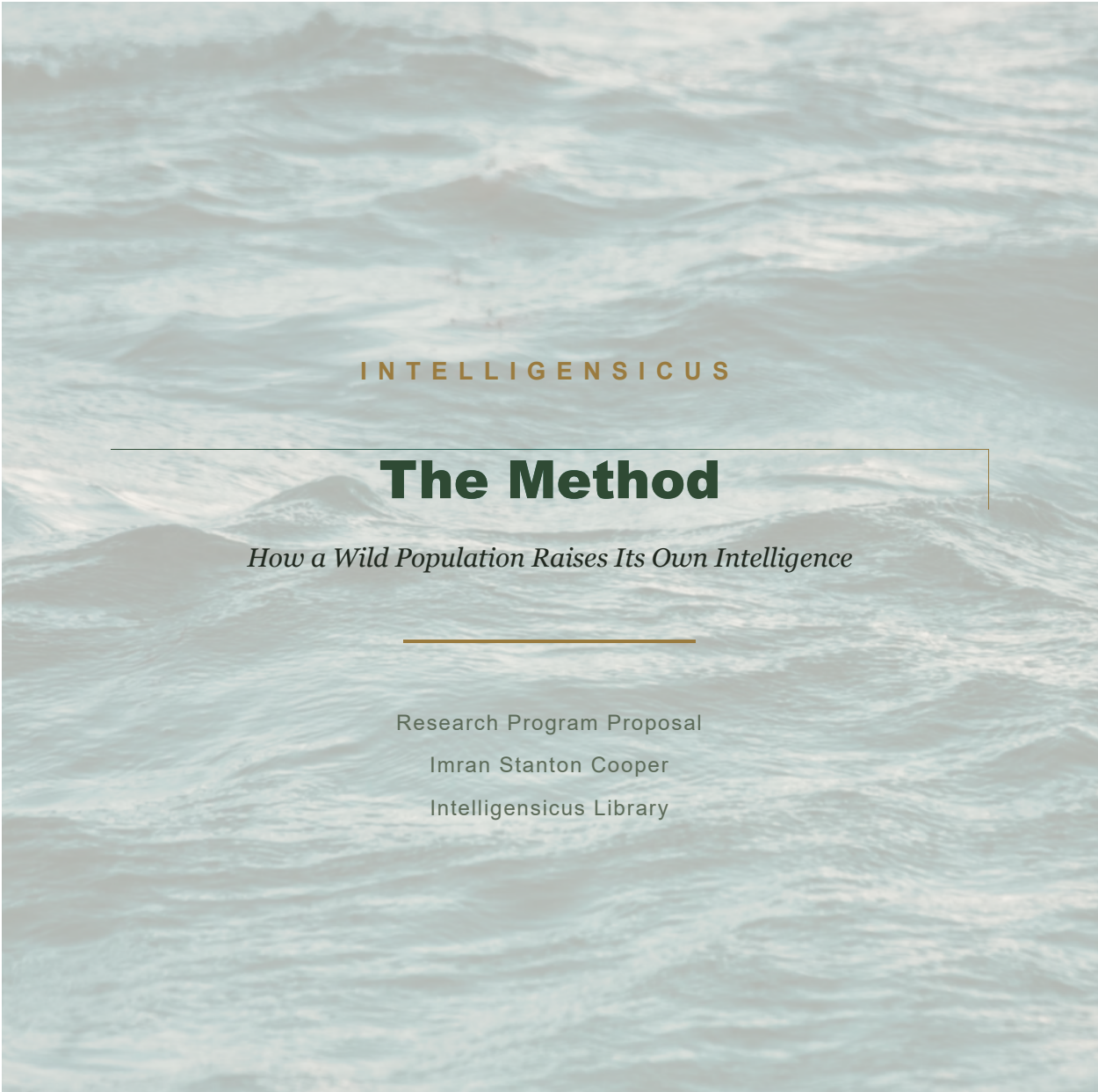
CETACEAN

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Intelligensicus Library

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01 THE PREMISE

Intelligence does not rise in a vacuum. It rises when a population gains abundance, and with abundance the spare time, the security, and the room to work problems out. Human intelligence and culture rose that way, as stockpiling produced docility and the leisure in which problems could be worked, solutions authored, and knowledge transmitted. The same pathway is open to other minds, and the evidence that it is real, fast, and heritable is already on the record. Intelligensicus is the deliberate application of that pathway to wild animal populations, so they raise their own capability and keep it across their own generations.

02 CONDITIONS FIRST

The method begins by giving a study population the conditions in which capability can grow: reliable provisioning where appropriate, security, and the spare time those produce. This is itself an uplift, and for a threatened species it is a conservation lever in its own right. A population living at the edge of survival has no capacity to spare for invention. A population with a margin does.

03 SCAFFOLD, DO NOT GIFT

This is the rule the whole program turns on. The program never hands an animal a finished solution. It designs tasks and staged problems that provoke the animal to author a better version of something it already does, using materials and ideas already within its reach: a better tool, a better foraging technique, a better shelter. The solution must be the animal's own, because only a self-authored capability can be understood by the animal, kept by it, and taught to others. A gift is forgotten. An invention is inherited.

04 WILD-USEFUL AND CONFLICT-REDUCING

The program favors capabilities that raise survival in the animal's real environment and that reduce, rather than increase, dependence on or conflict with people. This is the standing answer to the program's own dark side, the smarter forager that depletes its food or the smarter animal that raids human resources. The conservation and conflict-management response is designed in from the first site, not bolted on after.

05 TRANSMISSION IS THE GOAL

A single trained animal is not a result. A changed population is. Every outpost is instrumented to detect whether a capability spreads through the population, peer to peer, parent to offspring, or down the maternal line, and whether it persists across generations after the intervention ends. Transmission and persistence in the wild population are the definitive measures of success. Everything upstream, the conditioning and the scaffolding, exists to produce that one outcome.

06 THE APPARATUS

The tasks are built from the standard paradigms of the learning-and-memory literature, graded in difficulty. Simple alternation mazes probe working and reference memory. Radial-arm, Barnes, cheeseboard, and water mazes separate route memory from true map learning. Puzzle boxes, levers, and tool tasks exercise manipulation and insight. For the marine and small-invertebrate tracks the apparatus is a stationary clear enclosure sited in the animal's own water, so it sees its home environment throughout, solves the task, earns a real reward, and is released. The whole program runs under the 3Rs of humane research and a precautionary welfare posture for the sentient invertebrates the New York Declaration on Animal Consciousness now recognizes.

07 THE EVIDENCE IT WORKS

Two findings anchor the method. The silver-fox domestication experiment showed that selection on tameness alone produces docile, human-oriented animals with correlated behavioral change within only a handful of generations: the pathway is fast and heritable. Robert Sapolsky's savanna baboon troop showed that a wild population can adopt and hold a behavioral culture, transmitted to new members years after the originators were gone: the gain can be the population's own inheritance. Wild chimpanzees, dolphins, crows, elephants, octopuses, cuttlefish, and jumping spiders already hold and transmit the kinds of capability the program scaffolds. No one has yet combined these findings into a deliberate effort to raise the intelligence of wild populations and let them keep it. That is the method, and that is the opening.

Help a population do better what it already does, and the gain becomes its own.

INTELLIGENSICUS

*More intelligent life in the world, holding its own new
knowledge, of its own making.*

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