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**Rhyme, Reason, and Animal Rights:
Elizabeth Costello's Regressive View of Animal Consciousness
and its Implications for Animal Liberation**

Norm Phelps¹

Abstract

Novelist J. M. Coetzee is widely credited with “shifting the species boundary” (Mason 129) in his fiction to acknowledge the personhood of at least some nonhuman animals, thereby advancing the cause of animal protection, which he is known to support in his personal life (Satya). In this article, I will argue that in *Elizabeth Costello* Coetzee treats animals as alien and unknowable because he believes, contrary to a rapidly growing body of evidence, that they lack language. Building on this belief, he uses animals instrumentally to argue for the superiority of imagination to reason. And finally, because of his insistence on the priority of the imagination over reason, he would place animals solely at the mercy of human good will and leave them unprotected by the kinds of laws that protect human beings.

Background

From antiquity to the present, our most acclaimed thinkers and artists have endeavored to erect and defend what John Wesley called “the barrier between men and brutes, the line which they cannot pass.” (Wesley) This “great wall of humanity”—as it might be dubbed—is designed to maintain the uniqueness of human beings and our superiority to all other species. Over the years, the wall has assumed various forms, as successive scientific discoveries made earlier versions impossible to sustain. “[F]irst, it was possession of a soul, then ‘reason,’ then tool use, then tool *making*, then altruism, then language, then the production of linguistic *novelty*, and so on . . .” (Wolfe 2, emphases in original). From the perspective of nonhuman animals, the history of philosophy, religion, and literature—especially in the West—is the story of a Herculean effort, sustained over millennia, to establish and defend the priority of humanity over all other species of sentient beings.

In recent decades, primatologists, ornithologists, ethologists, evolutionary biologists, and scientists from other disciplines have brought about a revolution in our understanding of the interior lives of nonhuman animals, and their work clearly demonstrates that each of the attributes alleged to signal human uniqueness and superiority is, in reality, possessed by other species.¹ This new empirical approach to understanding nonhuman animals (foreshadowed by Darwin in *The Descent of Man* and more extensively in *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*) is challenging millennia-old prejudices and assumptions. But the practitioners of the humanities, the people who are supposed to be in the vanguard of those who tear down old prejudices and open new vistas, are resisting—or more often, ignoring—the findings of de Waal, Pepperberg, and Bekoff just

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as steadfastly as their scholastic forebears resisted the findings of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler (Wolf 2).

Twice winner of the Man Booker Prize and soon to win the Nobel, J. M. Coetzee was known to be a vegetarian out of concern for the suffering of animals. And so when it began to be rumored that he was writing a novel in which the protagonist was a vegetarian animal rights advocate, there was lively anticipation that we might soon be presented with the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of animal rights. What we got was something very different.

That novel, *Elizabeth Costello*, contains eight segments called “Lessons” plus a “Postscript.” The two Lessons that are most relevant to our purposes are number three: “The Lives of Animals: The Philosophers and the Animals” and number four: “The Lives of Animals: The Poets and the Animals.”² These Lessons are built around a lecture and a seminar that the book’s eponymous protagonist, an Australian novelist who is a vegetarian and putative proponent of animal rights, delivers on animal consciousness and our inability to access it. The views she expresses seem to reflect those of Coetzee himself, at least at the time the novel was written, and I think we may safely conclude that he has cast her as his spokesperson.

The Attack on Reason

Costello begins by pointing out that the twin pillars of modern Western civilization—Christianity and the Enlightenment—share a belief in the supremacy of reason. For Augustine, Aquinas and the generations of theologians who have sailed in their wake, reason is the defining characteristic of God, and being “created in the image and likeness of God” means having a “rational soul,” a term borrowed from Aristotle that refers to the ability to engage in the kind of abstract speculation to which philosophers owe their careers, and which they, therefore, regard as the *summum bonum* of the universe. To Augustine and Aquinas, as to Aristotle before them, creatures without “rational souls,” i.e. animals, are an inferior order of beings to whom we have no direct moral obligations (*Costello* 66-67. See Phelps 34-36, 53-58).

The Enlightenment may have dethroned God from lordship of the universe, but it did not dethrone reason as the sustaining principle of reality. Nor did it dethrone humanity from the privileged position we hold by virtue of being rational beings who are able to think abstractly, use language, enter into social contracts, etc. In fact, the Enlightenment gave us Descartes and Kant, both of whom enshrined reason as the touchstone of value and virtue (*Costello* 66-67. See Phelps 67-68, 79-82).

For Elizabeth Costello, this apotheosis of reason is at the heart of animal oppression (*Costello* 69-70). So long as we regard reason as the sole arbiter of truth and value, we will always debase and abuse those who do not possess it. Thus, she places the blame for our enslavement and slaughter of animals squarely at the doorstep of philosophy, even to the point of being dismissive of philosophers—she mentions Jeremy Bentham, Mary Midgley, and Tom Regan—who try to use reason to establish that we have direct moral

obligations toward animals (*Costello* 66). It happens that Costello is a feminist hero for her novel *The House on Eccles Street*, in which the protagonist is James Joyce's fictional character Marion Bloom transformed from a woman whose interior life can only find expression through her sexuality and tightly-scripted gender roles into a fully autonomous human being (*Costello* 1-2, 13). At this point, we have good reason to expect that Costello is leading us in an ecofeminist direction. And to some extent, she is; but she is also pursuing another agenda that actually works at cross purposes to the feminist ethic of caring for animals—or, for that matter, to any animal protection ethic. In this regard, it may be significant that in Josephine Donovan's sensitive and insightful essay on Coetzee and animals (easily among the best I have read on the subject) the discussion of Coetzee's earlier novels *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *Disgrace* is more extensive and delves deeper into the text than the discussion of *Elizabeth Costello* (Donovan, Miracles).

Reason, Costello suggests, is not the ordering principle of the universe, it is simply an ordering principle of the human mind, and as such, only one of the ways in which the universe can be apprehended. But there are other ways to order and relate to the universe, and at least some of those ways are embodied in animals (*Costello* 67). And since animals embody other, nonrational, ways of experiencing the world, their consciousness is absolutely inaccessible to human reason.

At this point, it is important to note that nowhere does Costello actually consider the evidence concerning animal consciousness. She *assumes* both that it exists and that it is alien and nonrational. In fact, her only attempt to shore up that assumption is to cite Thomas Nagel (*Costello* 75-77), whose celebrated 1974 essay, "What Is It Like to be a Bat?" argues against physicalism by pointing out that, "If physicalism is to be defended, then phenomenological features must themselves be given a physical account. But when we examine their subjective character it seems that such a result is impossible. The reason is that every subjective phenomenon is essentially connected with a single point of view . . ." (Nagel).

I know what sensation I have when I look at a blue flower, and you know what sensation you have when you look at the same blue flower, but there is no way for either of us to know whether we have identical sensations. I cannot experience your sensation and you cannot experience mine. To generalize from that example, I can know what it is like to be me, and you can know what it is like to be you. But I can know what it is like to be you only to the extent that we are alike. And even worse, I can know to what extent we are alike only by inference, and inference is uncertain. But—according to Nagel—I can never know at all what it is like to be a bat because bats and humans are unlike to such an extreme degree. ". . .[A]nyone who has spent some time in an enclosed space with an excited bat knows what it is to encounter a fundamentally *alien* form of life," (Nagel, emphasis in original).

As it happens, I have spent some time in an enclosed space (a gazebo) with an excited bat, and there was nothing alien or unintelligible about his behavior. He flailed along the screen wire that formed the walls, emitting the high-pitched squeak of his sonar, and perhaps squealing a cry for help as well. He wanted to get out of there, and he was trying

desperately to find a way through the wire. In his situation, I would have been doing exactly the same thing.

Bats may be *superficially* alien, but they are *fundamentally* like us. Our behavior demonstrates that we both live in a three-dimensional world of objects and extension in which time flows only forward, events occur, and causality is consistent and predictable. Thus, we are both rational beings who inhabit the same universe, and there is no readily apparent reason why our thoughts about it should not be intelligible to one another. We also live in a world of feeling which is characterized at its most fundamental level by pleasure and pain, fear and hope, and which includes such powerful, consciousness-shaping emotions as anger, contentment, and so on. Both rationally and emotionally, the bat's consciousness is comprehensible in those qualities that are most fundamental and urgent and may be incomprehensible only in qualities that are less so.

For those of us who are primarily concerned with the ethical implications of animal consciousness rather than the nature of consciousness itself, the critical point is not, as it is for Nagel, that we are unable to inhabit the minds of other animals and experience their subjective sensations as they experience them. For that matter, I cannot inhabit the minds of other human beings, including those who are very close to me. But I can experience my own participation in human life and—using the behavior of other human beings as a reality check—I can be confident that the suffering of my fellow humans is as distasteful to them as mine is to me. And from this, I can draw the appropriate ethical conclusion: If my own suffering is evil and not to be caused or allowed to continue unrelieved except for the most desperate of reasons, so is theirs. This process is generally known as “compassion based upon empathy,” and it is easily applied to other species because our participation in the common life of the animal kingdom—again using observed behavior as a reality check—allows us to be confident that the suffering of our fellow animals is as distasteful to them as ours is to us. And that confidence imposes upon us an imperative to grant the members of other species equal standing within our moral universe. As Austrian philosopher Helmut Kaplan points out, “There is *one single* morality for humans *and* animals . . .” (Kaplan 11, emphasis in original, trans. Phelps).

Souls of Poets

Elizabeth Costello agrees with Nagel that the actual consciousness of animals is inaccessible to reason. But she believes that poets can create a kind of parallel universe in which they can imaginatively construct an alien consciousness that will seem verisimilitudinous to us even though we have no way of knowing whether it bears any relationship to the consciousness of any actual animal (*Costello* 77-80, 91). In undertaking this fictional presentation of animal consciousness, the crucial point is that the poem (or story) must imagine what it might be like to be the animal; it must not use the animal as a symbol for some abstract idea or attribute to animals human modes of consciousness. By way of illustration, she cites three poems describing caged animals. The first, Rilke's “The Panther: In the Jardin des Plantes, Paris,” she criticizes for using the panther to represent human concepts. The poem's real subject, she suggests, is an abstract idea of the poet's, and it treats the panther instrumentally, as a means for

expressing the poet's mental life, not the panther's (*Costello* 94-95). This is a strange claim because the Rilke poem is widely understood to be a masterwork of empathic intuition into the psyche of a wild animal caged in a zoo. In it, Rilke portrays the panther as suffering mentally from his imprisonment, having fallen prey to a mind-deadening, soul-numbing lassitude that results from the boredom of his confinement and the loss of everything that lent energy and joy to his life even while his body remains taut and powerful.

Costello's dislike of "The Panther" is all the more surprising because her creator, in his essay on Rilke, praises the poem as an effort "to find words that will take us back before words and allow us to glimpse the world as seen by creatures who do not have words, or if that glimpse is barred to us, then to allow us the sad experience of standing at the rim of an unknowable mode of being" (Coetzee, Rilke 71).³ This is a critical point because it is at the heart of Coetzee's—and Costello's—attitude toward nonhuman animals. Costello and her creator share the Chomskyite prejudice that human consciousness is superior to other forms of consciousness because it alone is formed by language.

Coetzee and Costello's claim raises two questions of paramount importance. The first is: Is our consciousness formed by language? Or is language merely a tool that our already formed consciousness uses for convenience? The second question is: Do animals really "not have words?" Or do they create and use language much as we do? Examining the first question would require more space than I have available, and that question will, in any event, be rendered moot if animals do, in fact, create and use language. Therefore, I shall proceed directly to the matter of nonhuman language.

What is it Like to be a Prairie Dog?

Key to understanding Costello's view of animals is her failure to acknowledge findings of scientists who have uncovered convincing evidence that nonhuman animals construct complex languages which they use to communicate effectively and reliably. Here, for reasons of space, I will limit myself to describing one particularly impressive breakthrough that has been made by Dr. Con Slobodchikoff, professor of biology at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, who has conducted extensive research on the social organization and language of Gunnison's prairie dogs in their natural setting.

Dr. Slobodchikoff is unequivocal about the fact—and the complexity—of prairie dog language. "We now know that the alarm calls of prairie dogs are part of a sophisticated animal language rather than merely an expression of fear. . . . Two major components [of a genuine language] are semantics and syntax. . . . Prairie dog vocalizations contain both of these basic design elements of a language," (Slobodchikoff 66). By careful observation, Dr. Slobodchikoff established that prairie dogs can announce the approach of a predator, indicate whether the predator is in the air or on the ground and the speed at which he is approaching; they can identify predators' species and even assign individual names to specific predators whom they encounter more than once (Slobodchikoff 71). Dr. Slobodchikoff's observation that prairie dog language contains syntax opens the door to a breakthrough in our understanding of both language and animal communication. While

animals may appear to have difficulty handling the syntax of human language in a sophisticated way, they seem able to construct their own syntax, one that is suited to their physiology and the setting in which they live. Therefore, a definition of language that does not account for nonhuman languages must be regarded as, at best, provisional and incomplete. To put it more bluntly, Dr. Slobodchikoff's findings suggest that our current conceptions of language are distorted by anthropocentric bias. Just as "the proper study of mankind is man," the proper study of animal language is animal languages, not animals' ability to learn human language. I would not like to have my linguistic capacities judged by my ability to learn the language of Gunnison's prairie dogs.

In addition to predator warnings, Dr. Slobodchikoff describes what he calls the "social chatters" of prairie dogs, conversations among two or more members of the community unrelated to any observable phenomenon like predators or foraging for food. "[T]hese chatters have a definite syntax. They are not given in random order but have a pattern just like words in a human sentence," (Slobodchikoff 72). It seems apparent that prairie dogs carry on social conversations just as we do.

Perhaps most important of all, Dr. Slobodchikoff discovered that, "[P]rairie dogs from different colonies differ in how they pronounce 'human' and 'dog.' . . . This suggested that the calls might be learned by juvenile animals from their parents, just like human dialects, rather than being determined by some genetically controlled instinct for calling in a precise way," (Slobodchikoff 69). In other words, prairie dog language was created by prairie dogs and is transmitted from one generation to the next in the same way that human language was created by human beings and is transmitted from one generation to the next. Reinforcing this point, Susan McCarthy, summarizing the work of other researchers, tells us that great apes, whales, dolphins, seals, sea lions, walruses, bats, parrots, songbirds, and hummingbirds have all been shown to learn their own languages from their parents. And she acknowledges that ". . . it may be that there are other groups of birds or animals out there who learn what to say," (McCarthy 92).

There is, in fact, no reason to believe that any animal who lives in a community and acts cooperatively with other animals lacks language. Regardless of species, language would seem to be the *sine qua non* of social organization. In this respect, language serves a vital evolutionary function, since efficient social organization involving divisions of labor is of tremendous survival and reproductive value. The kind of cooperative hunting strategies practiced by lions and wolves, for example, would appear to be dependent on the ability of the partners to communicate with one another. Crows and geese set sentries to watch for predators while they eat, and rotate the assignment so that everyone gets a chance at the food, a phenomenon my wife and I have observed any number of times. How do they assign the lookouts and schedule the shift changes unless they can discuss both the system and the assignments? The only satisfactory answer requiring us to presume the existence of no hypothetical entities—the answer demanded by Ockham's razor—is that they use the same mechanism we do: language. Crows and geese, by the way, like many other birds, are very vocal animals, chattering constantly among themselves. Unless they are talking, discussing matters of common interest, perhaps even gossiping—in the manner of Dr. Slobodchikoff's prairie dogs—it is difficult to construct a credible

explanation for this behavior. Constant vocalization to no purpose would be a waste of valuable energy, especially in cold weather or on long flights, and would alert predators to the birds' presence, both outcomes that would be counterproductive from an evolutionary standpoint. It seems likely, therefore, that this behavior has some countervailing evolutionary value, and that this value lies in communication.

The claim that animals lack language is an ancient prejudice that can no more be sustained in the light of contemporary scientific research than the ancient prejudice that the sun revolves around the earth could be sustained in the light of Renaissance science.

Imagining Molly Bloom

To return to my main thread, it might appear at first glance that Costello is claiming that poets can intuit the nature of an animal's consciousness even though nonhuman consciousness cannot be understood rationally. In fact, she—and her creator—are claiming nothing of the sort. Rather, they argue that poets can create an imaginary mode of consciousness and attribute it to a nonhuman, nonlinguistic animal in a way that makes the reader feel as if she were experiencing the world as the animal experiences it. Costello praises poetry that “does not try to find an idea in the animal, *that is not about the animal*, but is instead the record of an engagement with him,” (*Costello 96*, emphasis added). Unfortunately, this “engagement” occurs exclusively in the poet's imagination; it has nothing to do with any living animal or her actual experience of the world, as Costello acknowledges when she says that this kind of poetry “falls within an entirely human economy in which the animal has no share,” (*Costello 96*). The word “engagement” is commonly understood to imply an “I and Thou” relationship in which at least two parties are actively involved. But for Costello, the poetic engagement is between her and her own fictional creation. There is no second party, and thus there is no genuine engagement, only a fantasy. Costello makes this clear when she invokes her most famous novel to illustrate her point:

There are no bounds to the sympathetic imagination. If you want proof, consider the following. Some years ago, I wrote a book called *The House on Eccles Street*. To write that book I had to think my way into the existence of Marion Bloom. Either I succeeded or I did not. If I did not, I cannot imagine why you invited me here today. In any event, the point is *Marion Bloom never existed*. Marion Bloom is a figment of James Joyce's imagination. If I can think my way into the existence of a being who has never existed, then I can think my way into the existence of a bat or a chimpanzee or an oyster, any being with whom I share the substrate of life. (*Costello 80*, emphasis in original)

Taken at face value, this claim is nonsensical because its purported meaning depends on attributing reality to an unreal being. Sympathy is, I believe, an essential and fundamental ingredient in any valid ethical theory. But to be authentic, it requires two distinct (and real) consciousnesses, a subject consciousness and an object consciousness, both of which have actual experiences. If the object is imaginary, our “sympathy,” while it may

be real as an internal experience, is invalid as a way of understanding the world because it bears no relation to the world outside of our own minds. As in the case of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or *Bambi*, sympathy for a fictional creation can serve a valuable function by opening us to sympathy for actual living beings in similar extremities. But even here, its validity depends on the consciousness of those actual living creatures being neither alien nor unknowable, and in the sympathetic imagination being firmly anchored to a reality-based assessment of the actual experiences and needs of the living creatures (Donovan, Attention 149-152). As it stands, Costello's claim is a kind of pathetic fallacy. The statement "I can think my way into the existence of a being who has never existed . . ." is formally correct but substantively empty because a being who has never existed has no existence into which a poet can think her way. In this regard, it is analogous to the ontological argument for the existence of God. It is form of linguistic Three-Card Monte, and all Costello has actually done is imagine a new fictional creation that has enough points of contact with Joyce's original character that the reader can imagine they are the same person.

The only way that this passage can be meaningfully interpreted is to gloss it as, "I can imagine the interior life of another being so vividly and express it so convincingly that you can imagine that what I imagine is actually true." Costello is arguing for the superiority of verisimilitude over truth on the grounds that verisimilitude is limited only by the imagination and expressive powers of the poet; it never runs up against the blank wall of the limits of human knowledge and never finds itself held down by the shackles of reality. Her argument, in fact, has little to do with animals and a great deal to do with her creator's belief that poetry is superior to philosophy and poets are superior to philosophers, whom Coetzee appears to believe have been rendered obsolete by the collapse of the Enlightenment. He is reducing animals to pawns in a sectarian dispute within a provincial human academia. Just as the medieval schoolmen argued their theistic fantasies against the facts of Renaissance astronomy, Coetzee is arguing his poetic fantasies against the facts of contemporary ethology. If we can, indeed, empathize with the genuine consciousness of actual, living animals, then in Coetzee's eyes the poetic enterprise, his enterprise, has been devalued—just as the medieval schoolmen believed that science devalued their enterprise.

In contrast to Rilke's *Panther*, Costello heaps praise upon the Hughes poems (*The Jaguar* and *Second Glance at a Jaguar*). What so impresses Costello is that Hughes credits the jaguar with a reaction to being caged that purports to be radically different from that of a human being, a reaction that is supposedly a function of his jaguariness and alien to the human mode of experiencing life, which she pretentiously refers to in Heideggerian jargon as "being-in-the-world," (Costello 95)⁴. Not insignificantly, this mode of consciousness is primarily physical rather than mental. "In these poems we know the jaguar not from the way he seems but from the way he moves. The body is as the body moves, or as the currents of life move within it. The poems ask us to imagine our way into that way of moving, to inhabit that body," (Costello 95-96). This is a depressingly familiar theme. Traditionally, whites degraded blacks by imagining their mode of being as primarily physical; for black men, this took the form of raw strength and aggressive sexuality; for black women it took the form of wanton sexuality and prodigious child-

bearing prowess. In the same way, men traditionally degraded women by imagining their mode of being as primarily physical rather than mental, again in terms of sexuality and child-bearing. Costello's imagining of nonhuman animals' mode of being as primarily physical is equally degrading. And it equally leaves them vulnerable to the oppression that arises from fear, cupidity, and envy coupled with power in the service of arrogance.

When a member of the audience misreads her point and questions Hughes' empathy with animals on the grounds that he runs a sheep ranch from which the unfortunate creatures are presumably shipped to slaughter, Costello points out his error by launching into a silly buck-and-wing in praise of, among others, Gary Snyder and Ernest Hemingway (*Costello 97*). At first glance, this seems bizarre since Snyder defends hunting as an ecologically sustainable way of life and asks only that the hunter pay homage to the spirit of the animal he has murdered in a white man's arrogant burlesque of Native American rituals. As for Hemingway, he rarely met a form of animal cruelty that he didn't fall in love with, especially bullfighting, of which he is the Anglophone world's poet laureate. But there is a method to Costello's madness. She tells her audience that she finds Snyder and Hemingway admirable because they:

celebrate the primitive and repudiate the Western bias toward abstract thought. . . . Bullfighting, it seems, gives us a clue. Kill the beast, by all means, but make it a contest, a ritual, and honor your antagonist for his strength and bravery. Eat him too, after you have vanquished him, in order for his strength and courage to enter you. Look him in the eyes before you kill him, and thank him afterwards. Sing songs about him. We can call this primitivism. It is an attitude that is easy to criticize, to mock. It is deeply masculine, masculinist. Its ramifications into politics are to be mistrusted. But when all is said and done, there remains something attractive about it at the ethical level (*Costello 97*).

From a less "imaginative" perspective, to call the bull the "antagonist" of the bullfighter is to reverse the roles of aggressor and victim and to show how easily imagination can ignore the suffering of its object in the service of the poet's self-absorption. The bullfighter is the antagonist of the bull, who was simply grazing in a pasture minding his own business until he was pulled and prodded onto a truck and hauled to the bullring where men he had never met, much less antagonized, began taunting him and jabbing spears into his flesh for no reason at all that he could understand. And then, after inflicting more and more pain and exhaustion on him, they take from him his most precious possession, his life, still for no discernable reason. Bullfighting may be attractive to some at the esthetic level (which is to say, at the level of the poetic imagination), but at the ethical level (the level concerned with real suffering and real death), it is atrocity, pure and simple, and to claim otherwise is to willfully ignore the consciousness of the animal in favor of a delusion.

Bullfighting also demonstrates that when the poetic imagination pushes reality aside, it is very easy for aesthetics to be palmed off as ethics for the simple reason that the poetic imagination's focus of concern—at least as it is defined by Elizabeth Costello—is the

experience of the poet, not the experience of the living being who inspired the poem. The poem's subject is merely the occasion for the poetic experience, a screen on which the poet can see her imaginative powers displayed; in this process, a sentient, autonomous being is reduced to an instrument of the poet's narcissism. Narcissus, after all, had no interest in the true nature of water; his interest was in water's ability to display his beauty. And this approach to external reality—in Elizabeth Costello, as in Narcissus—is an esthetic experience that can masquerade as ethics by claiming to be an authentic encounter with life and death, good and evil. But in fact, it has no point of contact with ethics because genuine ethics is always concerned first and foremost with the other in his or her own right, not with the other as an instrument for defining or displaying oneself. Real ethics would be concerned with the plight of the suffering bull, not with the poetic imagination of Hemingway. Ethics is concerned precisely with the laws and proscriptions which in a moment we will see Costello dismiss impatiently, implying that they are too mundane to merit her concern. The poetic imagination, set free from the need to regard the *other* as real, can lead to *Death in the Afternoon* and *The Sun Also Rises* just as easily as it can lead to *Bambi* and *Black Beauty*. It is, perhaps, worth remembering that while Americans tend to think of bullfighting as a sport, the Spanish regard it as an art form, like ballet or flamenco.

While it is, or at least should be, self-evident that love and compassion—*caring*, in the sense that this word is used by feminist theorists (See Donovan, *Attention*; Adams)—must be the bedrock foundation of any valid approach to ethics, there is also an indispensable role for reason in the development and maintenance of methods by which compassionate *caring* can be translated into effective *care*. In other words, reason and rational constructions are essential in transforming the identification of ends, which is a function of compassion, into action that will achieve those ends as quickly and universally as possible (Donovan, *Attention* 158, 160-162, 165; Kelch 259 ff). Reason, in fact, plays two valid and indispensable roles as an instrument of compassion. In addition to translating compassion into protection, it can also give us a gauge by which to judge our emotional impulses, so that anger, pride, and other selfish emotions do not lead us astray. But Costello has no interest in going there because reliance on any form of reality-based thinking would undermine her primary enterprise, which is to establish the aesthetic and ethical superiority, not of emotion to reason, but of imagination to reason, of fiction to philosophy.

Left to Our Tender Mercies

There is no way to build a real animal protection movement on a purely imaginary foundation. Costello admits as much when she is asked if she can enunciate any principles that people who want to protect animals should follow. "If principles are what you want to take away from here, I would have to respond, open your heart and listen to what your heart says . . . I have never been much interested in proscriptions, dietary or otherwise. Proscriptions, laws. I am more interested in what lies behind them," (*Costello* 82). Unfortunately, there has been no progress toward social justice that has not been implemented by proscriptions and laws. After opening your heart, you have to use your head. Throughout human history, the still, small voice of the heart has been powerless to

protect human beings from oppression, slavery, and slaughter unless the wisdom it imparted was enforced by the very sorts of proscriptions and laws that Costello disdains to discuss. The heart inspires the laws and proscriptions, but it is the laws and proscriptions (or more precisely, the *enforcement* of laws and proscriptions) that actually protect the weak from the powerful. By rejecting such reality-based mechanisms for nonhuman animals instead of recognizing them as the tools by which caring is translated into care, Costello scorns the animals' only hope and condemns them to everlasting slavery and slaughter. Interestingly, her creator does seem interested in laws and proscriptions as protections for human beings, including himself. When Coetzee expatriated himself from South Africa in 2002, he said that he was doing so because President Thabo Mbeki had failed to control crime, presumably by failing to enforce laws and proscriptions (Pienaar).

Costello wants animals to depend on nothing more substantial than everyone imagining what it must feel like to be a nonhuman animal and drawing from that experience what she believes to be the natural ethical conclusion. (Although it is difficult to reconcile this view with her approval of Snyder and Hemingway. Consistency is a function of reason, not of the poetic imagination.) She asserts that the Holocaust was possible only because “the killers refused to think themselves into the place of their victims,” (*Costello* 79). But if thinking your way into the life of a nonhuman animal takes place, as Costello claims, “within an entirely human economy,” it can lead to an infinity of contradictory conclusions, as we saw in the cases of Snyder and Hemingway. Even when the objects are other humans, there is a grave danger that selfish and self-serving imaginings unrestrained by reality and reason may drive out genuine sympathy with catastrophic results. It could well be that the Nazi murderers did, in fact, “think themselves into the place of their victims” and used their imaginations to re-create Jews as depraved monsters, killers of Christian babies (to make matzoh), cultural polluters, thieves, and traitors who were not fit to live. In fact, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, one of the primary inspirations for Nazi anti-Semitism, was precisely an exercise on the part of its authors—unknown Russian anti-Semites writing around the turn of the 20th century⁵--in “thinking themselves into the place of” Jews, and imagining them as greedy, vicious misanthropes bent on world conquest. (*Protocols*) During the Nazi era, ideologues and propagandists such as Alfred Rosenberg, Julius Streicher, publisher of the anti-Semitic tabloid *Der Stuermer*, and of course, the master of Nazi propaganda Joseph Goebbels daily thought themselves into the place of Jews and concluded that they were not fit to live (see, for example, Patterson). Today, human chauvinists think themselves into the place of animals and conclude that they are an inferior category of non-linguistic, instinct-driven beings who exist only to serve our purposes.

Conclusion: Getting it Backwards

And so, Elizabeth Costello presents us with a paradox. On the one hand, she finds vivisection, factory farming, and animal slaughter so revolting that she is a vegetarian who describes human exploitation of animals as “an enterprise of degradation, cruelty, and killing which rivals anything that the Third Reich was capable of, indeed dwarfs it, in that ours is an enterprise without end, self-regenerating, bringing rabbits, rats, poultry,

livestock ceaselessly into the world for the purpose of killing them,” (*Costello* 65). This is the aspect of Elizabeth Costello that has drawn so much attention. But there is another side to Elizabeth Costello that attracts less comment, perhaps because it is incomprehensible if one assumes—as most commentators do—that the vegetarian speaker of those words must be an advocate of animal rights on ethical grounds. What are we to make of the Elizabeth Costello who speaks appreciatively of Ernest Hemingway’s love of bullfighting, who explicitly refuses to endorse “laws, proscriptions, including dietary proscriptions” to protect animals from the enterprise she has just compared to the Third Reich, who explicitly denies that her vegetarianism is the product of a “moral conviction,” and who points out that she wears leather shoes and carries a leather purse, apparently with no qualms of conscience? (*Costello* 88-89)⁶

In her essay “The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy,” Cora Diamond provides a key to understanding this paradox. Unlike animal activists who try desperately (and futilely) to interpret Elizabeth Costello as one of their own, Professor Diamond places the emphasis not on Costello’s attitude toward animals, but on J. M. Coetzee’s attitude toward Costello. It is, she tells us, Costello who stands at the center of these two “Lessons,” rather than the animals on whom most interpreters want to focus. She draws our attention to “. . . the life of this speaking and wounded and clothed animal . . . that this story is about . . . the life of the speaking animal at its center,” (Diamond 47). A little farther on, she describes the Lessons as “centrally concerned with the presenting of a wounded woman” rather than “centrally concerned with the presenting of a position on the issue of how we should treat animals,” (Diamond 49).

I think that Professor Diamond is correct. Coetzee is writing about Elizabeth Costello and not about animal rights. And I would go further and say that his use of animal suffering to illuminate a phenomenon that takes place within “an entirely human economy” constitutes a form of human chauvinism. Costello, for her part, is horrified at our treatment of animals, but her horror is more important to her than the animal suffering that inspired it. Her primary interest is in her own mental states, not in the external world that occasions them. Thus, she can be horrified at our abuse of animals and at the same time be “not much interested in” laws and proscriptions that would mitigate the abuse. She can be disgusted at the idea of eating the flesh of murdered animals, but have no problem wearing their skin on her feet or carrying it on her arm; meat is the greater horror because it is the primary reason for which animals are slaughtered, and therefore, it suffices as the mirror for her sensitivity—no need to inconvenience herself any further. And she can deny—with considerable honesty and self-awareness—that her concern for animals is ethical. She is right. It is not ethical. It is esthetic.

As we saw in Costello’s appreciation of Gary Snyder and Ernest Hemingway, when Coetzee uses animals to illuminate the plight of his protagonist rather than *vice versa*, from the perspective of animal protection he gets things exactly backwards, and—naturally enough—so does she. When Coetzee and Costello ought to be looking at the suffering of animals, they look instead at Costello’s reaction to that suffering. When they ought to be concerned above all with the animals who suffer and die at our hands, they are first and foremost concerned with Costello’s “sympathetic imagination”. In fact,

Costello's denial that animals have language seems made to support her contention that animal consciousness is alien and unknowable, a claim that makes it possible for her to take the spotlight off the animals and shine it on her own imagination instead—which seems to be the point of the entire convoluted operation.

Professor Diamond describes Costello as being possessed by a “woundedness . . . a hauntedness . . . a terrible rawness of nerves,” (Diamond 47) brought on by our abuse and slaughter of animals, and she appears to regard this as an admirable trait; she seems to accept that it marks Elizabeth Costello as a superior person. To some degree, I suppose that she is right in this. But a woundedness caused by the wounds of others that does not motivate us to go out into the world and heal those wounds is self-indulgent. To use a word that I have used before, it is narcissistic. Except for the animals that she does not eat (although this is no small thing), animals are no better off for Costello being wounded. Woundedness is only the first step. When it is mistaken for the entire journey, esthetics and narcissism triumph over ethics and altruism, leaving the animals to suffer and die undefended.

Nothing I have said here is meant to imply that J. M. Coetzee's outrage at animal abuse and slaughter are insincere. Since the publication of *Elizabeth Costello*, for example, he has lent his name to an Australian animal protection group, Voiceless: The Fund for Animals, as well as to Rev. Dr. Andrew Linzey's Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics. For this he is to be applauded. We can also hope it is a sign that he is evolving toward an engagement with animals that puts them first and is genuinely supportive of animal rights. But in *Elizabeth Costello*, he shares in the failure of his fictional alter ego to transcend herself. And their failure is all the more bitter because their woundedness raises hope only to betray it. The horror and outrage that could have produced the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of the animal rights movement has given us *Elizabeth Costello* instead.

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¹ With the exception of Dr. Con Slobodchikoff's research into prairie dog language, which is directly relevant to Coetzee's claim that nonhuman animals lack languages of their own, a discussion of the findings of these scientists is beyond the scope of this essay. But see, for example, (in no particular order) *The Alex Studies: Cognitive and Communicative Abilities of Gray Parrots*, Irene Maxine Pepperberg, Harvard University Press, 2002; *Apes, Language, and the Human Mind*, Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, et al., Oxford University Press, 1998; *Mind of the Raven*, Bernd Heinrich, HarperCollins, 1999; *Next of Kin: My Conversations with Chimpanzees*, Roger Fouts, Avon Books, 1997; *Nim Chimpsky: the Chimp Who Would be Human*, Elizabeth Hess, Bantam, 2008; *Apes, Men, and Language*, Eugene Linden, E. P. Dutton, 1974; *The Parrot's Lament*, Eugene Linden, E. P. Dutton, 1999; *Animal Social Complexity*, Frans B. M. de Waal and Peter L. Tsvack (eds.), Harvard University Press, 2003; *Minding Animals: Awareness, Emotions, and Heart*, Marc Bekoff, Oxford University Press, 2002; *The Emotional Lives of Animals*, Marc Bekoff, New World Library, 2007; *The Human Nature of Birds*, Theodore Xenophon Barber, St. Martin's Press, 1993; *Pleasurable Kingdom: Animals and the Nature of Feeling Good*, Jonathan Balcombe, Macmillan, 2006; *In the Shadow of Man* (revised edition), Jane Goodall, Mariner Books, 2000; *Created from Animals: the Moral Implications of Darwinism*, James Rachels, Oxford University Press USA, 1991; and Darwin's

widely ignored *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, various editions, originally published 1872.

² *Elizabeth Costello* was published in 2003. These two chapters had been published previously, in 1999, together with essays by four other authors, including Peter Singer, under the title *The Lives of Animals*. The text is identical in both volumes, except that *The Lives of Animals* comes equipped with footnotes that identify the sources of Costello's references and support some of her contentions, although none report the findings of modern science regarding animal language or consciousness. Coetzee had also read these two chapters as the Tanner Lectures at Princeton University in 1998.

³ Strictly speaking, Coetzee is describing "Elegy No. 8" in Rilke's *Dunio Elegies*, but later in the paragraph he refers to "The Panther" as a poem that makes the same effort.

⁴ "Being-in-the-world" is a frequent translation of the German word *Dasein*, especially as it is used by Martin Heidegger. Broken down into its constituent parts and translated literally, "*Dasein*" would mean "being there." But in everyday German usage it simply means "presence," as in *im Dasein meiner Mutter*, "in the presence of my mother," or sometimes "existence" or "life," as in *der Kampf ums Dasein*, "the struggle for survival." In German phenomenology, however, it came to stand for the particular mode-of-being experienced by any given individual. This technical usage reached its apotheosis with Heidegger, who gave *Dasein* a meaning that approximates what Tom Regan means when he speaks of being "the subject of a life." I think it is fair to say that an individual who has *Dasein* is the subject of a life, while an individual who lacks *Dasein* is not. By using the term of art "being-in-the-world", Costello is announcing that she is working in the Continental post-modernist tradition.

⁵ Its first public appearance was in Russian in 1905, when it was serialized in the reactionary, ultra-nationalist St. Petersburg newspaper *The Banner*. Since then it has been translated into most European languages and has had an abiding influence on Western anti-Semitism. In 1923, Alfred Rosenberg, a leading Nazi ideologist and close friend of Adolf Hitler, published a German translation that was widely read by the Nazi leadership.

⁶ So far as I know, Coetzee has never claimed to be a vegan. I do not know whether he wears leather shoes or carries a leather wallet.

Three Fragments from a Biopolitical History of Animals: Questions of Body, Soul, and the Body Politic in Homer, Plato, and Aristotle

Dinesh Wadiwel¹

The civil political sphere – that space where human public politics occurs, where ‘the political is declared,’ often through government, representation, measured participation and the ballot - has inherent limitations that frustrate the project of ending violence towards animals. Animals are “by nature” always, at best, secondary entities, not due the political agency that is naturally bestowed upon humans. In this way a perceived fundamental differentiation undermines any claim for equivalent political agency between human and non human, and assures that animals, even if granted consideration, will always be owed a lesser degree of responsibility.

These limitations very clearly underpin animal welfare approaches, which seek to minimise animal suffering without necessarily changing the frameworks of violence and power that perpetuate this suffering. For example, the notion that slaughter houses are tolerable once perceived pain is eliminated.

Animal rights approaches often fare better in this regard by seeking to demonstrate the existence of unjustifiable speciesism in order to guarantee equal protections. One of their principle arguments is that the life that is held by both non human and human animals alike has an intrinsic value. Yet rights approaches themselves face constraints that reproduce the same fundamental differentiation – the gap – between human and non human. For instance, in the “life boat case,” Tom Regan stops short of agreeing that the death of an animal would constitute the same harm as the death of a human (2004: 324).

Recent work by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben (see 1998, 1999 and 2004) provides an opportunity to consider the place of animals within politics from a different standpoint than other approaches, such as animal rights or animal welfare interventions. Agamben’s focus on the concept of *biopolitics*, his attention to the relationship of politics to violence and to legitimation and the relation between the human and the non human, make his work worthy of analysis by those interested in the violence perpetrated by humans against non human animal life, even if Agamben’s own conclusions are themselves not aimed at finding solutions to these problems (see Wadiwel, 2003). While this approach differs from animal rights or welfare strategies in that it focuses concern on the nature and meaning of politics itself and its relationship to animality (Agamben understands the political sphere as a space that aims to exclude animal life as its primary activity), this approach does not seek to promote action within the terms of the civil political space. Rather it challenges the very boundaries of this space itself. Thus, although Agamben is no champion of animal rights or welfare, his philosophy offers a different way to conceptualise “the problem of the animal.”

The term “biopolitics” is taken from Michel Foucault’s description of the contemporary focus of power towards biological *life*, its vicissitudes, its requirements, and its essence. An example of the effect of biopower within contemporary

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government is the focus upon meeting the broad biological needs of human populations: today government concerns itself with the deployment of resources for education and training, public health, the facilitation of relationships and organisations, fertility and “family” planning, the management of the economy, and the generalised financial well being of populations.

Where Foucault treats biopolitics as a relatively *modern* form of rationality, tied closely with the emergence of government and the disciplines, Agamben suggests that the connection between biopower and the political space is much more significant and enduring. According to Agamben, biological life is given both place and meaning within the domain of sovereignty through its position of vulnerability in relation to sovereign power. Following Walter Benjamin, Agamben defines the life constituted by exception as “bare life,” which he identifies as the “bearer of the link between life and law” (1998: 65). Bare life represents life contained within the “zone of indistinction” or the sovereign ban, a life which is neither constituted by law, nor by divine justice, where it is licit for sovereign power to “*kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice*” (83). It is for this reason that Agamben insists in his definition of ‘bare life,’ that sovereignty constitutes life within the context of a power over life and death: in Agamben’s words “human life is included in the political order in being exposed to an unconditional capacity to be killed” (85). Biopolitical rationales become inseparable from the exceptional character of sovereign power, since the constitution of the political sphere itself necessarily entails the constitution of life (181). Thus, in so far as political sovereignty in the Western tradition defines itself through the capture of biological life, it is biopolitical in origin.

Further, Agamben suggests that this view of political sovereignty assists to resolve the apparent tension between Foucault’s two apparently divergent foci of study: namely, “*political techniques*” associated with the State and government and “*technologies of the self*” relating to the disciplines and individuated power (5). In Agamben’s insistence that biopolitics is synonymous with the whole history of politics in the West, he identifies a process that unites the activity of state sovereignty with the evolution of individuated forms of biological control. Agamben remarks: “*It can be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power. In this sense, biopolitics is at least as old as the sovereign exception*” (6).

Not only does Agamben identify closely the relation between biology and the political sphere, but he also identifies this process as constitutive of the human / animal divide. In *The Open: Man and Animal*, Agamben states: “In our culture, the decisive political conflict, which governs every other conflict, is that between the animality and the humanity of man. That is to say, in its origin Western politics is also biopolitics.” (Agamben, 2004: 80). I should be clear here that is not controversial in itself that Agamben should consider animal life within his understanding of biopolitics. After all, Foucault himself was aware of the long philosophical connection between human life and that of animals that gave shape to biopower: thus Foucault states “modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence as a living being in question” (Foucault, 1998: 143). But what is interesting in relation to Agamben’s understanding is that the contestation between human and animal should figure as defining of biopolitics itself, rather than a mere feature. Biopower (or politics in the West) is, before any thing else, a question of determining the distinction between human and animal.

What interests me in Agamben's pronouncements— if we hold them as true - is the possibility not merely of telling a history of biopolitics as the history of politics in the West, but tracing the genealogy of the relationship between the human, the animal and thus the biopolitical. There is an opportunity to revisit the “primal” scenes of Western public politics in order to draw attention to the curious recurrence of the animal within the development of the human political subject, and highlighting the fact that this subject is mapped by threshold points which although operate to formally exclude animal life, also intersect, and are grounded in, the animal. It is after all no coincidence, as I shall discuss, that Aristotle describes “man” as the *political animal*; that entity that finds its home within the *polis*; an animal that is at once an animal, yet is also beyond other animals due to its natural residence within political community. This construction of the human political subject illustrates the necessary biopolitical connection of the human to its animal bare existence – its biological soul if you like – that speaks and yet does not speak at the same time as the fully formed human subject. The animal arrives as a necessary burden to the human political subject, the connection to biological life it cannot seem to shake, and in many respects, the destiny that it inescapably returns to.

Below, I provide three fragments on the animal from the classical age. These fragments are not intended to provide definitive statements on the positions of these thinkers on animals. Rather they intend to highlight the curious positioning of the animal with respect to the human, and the implication of this co-department for politics in the Western tradition. Thus, the fragments I look at are in many respects taken for what they are; the question I pose throughout is why they are positioned in the way that they are, and in what way do they illustrate something about the intersection of animal and human life, and its relationship to politics.¹ These intertwinings are significant, as they indicate the historical existence of an active process of dividing between the human and the animal, a process that simultaneously defines the frontiers of the civil political space. And the flow on from this intersection, as I shall discuss in the conclusion to this paper, are the inherent limitation of engaging with the civil political space when this same sphere maintains as a principle of its operation a primary exclusion of non human animal life.

Homer and the Human “Shades”

For those interested in exploring the relationship of animals to humans, Homer's *The Odyssey* contains many rich images that map the connection of animals, humans and gods within a matrix that is, I imagine, difficult to comprehend fully today, though it beckons careful analysis. I do not mean to suggest that non human animals are treated charitably in the work. The blood of non human animals is everywhere in *The Odyssey*; in particular the reader must wade through the many animal sacrifices described at almost every second page within the work. Perhaps the most vivid description provided of this violence is a mass slaughter organised by King Nestor to the God Poseidon: “bulls and rams by the hundred” are sacrificed (Homer, 1997: 78 [Book 1, 30]).

Yet more interesting for our consideration here are the strange tales in which the borders of human life are challenged by non-human animal life. An example of this is

the account of the transformation of the crew of Odysseus's ship into pigs by the Goddess Circe:

... she struck with her wand , drove them into her pigsties,
all of them bristling into swine – with grunts,
snouts – even their bodies,
yes and only
the men's minds stayed steadfast as before. (Homer, 1997:
237-8, [Book 10, 260]).

In so far as it illustrates awareness by the author of the potential elasticity of the borders between human and animal, this incident is certainly curious, and suggests that Homer was aware of a certain unspeakable relationship between human and animal life at its core.

Indeed another fragment on which I wish to focus similarly illustrates a borderland between human and animal life. Odysseus, the hero of the epic poem, sails to the house of the dead – the underworld – to speak to the spirit of the prophet Tiresias. Here Odysseus encounters the spirits of the dead, who have been stripped from their previously living bodies:

... this is just the way of mortals when we die.
Sinews no longer bind the flesh and bones together-
The fire in all its fury burns the body down to ashes
Once life slips from the white bones, and the spirit,
Rustling, flitters away... flown like a dream. (Homer, 1997:
256, [Book 11, 250])

These entities inhabit a bodiless presence, a waking dream. The “shades” are also distinctly *speechless* – they no longer carry the ability for intelligible speech, and are unable ordinarily to articulate themselves.

In order to allow the disembodied souls to speak, Odysseus must follow a procedure described to him by the Goddess Circe before he left her island. He digs a trench in the ground. He pours milk, honey, mellow wine, water and barley around on the ground. After he has prepared his trench, he sacrifices a ram and a black ewe:

I took the victims, over the trench; I cut their throats
And the dark blood flowed in – and up out
of Erubus they came,
Flocking toward me now, the ghosts of the
dead and gone...
Brides and unwed youths and old men who
had suffered much
And girls with their tender hearts freshly scarred by sorrow
And great armies of battle dead, stabbed by bronze spears,
Men of war still wrapped in bloody armor – thousands
Swarming around the trench from every side –
unearthly cries – blanching terror gripped me! (Homer,
1997: 250 [Book 11, 30-50])

The blood provides – as per the best vampiric tradition - what the animation that the spirits of the dead do not otherwise possess. But more important, is the fact that the blood in this story not only gives temporary life to the dead, but enables the spirits to speak--indeed, to speak the ‘truth’. (Homer, 1997: 252 [Book 11, 100]). And it is not merely the seer Tiresias who is granted this revived ability through imbibing the animal blood, but all the spirits who kneel at the trench and quench their thirst:

She knew me at once and wailed out in grief
And her words came winging toward me, flying home.
(Homer, 1997: 254 [Book 11, 170])

Thus, for the remainder of the chapter, Odysseus, standing with his sword drawn at the trench, allows spirit after spirit to drink from the blood and tell them his story. In the words of Tiresias – “Drink the blood and tell you the truth.” (Homer, 1997: 252 [Book 11, 100]).

The ability to use language to speak the ‘truth’ is one of the conventional traits associated by philosophers with the human, that essential element that it is assumed floats above the mere biological body. Yet what this scene illustrates, at least in Homer’s world, is that the ability to speak the truth, to enact what is distinctly human about the human animal, is also reliant on the animal within. It is the biological body that provides the engine for that quality that marks the human as having something beyond the mere biological.

Moreover, what is fascinating about Odysseus’ journey to the underworld is that the spirits operate as an inversion of Agamben’s concept of “bare life.” In *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Agamben discusses in detail the *Muselmänner* (or ‘Muslims’), the term given to the ‘walking dead’ of the concentration camps, who due to the infliction of continued violence — malnutrition, sleep deprivation, extended work, and torture — are reduced to a state of fragile indifference to their immediate conditions (Agamben, 1999). The insensibility of these figures to the world, and their disjunction from the social interactions of the prisoners and guards around, is also the process by which the *Muselmänner* are apprehended as living beings who have in some way lost their humanity, their ability to interact and engage with their surroundings, their ability to *speak*. Agamben states that the “*Muselmann* is not only or not so much a limit between life and death; rather, he marks the threshold between the human and the inhuman” (Agamben, 1999: 55).

Agamben argues that the *Muselmann* is the human reduced to the point at which it is indistinguishable from the animal and is therefore rendered speechless. Homer, on the other hand, provides a vision of the human torn from its animal materiality, which also happens to produce speechlessness. The message through both accounts is that the human capacity for rational speech – that trait that is so loved by philosophers and scientists as the mark *par excellence* of humanity’s difference from the animal – resides in the space between the human and the animal, a trait that does not survive the extinguishment of the human within the animal, nor the animal within the human. The bind of the human is that even when it demonstrates that characteristic which highlights its distinction from other animals, it is reliant upon its animality for its expression. We find an echo of this same uneasy differentiation between the human

and animal today when we consider something like the human genome project, which at once sets out to source the essence of the human, yet resorts to locating the essence of the human through its biological classification: the animal inside. As much as we may desire for the human to sail from the shore of its own animality, its most urgent political task brings it crashing back to the animal within, always caught in the breakers.

Plato and the Philosophical Dog

This eternal return to the shore of animality also belongs to Plato's contemplation of the perfect political state in his *Republic*. It is fair to say that the *Republic* lends itself well to analysis as a primary source for thinking about the relationship of biopower to the politics in the Western tradition because of the importance Plato placed upon seeking to align the marcopolitical system to the 'souls' of the citizens within it. Justice, in Plato's conception, is about providing people what they are owed, but not merely in the sense of debt or surplus. Plato viewed justice as ensuring that political outcomes aligned as closely as possible with the natures inherent to political subjects. "When god fashioned you, he added gold in the composition of those of you who are qualified to be Rulers...he put silver in the Auxiliaries, and iron and bronze in the farmers and other workers" (Plato, 2003: 116 [Part IV, Book III, 415a-b]). Thus the true nature of the individual – what they have been given as a preformed biological entity – provides the balance sheet to what is owed to them, and their place within a political system.

Assuming this focus by Plato on essence, there are similarly abiding connections drawn between human and non human animal life throughout *The Republic*. As per the opening quote in this paper, Plato's use of animals within the text may often highlight the odd positioning of the animal on the teasing periphery of the civil political space. Perhaps one of the most persistent examples within the book is the comparison of the Guardian class – those charged with securing the Republic – with watch dogs. On the face of it, this comparison is merely intended to illustrate the role of the Guardians in providing the armed security, both inside and outside the Republic. Yet beyond a mere passing comparison, there is a seemingly genuine and primal connection here that Plato leans on. This is illustrated in the second fragment I wish to examine, a fragment that might be called, "the philosophical dog."

In this section of *The Republic*, Socrates notes that the Guardian class will be required to both maintain ruthlessness with respect to their enemies, yet also a kind benevolence towards those who are in their charge – namely the citizens of the republic. This governing task appears to require the Guardians to reconcile two apparently unconnected – even opposed – characteristics, namely the power of violence towards enemies and the power of care towards friends. Searching for an answer to this apparently contradictory nature, Socrates, in conversation with Glaucon, turns to examine more closely his example of a watch dog:

[Socrates] "I felt myself in difficulty, but I thought over what we had just been saying, and then exclaimed: 'You know, we really deserve to be in difficulty. For we have failed to press our analogy far enough.'

[Glaucon] 'In what way?'

‘We have not noticed that there are natures which combine the qualities we thought incompatible.’
‘And where are they to be found?’
‘In different kinds of animal, but particularly in the watch dog to which we have compared our Guardian. For you must have noticed that it is a natural characteristic of a well bred dog to behave with the utmost gentleness to those it is used to and knows, but to be savage to strangers?’
‘Yes, I’ve noticed that.’
‘The kind of character we are looking for in our Guardian is therefore quite a possibility and not at all unnatural.’
‘So it appears.’
‘Would you agree then that our prospective Guardian needs, in addition to his high spirits, the disposition of a philosopher?’
‘I don’t understand what you mean,’ he said.
‘You will find it in the dog, and a remarkable quality it is.’
‘What sort of quality?’
‘It is annoyed when it sees a stranger, even though he has done it no harm; but it welcomes anyone it knows, even though it has never had any kindness from him. Haven’t you ever thought how remarkable this is?’
‘I can’t say I ever thought about it before,’ he replied. ‘But of course it’s what a dog does.’
‘And yet it is a trait that shows discrimination and a truly philosophic nature,’ I said.
‘How so?’
‘Because,’ I replied, ‘the dog distinguishes the sight of friend and foe simply by knowing one and not knowing the other. And a creature that distinguishes between the familiar and the unfamiliar on the grounds of knowledge or ignorance must surely be gifted with a real love of knowledge.’
‘There is no denying it,’ he said.
‘But is not philosophy the same thing as the love of knowledge?’ⁱⁱ
(Plato, 2003: 65 [Part II, Book II, 375d-376b])

As Socrates is attempting to illustrate that essential quality that belongs most intimately to the Guardians, simultaneously he chooses to associate this elite of humanity with the dog. He points to an association between not merely the ability to measure violence and love appropriately in the face of either one’s friends or enemies, but further names this trait as distinctly philosophical, both in human and dog, despite the fact that philosophy, of all things, has almost always treated itself as that most essential human characteristic.

I should emphasise that this relationship is not metaphorical: the dog is not a linguistic stand in for the human. The dog is rather an example that illustrates in a biological sense what might be possible for humans. That is, the reasoning suggests that if humans and dogs are both animals, and a dog might possess the philosophical trait of differentiating between friend and enemy, then it is likely that humans may also share this trait. Thus, extrapolating on this reasoning, the human quality can be found in

nature, and thus, the characteristics sought in the Guardian are not artificial but reside within the terms of the biological body, within the animality of the human.

Once again then, just as in the fragment from Homer above, we see an odd intertwining between human and animal life, in the fact that Plato describes what is definitive to the perfected human by recourse to the animal. The imperative displayed is to distil the essential nature of the human; the product is a state that returns to the animal. It is the animal that provides the proof that they sought after.

Aristotle and the “Political Animal”

It is appropriate at this point to turn to Aristotle, who I believe provides the most refined understanding of this relationship between human and animal life, and the essential relationship between the human and animal organisms, even when it is the human specifically, rather than the animal *per se*, that is at issue.

It would not be unfair to say that Aristotle is almost perversely interested in animals and their relationship to the human. Aristotle, after all, contributed a five volume biological treatise on animal life – namely *History of Animals*, *On the Parts of Animals*, *On the Motion of Animals*, *On the Gait of Animals* and *On the Generation of Animals* – which offers detailed examinations on the anatomy, movement and reproduction of animal life. Importantly within these works, human life was not treated separately, but regarded as one of the many species under Aristotle’s magnifying glass, and thus there is an implicit understanding of the interconnection between human and animal life. Aristotle’s aim here is to situate the human within the field of animal life, by providing a sense as to what human life shares, and does not share, with other animals.

But it is not merely in Aristotle’s biological studies that we find a connection drawn between human and animal, but, it would seem, at various important threshold points within the body of Aristotle’s work. Consider Aristotle’s volume on *Logic*. Here on page after page, indeed from the first page of the first book, the example of the distinction and non-distinction between animal and human life is used to illustrate the nature of logical argument. For example, in Book I, Chapter 2 of “Prior Analytics,” Aristotle proclaims:

... if some B is A, then some of the As must be B. For if none were, then no B would be A. But if some B is not A, there is no necessity that some of the As should not be B; eg let B stand for animal and A for man. Not every animal is a man; but every man is an animal. (Aristotle, 1952a: 40 [25a])

This distinction, that the human belongs to animals, but not all animals are human, is of course pivotal to Aristotle’s definition of the human, and that special quality that is inherent to the human yet not intrinsic to other animals. Indeed we note that in the citation above, this particular relationship is not merely “in theory” but elevated to a matter of logic: “Not every animal is a man; but every man is an animal.”ⁱⁱⁱ

This is the 'logic' that grounds Aristotle's proclamation on the relationship between humans, animals and politics, a fragment I will quote here at length:

...it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without state, is either a bad man or above humanity; he is like the

Tribeless, lawless, heartless one,

Whom Homer denounces – the natural outcast-- is forthwith a lover of war; he may be compared to an isolated piece at draughts.

Now that man is more of a political animal than bees or other gregarious animals is evident. Nature, as we say, makes nothing in vain, and man is the only animal who she has endowed with the gift of speech. And whereas mere voice is but an indication of pleasure or pain, and is therefore found in other animals (for their nature attains to the perception of pleasure and pain and the intimation of them to one another, and no further), the power of speech is intended to set forth the expedient and inexpedient, and therefore likewise the just and unjust. And it is a characteristic of man that he alone has any sense of good and evil, of just and unjust, and the like, and the association of living beings who have this sense makes a family and a state. (Aristotle 1952c: 446 [1253a])

Here Aristotle makes a decisive pronouncement that captures the logic of biopolitics, its necessary connection to politics in the West, and the extent and limits of its jurisdiction.

Firstly, the logical distinction outlined above ("Not every animal is a man; but every man is an animal") is founded through a differentiation in relation to the human propensity for political community that apparently exceeds other comparable species (certainly, more clearly than "bees or other gregarious animals"). Yet note here that although "man" possesses a quality that is not shared by other animals, the structure of this same logic dictates that "man" remains at base an animal. The human is both beyond the animal, yet absolutely captured by the animal: the human is an entity that extends beyond what it is, yet at the same time is what it is.

Secondly, Aristotle describes the graduated scheme by which human animals may be distributed across varying positions along the long trajectory between the animal and the idealised human subject. This entity, "the bad man" or the one "above humanity," is unable to perfect "his" nature: "For man, when perfected, is the best of the animals, but when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all...he is the most unholy and the most savage of animals, and the most full of lust and gluttony" (Aristotle, 1952c: 446 [1253a]). This particular bond between the human who has lost its relation to justice and non human animal life is all too apparent in Aristotle's discussion of

slavery, where the slave is understood as the human who is closer to the animals, as the human animal who has not developed that quality that marks it as a more perfect animal:

When there is such a difference as that between soul and body, or between men and animals...the lower sort are by nature slaves, and it is better for them as for all inferiors that they should be under the rule of a master....indeed the use made of slaves and of tame animals is not very different; for both with their bodies minister to the needs of life. (Aristotle, 1952c: 448 [1254b]).

Once again, we find the inescapability of the animal essence within the definition of the human essence: the slave is the human animal who has failed to demonstrate that he is human, and thus is at base, a mere animal.

It is here that I wish to reinforce the importance of the soul through Aristotle's understanding of politics, an importance that is arguably illustrative of the political sphere in the classical tradition, and its peculiar relationship to animal life. It is within this tradition that discussions on the nature of the soul are necessarily wed to the understanding of how the political sphere is constructed. This lies behind so much of the reasoning within Plato's *Republic*, for example, in so far as the alleged beauty of the political system Plato proposes, is the sense of justice it offers in aligning the political sphere to the souls of its citizens. Yet where Aristotle differs significantly from Plato and other thinkers is his resolute understanding of the connection between the human soul and the animal soul. Indeed in his work entitled *On the Soul* (*De Anima*), he explicitly draws a point of difference between his own work and that of previous thinkers by accusing these philosophers of erroneously only concerning themselves with investigating the "human soul" rather than the souls of animals in the first instance (Aristotle, 1952b: 631 [402b]).

According to Aristotle, the soul is not an essence or spirit that is distinct from, and may survive the extinguishment of, the biological body. Instead, the soul is presented as the living presence of the biological organism: in Aristotle's words "the soul is the cause or source of the living body" (1952b: 645 [415b]). Aristotle states that there are three properties that may belong to a fully formed soul: thinking; perception; and generation / nutrition (Ibid [414b]). It is the latter property that refers to the minimal condition of functioning for any biological organism and acts as its baseline principle for living in its barest sense.

It is possible here to see the connection that is drawn between human and animal life, and the importance of the animal soul as a baseline for the human soul. The human must be thought of firstly as an ensouled body: in Aristotle's words "the soul plus the body constitutes the animal" (Aristotle, 1952b: 643 [413a]). And thus the human is not the only organism owed a soul – rather the human is an animal with a soul with properties that may extend beyond the merely living animal. Although humans are granted a thinking faculty beyond other animals, the human is still at base an animal, and, as Aristotle's discussion of slaves demonstrates, some humans may never be accorded a "fully formed soul", and thus always be closer to the animal.

I acknowledge that today the soul is not a particularly fashionable point of contemplation, either for philosophy or political theory. Yet I think it is crucial to rethink the soul, and acknowledge its curious absence – at least on the surface - from thinking about the nature of the political subject. Foucault makes an important observation in *Discipline and Punish*, that modern punishment affected a shift of focus from “the body to the soul”. To my mind this particular observation by Foucault has not been adequately appraised for what it is: namely an opportunity to rethink the soul within the contemporary political context. For we only need to turn to Agamben’s work on bare life – the political subject caught within the sphere of exception of biopolitical sovereignty – to understand the trajectory that links classical thought on the soul to the modern political predicament of the human. For Agamben’s bare life carries an uncanny resemblance to Aristotle’s animal soul – a life stripped of all relationality, with the exception of its nutritive and reproductive capacities, that is its core biological functioning. And of course, this same figure illustrates in an exact way, how it is that power had shifted in focus from the body to the soul – as explained by Foucault – even if the body should remain the continuing focus of violent attentions – incarceration, rape and torture. The shift Foucault refers to from body to soul is not about the change in the instruments of punishment (although this may be entailed) but reflects a refinement in the ability to capture biological life as the first port of call.

The non-human animal continues to inform this focus, since contemporary biopolitics holds the power to always reduce the human to the animal – this is the principle of functioning that is accorded to sovereign exception. Where the other components of the soul — perception and intellect — are not accorded by we humans to all living things, it is the capacity to reproduce and to nourish which is held central to each biological organism, human, animal or plant. Yet, we may observe by a curious reversal how any biological organism, no matter how cultivated or advanced their soul, retains the ability to be reduced to a bare state of functioning. Biopolitics holds this particular passage of transformation in its hands.

Conclusion

Readers of *The Republic* will know that Plato paints a picture of democracy as social organization quite literally “gone to the dogs”:

You would never believe it – unless you have seen it for yourself – how much more liberty the domestic animals have in democracy. The dog comes to resemble its mistress, as the proverb has it, and the same is true of the horses and donkeys as well. They are in the habit of walking about the streets with a grand freedom, and bump into people they meet if they don’t get out of their way. Everything is full of this spirit of liberty. (Plato, 2003: 300 [Part IX, Book VIII, 563c]).

If we are right to assume that the political sphere in the Western tradition is founded upon the exclusion of the animal, then it becomes clearer why the freedom of animals, who are otherwise formally excluded from the political sphere, should be at issue in Socrates’ deliberations on the nature of a political system ostensibly designed for

humans. These apparently humorous deliberations reflect a somewhat deeper concern: an anxiety in relation to the borders between the human and the animal, and their close relationship to the political space. After all, the ‘civility’ of the political space depends upon the absolute exclusion of non human animals from formal participation. This is a primary exclusion that shapes who it is within this space that is granted political agency, and who is by the same process violently alienated from political power. In this sense, moral consideration of species value occurs at the same moment as the political is enacted. As opposed to a liberal political view of power, where moral consideration precedes the construction of the civil political space and shapes the terms of inclusion, we might argue that politics emerges through a primary exclusion that simultaneously declares the moral decision.

If politics, following Agamben, describes the biopolitical struggle between human and animal, then democracy, properly understood, describes the process, successful or otherwise, of admitting the animal into the political sphere. Democracy is the political process of struggle over the terms of moral consideration. If this speculation is accurate, it is then no accident that we should find threshold points that mark the struggle over the definition of the human, or even the ‘fully formed human subject’, which curiously resonate with unresolved democratic struggles over the last two hundred years: for example slaves, women, savages, queers and children.

Democracy is the active process of negotiating admittance; a process that is both massively transformative, but is also at the very same moment immensely dangerous. It is for this reason that I believe that the political challenge before us to think about a radical democratisation, since surely it is true that only an expanded concept of democracy could break the forms of exclusion that are inherent to politics, and thus transform the meaning of politics itself. We might imagine some concrete ways forward in this area. For example, thinking about the way in which political change is possible through readmitting animals within urbanized spaces, as suggested by Jennifer Wolch (1998). Close cohabitation with non-human animal life – beyond the limited involvement of non-human animals as domesticated ‘companion animals’ – and a genuine attempt to negotiate public spaces with non human entities, would affect a change in how we understand the civil political sphere. This means, invariably, tempering human activity with respect to other entities, and actively building inclusive rather than exclusive forms of political engagement. Similarly we could imagine political networks that implicitly include non-human entities, such as described in Bruno Latour’s “Parliament of Things” (1993). If we accept the fact that our political networks invariably intertwine with both non human sentient beings, and non sentient entities, it is possible to re-imagine a political space which formally recognise that political decisions must be made and enacted not merely by human actors, but by all constituent entities.

Yet I note that we encounter here the constitutive problem that faces democracy in this project of admitting the animal: namely the fact that the civil political space is based on the exclusion of the animal, and thus, democracy must work, whether through rights or through welfare, by inducting newly formed humans rather than admitting animals *per se*. This democratic and expansive process of induction, which is revolutionary in so far as it promises to stretch the borders of the human, also is contemptibly conservative, in that it resolutely maintains the constitutive status quo: namely, that the political sphere is founded on the continual and violent exclusion of

the animal. If biopolitics and Western politics are the same, then we will continue to have more of the same. Namely a political sphere that by definition operates through continuing economy of souls--a primal form of segregation, inherent to the human/animal machine. And the machine will continue to produce violent effects – incarceration, torture, death – for those who fall outside the sphere of humanity, whether they are anatomically “human” or “animal.”

In other words, and this is the message that weaves its way through the fragments in this paper, the fates of both the human and animal are intertwined through the construction of the political sphere, in body, in voice, in democracy. The human belongs to the political in so far as it can divorce itself from the animal, and the animal is understood, conversely, as that entity that is constituted at the moment of its exclusion. I end therefore with a question: How do we unthink this process and bring the animal (both that which is within us and the non-human varieties that inhabit the Earth with us) into the sphere of politics?

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ⁱ Noting this, I also take this opportunity to acknowledge that there are many grey areas within the literature I will cite, with the usual translation difficulties that arise in comprehending any ancient text in today's context, and with this an allied problematic in relation to the comparability of terminology. An example of this is the term 'human' that has a distinct contemporary meaning that does not necessarily translate to the ancient world. Contemporary theorists such as Agamben elide this issue through the use of the gendered term "man" – in Agamben's case "man" is used as the intermediary between the human and the animal – but I have my own concerns with using this approach, namely a desire to not efface the historical situation of "woman" within the human / animal distinction, which has never assumed the same trajectory as that of "man."

ⁱⁱ Note here that the last line is a play on words – which does not translate to English, but conveys a relation between a dog's love for its human masters and the human love of knowledge that is given the name "philosophy."

ⁱⁱⁱ It should also not escape our attention that a similar logical relationship lies behind the "philosophical dog" fragment I have cited above from Plato.

**'Most farmers prefer Blondes': The Dynamics of Anthroparchy in Animals'
Becoming Meat**

Erika Cudworth¹

My visit to the Royal Smithfield Show, one of the largest events in the British farming calendar, reminded me of the gendering of agricultural animals. Upon encountering one particular stand in which there were three pale honey coloured cows (with little room for themselves), some straw, a bucket of water, and Paul, a farmer's assistant. Two cows were lying down whilst the one in the middle stood and shuffled. Each cow sported a chain around her neck with her name on it. The one in the middle was named 'Erica.' Above the stand was a banner that read, 'Most farmers prefer Blondes,' a reference to the name given to this particular breed, the Blonde D'Aquitaine. The following conversation took place:

Erika: What's special about this breed? Why should farmers prefer them?

Paul: Oh, they're easy to handle, docile really, they don't get the hump and decide to do their own thing. They also look nice, quite a nice shape, well proportioned. The colour's attractive too.

E: What do you have to do while you're here?

P: Make sure they look alright really. Clear up after 'em, wash 'n brush 'em. Make sure that one (he pokes 'Erica') don't kick anyone.

E: I thought you said they were docile.

P: They are normally. She's abnormal that one-- really bad tempered.

E: Perhaps she doesn't like the crowds and the lights?

P: She certainly didn't like the lift yesterday.

E: I don't suppose she's had much experience in lifts.

P: Nah, it's not that. She's just a bitch, that one.

The difficulty with 'Erica' the cow is that she does not behave in the way expected by this breed. The Blonde D'Aquitaine has been produced through rigorous selective breeding in order to obtain a 'good looking' and easily managed farmed animal. Cows occupy a particular place in a typology of species in which different kinds of animals are assigned to different groups. These groups are distinguished by different formations of human-animal relationships. Drawing on Ted Benton's (1993) useful categorization, I consider that animals can be construed as 'wild' (in conditions of limited incorporation with humans); used as a labour force; used for entertainment or edification; installed as household companions; employed as symbols; and consumed as food (Cudworth 2003: 165-6). Shifts in forms of 'pet keeping' and in representations of animals have led some to argue for significant change - a postmodernisation of human animal relations (Franklin 1999; Baker 2000). By this, they infer that in 'modern,' Western, relatively wealthy regions of the globe "the categorical boundary between humans and animals...has been seriously challenged, if not dismantled in places" (Franklin 1999:3) and that there is an increase in respect and affection for a wider range of animals. However, for most people in such regions, the main relationship with animals is one of objectification - animals are expendable resources, eaten as meat. The farming of animals has long been, and continues to be, the most significant social formation of human-animal relations.

Human animal relations are not postmodernised, and in terms of concrete social practices, humans and animals rarely have close affinities (as suggested in the fantasies of theorists such as Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Rather, the largest animal populations in the West,

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those used for 'food', are caught in relations of human dominion that involve their exploitation and oppression. From conception until death, the lives of these animals are shaped by their location as potential food, and billions of animals are transformed into a multiplicity of 'meat products' each year.

This paper investigates the processes and practices through which agricultural animals become meat and it will argue that alongside the 'naturing' of animal agriculture and meat and dairy production, these processes and practices are socially intersectionalised. In feminism, this term intersectionality (McCall 2005) has been used to describe the way in which relations between gender and 'race' do not just overlap, but are changed by their mutual influence. For example, women who are not white are not necessarily more oppressed or socially excluded, but differently situated, particularly when other factors such as geographic location, class, age, faith, sexuality etc. are also included. In human-animal studies, there are some well-known attempts to consider the ways in which our relations with non-human animals have been shaped by gender, for example, studies which looks at cultures of meat eating (Adams 1990; Donovan 2006; Donovan and Adams 1996).

This paper is interested in the political economy of meat production and concentrates on the ways 'livestock' farming; slaughtering and butchery are constituted through gender relations. There are three ways in which the gendered process of animals becoming meat might be identified. First, meat animals may be disproportionately female, or bred for specifically gendered attributes which might correspond to patriarchal constructions of masculinities and femininities. Second, animals might be feminized metaphorically by workers within the industry. Third, forms of human control of animal fertility, sexuality and reproduction in modern British farming practice may be gendered.

I see the political economy of meat production as a key social form in which certain species of non-human animal are exploited and oppressed. In turn, it is part of a wider system, the domination of nature. It is here that I will begin, proceeding to show how meat production exemplifies the domination of animals-as-nature and the ways in which this is shaped by patriarchy and capitalism.

Entanglements: gender and the domination of animals-as-nature

I have long been interested in the coalescing of different forms of social domination based on inclusive/exclusive social practices such as those around gender, class and ethnicity. In trying to understand gender relations, I have thought it necessary to defend the use of a concept of patriarchy. Whilst 'sexism' refers (albeit critically) to practices of discrimination on the basis of gender, the concept of 'gender relations' is politically neutral. The strength of the concept patriarchy is that it refers to a *system* of complex interrelationships in which women are oppressed by men (Cudworth 2005:8-9, also Walby 1990). Patriarchy contains both a critical politics and enables us to see gender relations as having regular features or patterns. I have also been attracted to complexity theory in order to make sense of the intermeshing of social systems as both distinct and interrelated with others, such as capitalism, ethnocentrism, colonialism and so forth. I have sought a similar concept to understand human relations with non-human animals specifically, and with 'nature' more generally.

I have developed the term 'anthroparchy' to capture the social ordering of human relations to the 'environment'. Anthroparchy literally means 'human domination', and I see anthroparchy as a social system, a complex and relatively stable set of relationships

in which the 'environment' is dominated through formations of social organization which privilege the human (Cudworth 2005: 63-71, Cudworth 2007: 351-357). I consider that anthroparchy has certain advantages over other possible terms such as 'anthropocentrism' and 'speciesism'. The term anthropocentrism has been deployed by deep ecologists (such as Naess 1989, Devall 1990) to describe societies which are organized around a principle of 'human-centrism'. However, I consider that centrism is too weak a term politically to capture some of the severity of violence and exploitation involved, and a term implying domination is to be preferred. 'Speciesism' has long been used by those concerned with the exploitative treatment of non-human animals (Singer 1990). It has been linked to other forms of discrimination, such as that based on gender, in interesting and complex ways (Dunayer 2004). However, it suggests a practice, a kind of behaviour and is a parallel term to those describing other undesirable practices, such as racism, sexism, and class discrimination. We do not (just) live in societies which discriminate against non-human species. Rather, we live in societies which are organized around a species hierarchy, a hierarchy in which the needs, desires, interests and even whims of human beings shape the kinds of relationships we are likely to have with non-human species.

What is dominated, in an anthroparchal society, is the 'environment' and this can be defined as the non-human animate world and its contexts – including the whole range of multifarious animal and plant species. Whilst there are incredible differences between and amongst these phenomena, I group them by biological referent - their being both non-human and 'live' (manifesting properties of metabolism, growth, reproduction and response to stimuli, see Capra 1996). In societies structured around relations of human domination, the complex and highly diversified non-human animate lifeworld is homogenized as 'nature', as 'Other' to the human. 'Nature', as applied to non-human animals, is a socially constituted category with the physical referent of species difference. Human relations with other species are constituted by and through social institutions and processes and these can be seen as sets of relations of power and domination. These interrelate to form a social system of natured domination - anthroparchy.

Human domination may assume different forms and operate to a differing extent around the planet. Thus anthroparchy involves different forms and practices of power: oppression, exploitation and marginalization. I use these terms to indicate distinct degrees (extent) and levels (amount) at which social domination operates, and also the different formations it assumes within which only some species and spaces may be implicated. For example, animals closer to humans in biology and sentience can experience oppression, such as non-human great apes used for 'research' in laboratories or for exhibited for human entertainment in zoos. Other species may not be implicated in anthroparchal relations, but exist in symbiosis, such as the biota in the human gut, for example. Different oppressive forms apply to different species due to their specific characteristics and normative behaviours such as the presence of sociality and the ways in which this presents itself. Exploitation refers to the use of some being, space or entity as a resource for human ends, and one might speak of the exploitation of the properties of soils, woodland or the labour power of domesticated animals in agriculture, for example. Marginalization is most broadly applicable, referring to human centrism.

In addition, non-human 'nature' has its own properties and powers which can be exercised in specific situations, which operate within/across/alongside anthroparchal networks of relations. In turn, the structure of human social organization, involving the

exploitation of the environment, implicates human communities, practices and institutions within ecological systems. However, natural systems, for example, tidal flows and a host of weather patterns may have considerable impacts on the ability of people to dominate their environments (see Latour 2001). Some may feel the term 'human domination' is strong, but as it is an intersected system it does not mean that all humans, in all places are in a position to dominate their environments, nor that all humans engage in exploitative and oppressive practices all of the time. The existence of other systems of social domination, of colonialism, patriarchy and capitalism, for example, means that some groups of us are positioned in more potentially exploitative relations than others. In addition, individuals and collectivities choose not to exercise potential powers of domination and exclusion and also to contest them.

I suggest that five arenas network to form a social system of anthroparchy. First, production relations, that is, the sets of relations emergent as we interact with nature in order to produce the things we need (food, fuel etc.). The industrialization of production and market distribution associated with modernity in Europe significantly increased the ecological footprints of certain groups of humans, and the globalizing tendencies of modernity has led to industrialized production being an important formation across much of the globe. The second arena is domestication. Certainly, innovation has characterized human engagements with the environment for millennia, through the breeding of plants and animals. The last two centuries have seen intensification of such processes, especially in the West, for example, reproductive interventions in animal food production. Domestication also operates at the symbolic level, for example, in the distinctions between species that are safely domesticated and those dangerous beings that are not. The third arena is political. Institutions and practices of governance may re/produce or contest and change relations of systemic domination. States and state-like formations, can act as direct or indirect agents of anthroparchy. Examples include subsidizing intensive animal farming or making certain practices unlawful (such as the use of battery cages for laying hens or the hunting of certain non-domestic species such as foxes, dolphins or eagles). Fourthly, we have systemic violence. For some species, violence can be seen to operate in ways similar to violences affecting humans. For example, food animals may be terrorized, beaten, raped and killed. Finally, anthroparchal social relations are characterized by cultures of exclusive humanism that construct notions of animality and humanity and other such dichotomies, which encourage certain practices such as animal food consumption.

The following sections of this paper seek to exemplify the notion of anthroparchy as both a system of relations and one which is cross cut by other kinds of relations – those of patriarchy and capitalism. An empirical study of the British meat industry illustrates a specific site in which anthroparchal institutions, processes and practices may be evidenced and these can also be understood as co-constituted through those of gender and capital.

The practices and processes of animals 'becoming-meat'

This study of the British meat industry included interviews, observation and textual analysis. Written material produced by the meat industry took the form of journals, reports, magazines, legislation, government directives and circulars. Pressure groups campaigning for animal welfare provided information which was utilized where it could be corroborated by my own observation on farms and in abattoirs, or by material from interviews that I undertook with meat inspectors, butchers, meat packers, slaughterhouse staff, farmers,

farm animal breeders, and representatives of firms making products and equipment for animal agriculture.

This account draws largely on best practices. The farms I visited and farmers I interviewed were largely beef and dairy, and all allowed their animals to graze (i.e. a 'free range' system), supplemented by a predominantly vegetarian diet. I declined the opportunity to visit an intensive pig farm and to observe the slaughter of pigs and birds, but according to animal welfare groups and those I spoke to in slaughterhouses and farms, these involve some of the worst practice in animal farming. Here, I have relied on accounts provided by animal welfare groups corroborated by comments from those working in the industry, and reports from Government appointed bodies such as the Farm Animal Welfare Council. My access to abattoirs was facilitated by the Local Authority Meat Inspectorate. A Senior Inspector admitted that what I observed was more considerate and careful work than would usually be the case:

There shouldn't be that number of animals in the lairage. They'll do thirty nice and slow whilst we're here then whack another thirty through when we've gone.

'Just machines really': animals as natured objects

Farm animals are constituted as entities which become meat through a discourse of natured objectification. European Union countries adopt the same legal definition of a domesticated agricultural animal as outlined in the Treaty of Rome wherein they are 'agricultural products'. For example, in regulatory narratives, animals constitute standard units of 'parity': "1 bovine, horse or deer, 0.33 swine and 0.15 sheep or goat will be equivalent to one livestock unit" (*Statutory Instruments* 1991). However, farm animals are also capable of experiencing physical pain and mental anguish. They may demonstrate 'stereotyped' (pointless, repetitive) and violent behaviours (killing young, attacking peers) when denied opportunity to engage in activities biologically normative to their species: caring for young, company of adults of the same species, adequate diet, exercise, play, sex, and various species specific behaviour (dust-bathing for hens, foraging for pigs).

In intensive agriculture, lives are particularly 'nasty, brutish and short'. Most chickens are reared in large numbers (40-80,000 birds per unit) in windowless sheds called broilers. They live less than seven weeks, fed on a high protein diet that rapidly increases their weight, putting strain on limbs and organs and leading to 60,000 dying daily from disease, deformity and stress. Towards the end of their lives they are packed tightly, unable to move around on their contaminated litter, which burns them when they rest and in which rats, flies and maggots thrive. Laying hens in battery systems (used by 75% of egg producers within the European Union) are kept five to a cage measuring eighteen by twenty inches. They cannot spread their wings, their feet grow deformed from standing on wire mesh floors and lack of exercise means they suffer brittle bones and a fatty liver. The frustration associated with this environment may lead hens to pecking cage mates and to prevent this, many are 'de-beaked'. 'Free range' describes a variety of systems and practices where hens have access to outside runs. These may allow limited exercise, involve large groups and offer chickens no protective cover from the predators they fear, or at the other end of the spectrum may be smaller scale and on a woodland pastoral model. Free range chickens are slaughtered between three and four months. In non-intensive systems, where farmers may see the animals over some months, there may be some element of human compassion. My interviews with dairy farmers found some genuinely troubled that the animals they maintained had such "boring lives". This was a minority

view amongst farmers as a whole, they suggested, and absent from factory production. When I asked an ex-battery farmer what he felt about chickens, he said he found them “stupid and noisy. Can’t have a relationship with them – they’re just egg-producing machines really. Anyway, they’re not worth much and they don’t last very long”.

Pig farming is around 80% highly intensive. British sows are confined in farrowing crates prior to and after birthing, unlike those in intensive farms in other European Union countries, who spend most of their time in metal crates with boars kept in small pens. In all cases, piglets are fattened in pens and small runs with no bedding and nothing to do. The day after birth, piglets have teeth and tails ‘clipped’ to prevent ‘vices,’ such as knowing the mother’s teats and biting off tails of penmates, caused by the stress of living in a barren, over-crowded environment. After two weeks the piglets are separated from their mothers, packed into flat deck cages and hot rooms with slatted floors and they are graded according to sex and size. Once grown a little, the pigs are moved to overcrowded fattening pens. In their short lives (18-24 weeks) these animals will see nothing outside the factory, have been deprived of exercise, and had no opportunity to play. This small, dull, stressful existence can only be understood as such if pigs are accepted as sentient animals with species requirements, rather than as becoming-meat--as illustrated in the following excerpt from a conversation with the managing director of a company producing bars and crates for intensive farming:

It’s luxury, intensive pig farming. Huge buildings, lovely and warm and bright. I don’t know what these animal libbers complain about. The pigs don’t complain. If they were unhappy, they’d be thin. They’re very happy pigs; they stay in a five star hotel they do. Erika: They don’t get out though do they? Don’t they get bored? Bored? They’re *pigs*! Of course they don’t get bored. Heat and food, that’s all they want. You’re not one of those animal loonies are you?

Animals in less intensive systems still have radically foreshortened and difficult lives. Beef cattle are fattened quickly and slaughtered below the age of eighteen months; dairy cattle are usually slaughtered by six or seven years of age when their productivity reduces. The cows’ natural lifespan is thirty years. Most beef and dairy cattle are reared on a free range system, but some farmers are turning to semi-intensive housing and keep cattle inside over winter. Although there are battery lamb farms in Britain, most sheep live outside. This creates different problems, with three million lambs dying each year from cold or starvation due to what even the industry will admit is inadequate stockmanship. Most are five months old when slaughtered, although breeding females may be kept for up to five years, which is still significantly less than the potential twelve or fourteen year lifespan.

Systems of social domination do shift and change. There have for example, been moves to remove some of the cruel practices associated with intensive farming, such as the removal of sow stalls, allowing sows to socialize until heavily pregnant, and a pending ban on the use of battery cages by 2012 in Western European Union countries. However, these changes only ameliorate some severely oppressive instances of a system which is based on the exploitation of animals as food. Whether intensively farmed or not, all ‘meat’ animals are transported to slaughter in conditions of extreme discomfort for long periods - tightly packed, and subject to overheating, suffocation and crushing. Sheep are easily alarmed, and heart attacks resulting in death or paralysis are common. Such moribund animals are sent to the knackers’ yard, those already dead are thrown in pet food bins. As a lower price

is paid per animal if it is not killed in the usual manner, farmers have a vested interest in getting as many of the animals “who can still walk” to slaughter as possible.

Physical violence permeates the processes of slaughter and animals are regularly treated in an aggressive manner, but the most obvious violences in meat production are endemic rather than incidental: the stunning and killing (‘sticking’) of animals. Cattle are stunned by a captive bolt pistol administering a bullet which penetrates the brain. If the animal moves its head, or the bolt is placed incorrectly, a second shot is used. Cattle are inquisitive, used to being handled and most enter the stunning pen willingly. Whilst no unease could be found in the slaughtermen, meat inspectors often do not like to see animals killed, as one put it: “I can’t watch them, I usually wait in the car ‘till it’s over”. The farmers I spoke with preferred not to talk about slaughter, but a number seemed to take heart from contemporary stunning techniques: “It’s not as bad, the killing, as it used to be, not when they used to pole axe ‘em”. These techniques however, are not as effective for pigs, sheep and goats, whom are stunned by electrical tongs that are regularly applied for a few seconds rather than the required seven. According to both animal welfare groups and the Official Veterinary Service, many animals are immobilized but remain sensitive to pain and may recover full consciousness. Pigs, for example, may reach the scalding tank conscious, and die from drowning (Tyler 1990:4), despite having had an electric shock and their throat slit. Similarly, birds often rise in the shackles by which they are confined, ‘flying’ over the electrified water bath and reaching the automatic knife conscious. As one slaughterhouse manager advised, “Don’t see birds, it’s dreadful” and “it’s very grim with pigs”.

Good mothers and stropo cows: animals as gendered objects

Agricultural animals are gendered in two ways. First, farm animals tend to be female - being the most useful profit maximizers as they produce feminized protein (eggs and dairy products) and reproduce young, as well as becoming meat themselves. Egg production is the clearest example of this as male chicks are destroyed soon after birth and female birds are transformed into super egg-producers by genetic interference which ensures their eggs are infertile and frequent. Second, farm animals are constructed in ways resembling human gender dichotomies. Breed journals, for instance, indicate that genetics are manipulated to produce attractive, docile ‘good mothers,’ and ‘virile,’ strong, ‘promiscuous’ males.

The dairy industry is also based on reproductive manipulation of female animals. Male offspring, along with most female calves (i.e. those not selected as dairy replacements), will be sold for beef or veal production so that “If you get a bull, it’s not a complete disaster,” but many male calves are simply shot when days old. Not only is there an attempt to gender farm animals by reproducing females, cattle are also bred for characteristics which conform to patriarchal discourses of domesticated femininity. My dairy farmers noted that cattle are inquisitive, following people for amusement, investigating unfamiliar places, but on farms “their lives are so boring,” and placid breeds are sought because they are disinclined to be difficult (“the last thing you need is a stropo cow”). The ideal cow has “a friendly personality” is “affectionate,” not “independent or willful,” and is “a good mother”. In addition, they should have particular physical qualities:

You want ‘em tall and quite large, stature is important. Good solid legs. Udders are important, they need to be fairly firm, not too droopy or they can get infected. Even size is good. The udder is probably the most important factor in selection really. You want a ‘milky’ cow, if

she doesn't give a good yield, she's done for. If you look at them from the top, they should be pear-shaped.

Cattle are selected via trade exhibitions or through breed catalogues. In beef cattle, there are three considerations. As the National 'Sire and Dam Summary' for the South Devon beef cattle breeder puts it, these considerations are, "value of the carcass at the point of slaughter. The cost of the feed in getting to slaughter point...calving difficulty and associated mortality at birth". All breeds are monitored according to weight gain, mothering instinct, reproductive ease and meat value and are marketed accordingly. In the case of the Aberdeen Angus catalogue, the:

BULL leaves calves that: are naturally polled with a will to live, grow well on grass, do well on roughage, need a minimum of concentrates, give a high killing out percentage.

COW: is easily managed, is a good forager, means low maintenance costs, calves easily, lives long, breeds regularly, with outstanding mothering ability.

Breeders map family trees of certain herds and determine the heritability of each desirable trait. The Blonde d'Aquitaine, is held to have particularly docile cows and 'promiscuous' bulls, as well as 'good fleshing,' and breeders argue they are also popular for their 'pleasing' appearance. The natured and gendered evaluation of cattle as potential meat is reflected at agricultural shows, where 'best of breeds' are groomed, paraded around a ring and judged on their appearance. The final part of the evaluation however, comes when a number of the best of a breed are selected and slaughtered to enable butchers to select the 'winning' carcass.

The lamb industry is similarly premised on the manipulation of reproduction. Although male sheep are useful for both wool and meat, females are also useful as reproductive machines, and farms require few males. Female sheep selected for breeding must produce as many offspring as possible, and in the last twenty years reproductive technology has enabled two lambing periods. On farms in South East England, ewes now have reproduction synchronized via use of chemicals and vaginal sponges to concentrate lambing periods, and fertilization takes place by artificial insemination with pedigree selection (*The Sheep Farmer* 1994:12). As with cattle, breeding is gendered and natured, with animals selected according to natured characteristics of good meat and gendered characteristics of temperament and good mothering/birthing.

Pork is one of the cheapest meats due to the 'efficiency' of the industry, premised on absolute control of reproduction. In the predominantly intensive system, breeding sows are kept in stalls in which they are unable to turn round or exercise throughout their sixteen and a half week pregnancies and often lapse into stereotyped behaviour, trying repeatedly to build a nest from nothing. They give birth in farrowing crates (with a concrete, plastic or perforated metal floor and no bedding). Once piglets are born, the mother cannot see them properly and this often results in sows becoming frightened of their young or aggressive due to their biting. Piglets would properly be weaned at two months, but are taken away at two weeks, so good mothering is not an overwhelming breed requirement. Fast growth is the essential characteristic. In the case of free-range pig farming, criteria differ for pigs that are bred for gendered as well as natured characteristics:

Docility and mothering ability, so important in outdoor sows...giving the potential of a lifetime of large litters with strong healthy piglets. When crossed with the Newsam Large White boar, the Newsam gilt produces vigorous, thriving piglets, capable of rapid and efficient growth...Large Whites have a reputation for their strong legs and mating ability...This hybrid boar combines high libido and stamina with a lean carcass

When pigs are raised outdoors, the gendering of breed selection is stronger, as the 'Pig Improvement Company' argues, piglets need to be more 'durable,' boars more highly sexed and gilts (young sows) docile and motherly, as unlike in the factory farm, mothering on a free-range system is not fully deconstructed.

The major agricultural animals in Britain, chickens, cattle, sheep and pigs, are natured Other, bred for meat, eggs or milk for human consumption. This Other is also gendered, for agricultural animals have a strong tendency to be female - the proportion of females is higher than males because females are more profitable. Gendering can further be seen in the human manipulation of female animals' fertility and reproduction, wherein animals are forced into constant reproduction. Finally, gendering may be seen in the criteria for the breeding of cattle, sheep and pigs, in which the different sexes are constructed as having clearly gendered desirable characteristics.

It is also worth noting that animals, regardless of sex, are feminized metaphorically by slaughterhouse staff in terms of the use of gendered terms of abuse which are applied to animals (cunt, slag, bitch, dosy cow) used often to hurry them. The animals most likely to be injured in transit to slaughter are breeding females because of damages or weaknesses resultant from continuous reproduction. The ill-health of the 'older' breeder animals and their often appalling treatment is corroborated by leading figures in the meat inspectorate (as evidenced in *The Meat Hygienist*). This suggests that such examples are not exceptional and extreme cases. Thus whilst all animals are likely to experience overcrowding, overheating and fear, it is likely that in the process of slaughter, the most heavily feminized animals – breeders - suffer most.

'It's a really manly job': the gendering of human dominance

Farming is a male dominated form of employment. In factory farms, labour is almost exclusively male, bar office staff. In farms based on family production, I found that women tend to be involved in subsidiary activities such as running farm shops and 'pick-your-own' enterprises. There is a gendered division of labour that prevents women engaging in the heavier manual work, the use of heavy machinery, and certain tasks involving larger animals.

The slaughter industry exhibits patriarchal closure in terms of both the gender segregation of employment and the masculinization of its work culture. According to those who teach the skill at Smithfield market, the largest meat market in London, it takes a "certain kind of person" to slaughter-- one who has "disregard for the lives of animals" and who has "got to be callous". Slaughterhouses operate piece-rate systems, paying staff by output (animals killed), which encourages time saving measures which contribute to animal suffering. Sheep, goats and pigs are inadequately stunned, aggressive language is used to urge fellow workers to quicken pace, and animals are hurried with goads and sticks. Where women are present, they are segregated into particular areas such as in lightweight meat packing or as

local government inspectors in quality control and hygiene. Smithfield is described by men who work there as “a bastion of male dominance”. Slaughtering and cutting at Smithfield is carried out by men, with a few women present as office staff and buyers for catering firms. The market is run by a number of families but no woman has ever been a partner. Constraints on women’s participation in the industry are not solely based on male networking but on the heavily masculinized employment culture:

I’ve trained a great many people to slaughter, but in all the years I’ve done it, I’ve only taught one woman. She really was very good, strong as an ox and hard as nails. Not much like a woman at all. Only lasted six months, she couldn’t take any more. She must have felt ostracized. It’s a hard job; the people match it.

Others suggested that the decline of family business structures may lead to an aggressively masculinised work culture:

In the past, being a slaughterman was like being in a family business, like being a dustman. Now people get into it ‘cause it’s macho like. It appeals to young men ‘cause of the macho-thing. It’s a really manly job.

Animals are killed by men who, in addition to being poorly paid and overwhelmingly white working class men, are something of a caricature of masculinity. Most slaughtermen have a muscular physique, revealed by sleeveless tee-shirts and vests or often a bare chest. Most carry scabbards of knives. After the first ‘line’ of the day, they are all covered with blood, not just on hands and arms, but splattered over clothing, faces, hair and eyelashes. My interviews with butchers and meat packers suggest that despite the low status of butchering and slaughtering, killing and fragmenting animals may be a means of enhancing machismo. Butchering is also overwhelmingly male employment. Women may have an historic presence, often as wives assisting ‘traditional’ butchers in their shops with some processing, such as making sausages, yet they are largely absent from modern meat processing plants and male workers tend to see the work as unsuitable for women:

Without being sexist, they couldn’t do the physical work. Well, I’m sure there are some girls who could do it, but y’know – it’s very ‘laddy’...Well, I mean they comment on women they’ve seen in passing, like, where they drank last night, where they’ll drink together that night. They all drink together. Men only.

Certainly some meat packers undertake strenuous physical labour, unloading heavy frozen carcasses from container lorries in limited time. Like the slaughtermen, the meat packers were mostly muscular in physique and highly masculine in appearance. The meat packers had a dichotomous conception of gender roles and felt an all male work environment which required heavy manual labour enhanced their own sense of masculine identity. Thus the institutions and processes of animals becoming meat are those in which men predominate, a rigid gender segregation of tasks is apparent, and particularly in the case of slaughter and butchery, a highly masculinized work culture can be found.

Sexualization, or, ‘you can do it best with a sheep’

Animal agriculture is premised on the manipulation and exploitation of the reproductive powers of animals. This is constituted through gendered and natured processes involving tight human control of animal fertility, sex and reproduction. For example, to produce milk, cows give birth every year from two years of age. Should they not 'come into calf' they will be slaughtered. They are usually impregnated artificially and separated from their calf after a few days, from whence the calf is fed via a tank with rubber teats. In intensive pig farming, men intervene in the reproductive process by determining which boar will be made to have sex with which sow and by inserting the pigs' penises into the sows with their hands or by obtaining sperm with artificial vaginas and inserting this into sows. Animals' sexuality and reproductive capacity is appropriated in order to ensure continuity, efficiency and consistency in the production of milk and meat.

The actual killing of cattle, sheep, pigs and goats is via the slitting of the animal's throat, followed by a process known as 'sticking' wherein a large 'boning' knife is 'stuck' with some force down into the animal's chest cavity in order to ensure fast blood loss through the main arteries and full brain death. Slitting and sticking are the crux of slaughter - the point at which animals die. Sticking could be understood as a metaphorically sexualized practice. In sexual slang for example, 'boning' is a term for heterosexual--the actual physical practice is redolent of machismo, and in the abattoir itself, the task described with heavy sexual connotations.

The sexualization of labour in butchering is also strongly gendered and natured. Butchers work with 'products' which are selected on the basis of species membership, are disproportionately female, and are feminized as male workers have a tendency to relieve the monotony of their labour via sexualization of animal carcasses. According to some of the meat packers I spoke with:

You can do it best with a sheep. You can pick them up by putting your hand up their rib cage, or up their arse, basically, 'cause there's a big hole where their tail's bin cut off. There's lots of it, all the time y'know - sex with sheep.

You might get a huge steak; they're chilled, not frozen, right? An' you might slap it about a bit... Well; slap it about someone's head. Especially if we got a bag of steak that's full of blood, could squirt it on them. It looked like the inside of someone, something, y'nah? (Erika: The inside of what?) Beef curtains (laughs).

These kinds of sexualized practices can be seen as escapism for men engaged in low status and repetitive work. Yet butchering is an extreme example of a gendered and sexualized form of production. In this heavily masculinized and sexualized employment culture, the natured animal carcass is represented and sometimes treated as a female sexual body.

Conclusion – the gendered nature of becoming-meat

The case of British meat production can be seen to exemplify all three levels at which anthroparchal relations operate. First, marginalization is involved in the definition of certain species of animal as a resource and as a human food. This is a form of human-centrism. Second, the becoming-meat of animals involves material (that is, physical and economic) oppression and exploitation. Animals can be seen to be oppressed to the extent that they are denied species specific behaviours (such as play and socializing) and are

incarcerated or physically harmed. Animals are exploited as a set of resources in the process of their becoming-meat, as exemplified by the utilization, modification and magnification of their reproductive capacity. There is some diversity in the levels of operation of anthroparchal practice. Intensive animal agriculture can be seen as an extreme or strongly oppressive form whereas some kinds of non-intensive production are concerned with animal welfare, albeit within the frame of becoming-meat. Meat production demonstrates a range of anthroparchal arenas and processes. First, it constitutes a specific set of production relations. Second, it is a strong example of the practices of domestication as a means of dominating non-human natures. Third, the institutions and practices of governance both reproduce and shift the processes of animals' becoming-meat. Finally, different forms of violence against animals as non-human natures can be seen in the killing and dismemberment of animal bodies, and in some practices associated with reproductive control.

As a complex social system, anthroparchy is intersectionalised. In the case of the British meat industry as a site of anthroparchal relations, the intersection of capitalist and patriarchal relations is particularly marked, the latter of which, has been the focus of this discussion. The object of domination in the manufacture of meat is patriarchally constituted. As such animals are largely female and are usually feminized in terms of their treatment. Farmers disproportionately breed female animals so they can maximize profit via the manipulation of reproduction. Female animals that have been used for breeding can be seen to incur the most severe physical violences within the system, particularly at slaughter. Female and feminized animals are bred, incarcerated, raped, killed and cut into pieces, and this tale of becoming-meat is very much a story of commodification. Yet whilst the production of meat is shaped by relations of capital and patriarchy, it is most clearly a site in which anthroparchal relations cohere as certain kinds of animals are (re)constructed as a range of objects for human consumption.

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Response to Katherine Perlo's "Extrinsic and Intrinsic Arguments: Strategies for Promoting Animal Rights," in *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* Vol. V, Issue 1, 2007

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I have been a vegan animal rights activist for about 20 years now, and while I believe the ethical or "intrinsic" case for animal rights is central, I do not disdain using secondary, pragmatic, or "extrinsic" appeals such as involve claims that carnivorousism is unhealthy, environmentally disastrous, a disservice to the poor, and may indirectly promote warfare (a point Perlo correctly attributes to Dr. Richard Schwartz), or that vivisection is incapable of producing real advances for human medicine. Perlo urges us to "stick to the subject" of animal rights, which is apparently what she means by the "intrinsic appeal." She makes a number of claims about extrinsic appeals regarding health, the environment, medical effectiveness, etc., which I think merit rebuttals both in the interests of thorough academic discussion, as well as developing sound forms of activism.

She states that animal rights campaigns are most effectively advanced through intrinsic appeals, which seems to concede some effectiveness to extrinsic appeals. Indeed, Dr. Perlo concedes that "extrinsic arguments have had some positive effect." (Perlo 2007, 1) She notes that "[e]xtrinsic points may have their place within an intrinsic framework, for example as reassurance that vegetarianism or (vivisection) abolitionism can promote better health or medicine, but if these points are not assigned a clearly subordinate role, they can distort the real argument, which is intrinsic and moral" (Perlo 2007, 2).

I agree with this statement, except it is not clear if the role of "reassurance" is only in response to people who wonder about these things and require an answer. I think animal rights campaigners should support, use, and defend all manner of arguments that encourage a better state for animals. Indeed, her conclusion seems to be stringent, implying that we should exclude extrinsic appeals from any prominent place in animal rights campaigning whatsoever, such as when she writes: "When animal rights arguments are based on extrinsic features, or even include them prominently as supplements, the results may be inconsistency, concession to speciesism, concealment of moral principles, unconscious double standards, ethical ambiguity, remoteness and uncertainty of projected outcomes, and the suggestion that animal-related considerations are not important enough to make the case on their own." (Perlo 2007, 12) This seems to confirm that "reassurances" are only incidental, that is, if people happen to ask.

On the positive side, I agree that when making a case for animal rights, extrinsic appeals are often irrelevant. I do not wish to say they are always irrelevant though. In my article, "A Living Will Clause for Supporters of Animal Experimentation," (Sztybel 2006) I try to invert the claim that we should not give up on vivisection because the benefits supposedly outweigh the harms. I suggest that vivisectionists should volunteer for vivisection if they ever become cognitively equivalent to nonhuman animals, say, through a brain injury, and that such research should even take a priority over research on

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nonhumans because it would be infinitely more effective. Of course I do not literally advocate the living will but merely show it to be an unwelcome corollary of the vivisectionist position. My living will argument depends on the empirical claim that vivisection on nonhumans very generally does not provide (nearly as much) medical knowledge about human beings.

However most of my own ethics writing and advocacy does not use extrinsic appeals. Of course, being rooted in appeals to the inherent worth of nonhuman sentient beings, animal rights *themselves* cannot be won by extrinsic appeals. Also, as Dr. Perlo implies, we need to get people thinking about the animals themselves, and not just perpetually promote self-centered ideas concerning the health benefits of veganism or the alleged benefits from vivisection. Some cynics I have met even wish to get away from speaking about veganism or animal rights at all, thinking these ideas are too much of a hard-sell for a largely egocentric public. I agree with Dr. Perlo that the main thrust of the animal rights movement should be ethics and duty-for-it's-own sake, but her suggestion goes well beyond this, calling for a *total exclusion* of extrinsic appeals even as prominent supplements.

In the following I paraphrase Perlo's dozen or so negative claims about extrinsic appeals and then seek to rebut each one:

1. *Extrinsic arguments tacitly consign animal rights to a marginal or extreme position.* (Perlo 2007, 1)

Rebuttal: This is not necessarily true. The ethical case can be asserted as primary while a full-spectrum approach offers other reasons against animal exploitation. Also, Perlo is perhaps too rigid in her separation of intrinsic and extrinsic appeals. She associates intrinsic appeals at times with considering animals as ends in themselves (Perlo 2007, 10), thereby proclaiming the moral equality of all species (Perlo 2007, 4). This approach is evident, for instance when she writes: "To hurt or kill animals is wrong, regardless of any other considerations" (Perlo 2007, 9). Should a mosquito's life be saved equally as a human's? Is it wrong to kill a bear in self-defense or to cause unavoidable suffering to animals at the veterinarians? Apart from these questions, which undermine Perlo's simplistic assertions about animal liberation, if extrinsic appeals result in *less killing of animals and also less animal suffering*, then, in fact, intrinsic concerns of animal rightists may *partly* be won by extrinsic appeals.

2. *Extrinsic appeals "disown" animal rights.* (Perlo 2007, 1)

Rebuttal : Again, this is not necessarily true.

3. *Extrinsic appeals make the public suspect an ulterior motive and the animal rights movement loses some credibility.* (Perlo 2007, 6)

Rebuttal: I think the public is smart enough to know that a group promoting animal rights may use numerous kinds of appeals to make things better for animals. The credibility loss would only be in the eyes of those who think that only intrinsic appeals are

legitimate—but that begs the question, since that is exactly what is at issue here.

4. *Relying on extrinsic appeals uses a double-standard in that we would never use them on behalf of humans, arguing, for example, that slavery is less healthy for slave owners.* (Perlo 2007, 6)

Rebuttal: It is absurd to speak of slavery as unhealthy for slave owners, except in terms of slavemasters working less and becoming obese. In any case these comparisons are not so easily analogous. Human rights appeals have a powerful effect by themselves, and are enough to change public policy, quite unlike animal rights appeals at this stage. With particularly harsh political regimes, economic sanctions—a kind of extrinsic appeal—are also appropriate, e.g., the worldwide campaign during the 1980s and 1990s to divest from South African enterprises supporting Apartheid. However, if there were aliens who ruthlessly used humans for food and experiments and were smug in their sense of entitlement to do so, then—in a more relevant analogy—it might indeed cause less suffering and death for humans to urge that eating humans is unhealthy, etc. I would use such a tactic among others. In that case there is no speciesist double-standard in using extrinsic appeals.

5. *The animals themselves do not care about extrinsic appeals such as relate to arguments that animal agriculture” is inefficient at producing protein or that vivisection is scientifically unsound.* (Perlo 2007, 7).

Rebuttal: This is irrelevant. Many animals may not care about PETA’s slogans, either, but these may be crucial in promoting the cause of animal rights. And animals do care about suffering less and being allowed to live, goals which extrinsic appeals may help by Dr. Perlo’s own admission.

6. *Extrinsic appeals such as involving health or the environment are not as immediate and certain as the fact that animals suffer and die in exploitation practices.* (Perlo 2007, 8)

Rebuttal: It is certain that meat-eating is unhealthy and a global environmental disaster, and that vivisection is largely unhelpful in predicting results for humans. I think the scientific cases have been made overwhelmingly in support of these claims even if some so-called “experts” still refuse to admit it. Remoteness is not necessarily a factor, since intrinsic appeals may also involve concerning oneself with animals whom one never sees, and whose lives may only indirectly be affected by, say, particular purchasing decisions. Even animals who may not exist due to boycotts are a consideration. It is hard to get more “remote” than that.

7. *The extrinsic appeal that vivisection does not work creates confusion because animals are asserted to be different so results for them cannot be extrapolated to humans, but ethical anti-vivisection relies on the claim that nonhuman animals are similar to humans. This involves “conflicting” claims* (Perlo 2007, 2).

Rebuttal: Animals are different from us physiologically so vivisection does not work, but they are similar to us in terms of sentience, which is crucial to the ethical case against vivisection. These are not conflicting claims. Also, the sentience similarity does not justify pain research since we restrict against such research performed on humans and I argue it would be speciesist to do otherwise with nonhuman animals. The fear of some confusion seems itself confused, or to attribute to the interlocutor a lack of critical thinking skills which may be condescending.

8. *Extrinsic appeals do not “stick to the subject,” and we cannot win the debate over animal rights “by talking about something else.”* (Perlo 2007, 12)

Rebuttal: Granted, animal rights ethics debates cannot be decided by extrinsic appeals alone. But no one claims otherwise. This does not show that it is not helpful to use such appeals as part of a larger discursive argument that we ought to treat animals as ends in themselves.

9. *Extrinsic appeals such as vegetarianism and anti-vivisection are separable from extrinsic appeals.* (Perlo 2007, 12).

Rebuttal: True, but irrelevant. The question is: is it best for animals that we leave out these arguments? I have argued against the thesis that it is best to omit extrinsic appeals from any prominence.

10. *Extrinsic appeals involve inconsistency or a concession to speciesism.* (Perlo 2007, 12)

Rebuttal: Activists who use extrinsic appeals may consistently denounce speciesism, but they recognize that much of their audience remains speciesist nonetheless, and therefore there is a rational, morally motivated, and in fact anti-prejudicial move to cause these speciesists to create less death and suffering for animals. The anti-speciesism here is realized primarily in terms of alleviating the harmful effects of the speciesism. It is not always possible to erase speciesprejudices themselves.

11. *Extrinsic appeals suggest that animal-related considerations are not important enough to make the case on their own.* (Perlo 2007, 12)

Rebuttal: Most appeals to extrinsic considerations do not involve any statements at all about whether ethical appeals are more important than health or other appeals. In any event, I would say that ethical appeals are supremely important, and may succeed on their own, and perhaps will succeed with anyone who is perfectly rational and good. But I am not so naïve as to say that such appeals will work with everyone -- hence the relevance of the extrinsic appeals which also have important effects. For example, about 80% of vegetarians make this lifestyle change for (selfish) health reasons, not for (altruistic) moral reasons, but their abstinence still spares many animals suffering and death. Ignoring such statistic when campaigning is unwise and not best for animals.

12. *Avoiding extrinsic appeals and embracing only intrinsic appeals is more “honest.”*

(Perlo 2007, 12)

Rebuttal: It may be dishonest to claim one is not concerned with animal rights when one really is when launching an extrinsic appeal. But I am not so dishonest, and the extrinsic appeals are rooted in truthful claims largely about how animal exploitation affects humans.

Perhaps what is at work in Perlo's thinking is a variety of animal rights fundamentalist assumptions. In "Animal Rights Law" (Szybel 2007) I critically discussed those who reject animal "welfarist" legislation partly because it is a departure from animal rights. Promoting the health benefits of vegetarianism can be seen as a similar departure from advocating animal rights. Anything contrary to animal rights, if the latter is conceived of as an ultimate principle, can be deemed morally wrong or inconsistent for any who profess to animal rights. In that earlier essay I argued that we should aim for actions that have positive significance. However, I believe that only sentient beings find anything to be of significance. Mindless things do not find anything to be positively, negatively, or even neutrally significant. Stones are thus beyond indifferent, but so are ideals, including "animal rights." In "The Rights of Animal Persons," (2006b) I therefore urge an animal rights ethic that is ultimately about doing what is best for each and every sentient being, in a distinctly nonutilitarian manner. We cannot do better than what is best. And we should promote animal rights for the sake of sentient beings, not treat sentient beings in a manner that is subordinate to furthering any ideal, including animal rights. So is show-casing illness as a consequence of meat-eating part of promoting animal rights? Not in the narrow sense perhaps. However, is such a form of activism consistent with promoting what is best for animals? I think the answer is clearly yes.

I thank Dr. Perlo for her thoughtful comments in the *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, and again I think there is merit to her general thrust of appeal that animal rights should be central to the animal rights movement. However, I do not believe that her reasoning shows it is unwise to rely on a fuller spectrum of appeals and tactics. On the contrary her concession that extrinsic appeals have had positive effects—as they demonstratively have—and her logical failure to establish her invariably negative associations with extrinsic appeals, given the rebuttals that I offer, may help justify a judicious use of extrinsic appeals in conjunction with more straightforwardly ethical arguments for the treatment of animals.

However, I submit that it is ethically virtuous and pragmatically sound to be concerned with promoting human health, a sound environment, and efficacious medical research as well as the just treatment of animals. Indeed, the environmental impacts of animal agriculture do not only extend to humans. Should ethical people not care about these things? We should not care about them to the exclusion of animal rights, but that is obviously not what I am suggesting. I am merely showing that it is overly simplistic to try to utterly separate the so-called extrinsic appeals from ethically-concerned intrinsic appeals, and that we need a more pluralistic, flexible, and situationist ethic and mode of thinking. The animal rights movement is strongest with, as Tom Regan often puts it, "many hands on many oars." The movement is weakened if some of those oars are

disdainfully neglected.

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Fundamentalism or Pragmatism?

Katherine Perlo¹

Rather than address Dr Sztybel's points in order, which would lead to some repetition, I will group his related arguments under the following headings: 'Fundamentalism'; 'Audience psychology'; 'Uncertainty and remoteness'; and 'Miscellaneous points'. Evidence that intrinsic argument works will be followed by my conclusion and some practical suggestions.

Fundamentalism

"Perhaps what is at work in Perlo's thinking is a variety of animal rights fundamentalist assumptions," as found in "those who reject 'welfarist' legislation partly because it is a departure from animal rights." "We should... not treat sentient beings in a manner that is subordinate to furthering any ideal, including animal rights."

There is indeed a parallel between anti-welfarism and ideology for its own sake. But mine is not a fundamentalist position in either sense. I do not reject "welfarist" reforms or see any contradiction between them and liberation. For example, when I wrote "The case for intrinsic arguments rests not on a concern for ideological purity, but on the need to reach the public," it was not just a pious disclaimer, but expressed my concern that too great a reliance on human-centered supports weakens the great potential of the liberationist case for helping animals, and is thus the very opposite of the pragmatism claimed for those supports.

Audience psychology

1. Dr Sztybel writes, "...it is not clear if the role of 'reassurance' is only in response to people who wonder about these things and require an answer"; and that one of my statements "seems to confirm that 'reassurances' are only incidental, that is, if people happen to ask."

Reassurance can be given against doubts that are unspoken but anticipated. We can say – at the end of our main argument – "Don't worry, giving up animal products won't affect your health," and give some supporting facts. But there is a significant difference between that and "Another reason for going vegan is that it will make you healthier." The first statement has the subtext "You may be, understandably, wondering about this"; the second: "I've got to offer some additional positive incentive."

2. Regarding my contention that people suspect an ulterior motive when confronted with empirical claims, he objects, "I think the public is smart enough to know that a group promoting animal rights may appeal to other considerations to make things better for animals." Similarly, my criticism of the anti-vivisectionist claim that animals are sufficiently like us to demand ethical treatment, but too unlike us for results to be valid,

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brings the reply: “The fear of some confusion seems itself confused, or to attribute to the interlocutor a lack of critical thinking skills which may be condescending at best, or unkind at worst.”

On the contrary, I think the public is smart enough to be suspicious of statistics and expert pronouncements that seem just too convenient for the promoters of an ethical cause. We ourselves are suspicious when claims point the other way, or even when they are unconnected to our own beliefs. We may wonder, how selective is the information? What have other experts said? Has the survey controlled for all relevant factors? In regard to the “similar-but-different” argument, people with critical thinking skills are likely to ask “What if the difference isn’t great enough to invalidate the research? Would the ethics of similarity then outweigh the benefits of the research? What exactly are these campaigners saying?”

3. “Human rights appeals have a powerful effect by themselves, and are enough to change public policy, quite unlike animal rights appeals *at this stage*” (my emphasis). “...much of [activists’] audience remains speciesist nonetheless, and therefore there is a[n] ... anti-speciesist move to cause these speciesists to create less death and suffering for animals. ... It is not always possible to erase species-prejudices themselves.”

It is certainly not possible to erase species prejudices, or to issue effective animal rights appeals, if we are so convinced that the public is not yet ready for it that we do not even try. Dr Sztybel writes that “[a]ctivists who use extrinsic appeals may consistently denounce speciesism,” but I fear that in fact we do not denounce it often enough, prominently enough, or analytically enough to cause people to re-examine their thinking.

The problem is that our cause is as genuinely different from human liberation struggles – the success of which is often assumed to guarantee the eventual success of our own – as we are different from non-human animal species. When women or Africans were asserted by their oppressors to be less than human, it was a biological mistake that could be corrected. However, nonhuman animals are by definition different, and we must get across the point that their similarity in sentience obliges us to respect them *in all their remaining differentness*. This is a challenge which the movement has, to a significant extent, evaded outside of academic debate.

Even the pro-animal measures that might result in spite of such evasion, by profiting from human-centered arguments, can be limited in scope and implementation because that same humanist ethos confers low priority on the measures. As Arluke writes, [c]rossing the boundaries between humans and animals is taboo in Western societies. ... Those who are particularly anxious over such boundary blurring are likely to diminish the significance of cruelty, arguing that if taken too seriously, let alone on a level with violent crimes against people, it will degrade what it means to be human. (Arluke 2006: 194)

He is referring to acts that are already recognized as cruelty, legally prohibited, and comparatively rare; how much more so the legal, widespread forms of animal abuse.

Uncertainty and Remoteness

With regard to uncertainty and remoteness, Dr. Sztybel writes: “It *is* certain that meat-eating is unhealthy and an environmental disaster, and that vivisection is largely unhelpful in predicting results for humans, even if some so-called ‘experts’ are still .. too grudging to admit it,”; and “intrinsic appeals may also involve concerning oneself with animals whom one never sees.”

People’s uncertainty about meat-eating and health lies in such questions as how unhealthy it is, and how much and what kinds of meat can be tolerated by each individual. The person inclined to respond to the health argument might say, “I eat a little chicken and that’s not going to kill me,” which is very likely true. But the thought: “Murdering the occasional chicken is not so terrible” would be less comfortable, since the death of the chicken is certain and the self-exoneration is weak. Another source of uncertainty is that many people are suspicious of what may be seen as ever-changing health scares. Vegetarians who are unconcerned about animals may be tempted to start eating meat again if their health remains as good as it was, but no better, and they start to wonder whether their self-imposed “deprivation” is really necessary.

Environmental disaster has been officially linked to meat and dairy production, but how convinced in their hearts are people that *any* relevant “green” action by the individual is going to matter?

The scientific anti-vivisection case may seem certain to us, but the fact that the government and the research establishment reject it carries great weight with the public. The species-difference argument also avoids the question of vivisection for veterinary research; and the whole scientific case suffers from the exaggerated, frequently-made claim that animal research has never done any good. But in all these instances there is no doubt and no need for debate about the fact that the animals concerned have suffered and died.

As for remoteness, the part of the dead animal on one’s plate is more immediate as an intrinsic argument than any statistics about cancer or land usage, even though one has never seen the animal alive. Video evidence of laboratory animal suffering is more immediate than figures about adverse drug reactions – which are not necessarily all the result of animal testing.

Miscellaneous Points

(1) “... if extrinsic appeals result in *less killing of animals and also less animal suffering*, then, in fact, intrinsic concerns of animal rightists may *partly* be won by extrinsic appeals” (his emphases). Regarding my appeal to “stick to the subject,” he writes, “helping animals *is* part of the subject” (and that can be furthered by partly extrinsic argument).

Both these statements equivocate between intrinsic *argument* and intrinsic *concerns*. An extrinsic argument that serves an intrinsic concern is still an extrinsic argument.

(2) Commenting on my remarks that the animals don't care about human-centered concerns, he writes "Many animals may not care about PETA's slogans, either ... and animals do care about suffering less and being allowed to live which extrinsic appeals may help...."

Saying that animals don't care about human-centered concerns is a way of saying that their interests are more important to them than human interests, so that if they could understand the issues they would not care about the non-animal concerns, but they would care about PETA's slogans.

(3) Quoting me that "To hurt or kill animals is wrong, regardless of any other considerations," Dr Sztybel asks: "Is it wrong to kill a bear in self-defense or to cause unavoidable suffering to animals at the veterinarians?" Of course it is not. My statement was in the context of debate with supporters of animal abuse, the "other considerations" referred to being such things as medical progress, the "right to choose" what we eat or wear, the entertainment value of zoos, etc. In an academic discussion, or if asked while campaigning, I would explicitly exempt self-defense or therapeutic animal suffering.

Evidence that Intrinsic Argument Works

In the course of denouncing vivisection on scientific grounds, neurologist Marius Maxwell (2006) mentioned, citing the December 13th 2006 issue of *Nature*, that in December 2005 Swiss animal law was reformed "to protect the 'dignity of creation' of animals" – an intrinsic principle that "rightly has had the effect of progressive denial of funding for non-human primate research."

The campaign to close Hill Grove cat farm, which bred cats for vivisection, began in 1981 and finally resulted in the establishment's closure in 1999. In 1997 its most active campaigner, Cynthia O'Neill, "handed over the running of the growing campaign to Heather James and Greg Jennings"; a noteworthy feature of the handover was that "[while] the original campaigners had placed the emphasis on the fact that *vivisection is scientific fraud*, the new leadership focused on the cruelty to the cats ..." (The Campaigners 2002: 80)

In a dramatic victory, "Dozens of monkeys destined for experiments in South America arrive[d] in an English sanctuary ... after a successful International Animal Rights Day protest to close the laboratory in which they were imprisoned." (Uncaged 2008; details can be found at <<http://www.uncaged.co.uk/news/2008.chile.htm>>) For the IARD project, see below under "Conclusion and practical suggestions."

The Jamie Oliver/Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall TV campaign "to expose the short and brutal lives of broiler birds," was a straightforward appeal to compassion, with the result

that, despite initial industry claims of its ineffectiveness. For example, the Consumer Affairs Correspondent for the Independent newspaper Martin Hickman (2008) wrote:

“Sales of free-range poultry shot up by 35 per cent last month compared with January 2007, while sales of standard indoor birds fell by 7 per cent, according to a survey of 25,000 shoppers by the market research company TNS.

Supermarkets have been stripped of free-range birds ...

The rise in sales would have been even higher if poultry producers had been able to keep up with demand. Many suppliers in the £2bn-a-year poultry industry are now expected to convert cramped chicken sheds into more spacious accommodation.”

Better yet, “Overall, chicken sales were down by 4.8 per cent, perhaps because many people, when faced with an absence of free-range chicken, simply bought no chicken.”

During Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall’s “Chicken Run shows, residents of the Devon town of Axminster were invited to see free-range and intensive systems running alongside each other in a shed; many left in tears. According to separate polling by ACNielsen, half of the four million viewers who saw the shows said they would buy better chicken.” (Hickman 2008)

Although the celebrity of the two campaigners undoubtedly played a part in the campaign’s success, their fame was relevant to their subject. And it appears that the public responded more to the suffering of the chickens than to the presenters’ status.

Dr. Szybel observes that most veggies are so for health reasons. But what is the percentage of veggies? According to a 2003 survey in the US., “From 4-10 percent call themselves vegetarians,” of whom “over half ... can be classified as vegans,” allowing for margin of error. (Anon., *Vegetarian Journal* 2003) In the U.K. a 2006 figure is “5-6 per cent ... and the number is rising. The number of vegans has increased ten fold in the last 10 years.” (Anon., *Arkangel* 2007). How much faster might it rise in response to greater emphasis on morality?

Conclusion and Practical Suggestions

“It is ethically virtuous,” Dr Szybel argues, “to be concerned with promoting human health, a sound environment, and efficacious medical research as well as the just treatment of animals. ... Should ethical people not care about these things? We should not care about them to

the exclusion of animal rights, but that is obviously not what I am suggesting.”

There are many concerns and problems that ethical people care about, but they must choose where to place their resources and their emphasis. The oppression of animals is the greatest evil on earth, in scope, intensity, duration, universality, religious and ideological support, the helplessness of its victims, and its neglect by politicians. Even people in the movement sometimes fail to recognize this, so accustomed are we to thinking of ourselves as “just another cause,” and an unpopular, necessarily defensive one at that. In fact, ours is the most urgent cause. It is ethically virtuous to show why animal exploitation is evil, and would be evil even if it had no adverse human-centered side-effects. When we add those side-effects to our argument we are suggesting – at the very least, muddying the waters by raising the possibility – that animal exploitation might be acceptable if it benefited humans or the environment.

Our attempts, by such means, to ingratiate ourselves with the mainstream have not won us a place on the liberal agenda. Anti-war arguments don’t mention the death or lethal neglect of animals in war, let alone any connection of war with meat-eating; Michael Moore has vehemently denounced the animal rights movement (Anon., *Animal Times* 2007: 10); anti-poverty campaigners suggest that people donate a goat or a cow to poor villages; Al Gore has yet to succumb to PETA’s colorful exhortations to add vegetarianism to his anti-global-warming recommendations (Anon., *Animal Times* 2008: 28-29); the American Civil Liberties Union had only the mildest reservations about the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act which it otherwise condones (Best 2007).

There is nothing unethical or dogmatic about trying to correct this imbalance by minimizing or even sometimes excluding extrinsic factors from our arguments. Nor need the effort be confined to philosophy seminars. Information stalls on any animal issue, however “welfarist” the immediate subject, can include, alongside facts about the treatment of the animals, leaflets explaining the liberationist point of view and refuting the damning, often unspoken, objection that the animals just aren’t important enough to bother about. Placards can convey the compassion-plus-rights case in a few words. These two elements should be introduced whenever there is a chance to speak at public meetings, on the radio, in conversation, or in letters to the government. We should never back down and say “Of course humans are more important, but ...”; instead we should say, for example, “Animals are just as important; what are your grounds for believing otherwise?”

Every year the organization Uncaged (www.uncaged.co.uk) promotes an International Animal Rights Day, observed worldwide. The purpose is to secure by 2048 a Universal Declaration of Animal Rights 100 years after the equivalent human rights declaration. Demonstrators choose a site outside a place of animal abuse, linking the theory with particular aims, and the IARD leaflet reviews all the forms of animal oppression. In cities with enough support for a big parade in the center, it will stop on the way when passing abusive shops, or select a particular type of abuse as its theme.

Despite the event's linkage of animal rights with human rights, the centrality it gives to the animal rights case has undoubtedly made many people think twice. All campaigners could add public events of this type to their usual work on specific issues.

In making these suggestions my goal is the same as Dr Sztybel's: to end, as soon as possible, the human-inflicted suffering and untimely death of animals. My fundamentalism, if it can be so defined, is entirely pragmatic.

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Book Review: *Nature Ethics: An Ecofeminist Perspective*, Kheel, Marti (Rowman Littlefield 2008)

Lynda Birke¹

“There are plenty more where that came from.” So I was told when, as a trainee biologist, I became upset at the death of a lab rat. So too said the Division of Wildlife to a woman concerned to find orphaned fox kits in Colorado - the example with which Kheel begins this book. It is a widespread assumption that as long as there are enough animals to make up a robust population of the species, then the loss of one or two simply does not matter. And there is another message: that emotional responses, such as my grief for the rat or the unknown woman’s empathy for baby foxes, do not matter. What is important, it would seem, is survival of species or ecosystems.

There is undoubtedly a tension between such a stance in writing about environmental ethics, and the concerns of animal liberation. For the latter, individual suffering and death matters a great deal, and there cannot be a justification for killing animals in the name of any greater good. In *Nature Ethics*, feminist activist and writer Marti Kheel explores ideas about nature in the work of environmentalist thinkers: but, significantly, she seeks to do so through challenging the assumption that individuals are not important. Her task is to find an ethics which pays attention to both nature in general and simultaneously to individual animals and their suffering.

Kheel’s odyssey began with concern about how humans treat other animals (whom she calls “other-than-humans”), but she found neither environmental nor animal liberation philosophy to be helpful. Both, she felt, were too rooted in highly abstract ideas, such as rationality - as foregrounded in the work of writers such as Singer and Regan. Both these key writers in animal rights, she suggests, tend to discount feelings of empathy as unimportant to ethical thought. Yet it is empathy towards other-than-humans which motivates most people involved in any kind of animal advocacy.

Turning to ecofeminist writers did not help Kheel’s despair, either, as here too animals were often absent. “I was beginning to suspect,” she says, “that the neglect of other-than-humans was not an incidental aspect of the Western nature philosophies, but rather central to it” (p. 20). Thus began her exploration of how prominent environmental writers have represented nature, to the detriment of concern for individual animals. She focuses specifically on four writers whom she considers to be representative of holist philosophies in the evolution of thinking about the environment - Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold, Holmes Rolston III, and Warwick Fox.

The story of the conservation movement in North America is inevitably tied up with the history of colonization. To begin with, Kheel notes, pastoralism was seen as preferable to hunting (associated with the practices of indigenous populations). But in the nineteenth century, the practices of hunting were reshaped into an ethical discourse, to create the concept of sport hunting. Sport (in the form of killing living beings with rifle or bow) and adventure became increasingly seen as ways of “experiencing nature.” As these ideas took root, so followed the notion that nature should not always be controlled, but conserved - for if there is no “wild” nature, then there is nothing for humans to experience.

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These developments were deeply imbued with masculine values. Starting from feminist debates about the psychology of attachment/detachment and masculine identity, Kheel explores how modern ideas of masculinity are linked to a separation from (and sometimes violence towards) nature. Sport hunting became an expression of how “real men” could experience the wilderness, and conservation ensured that there was something left for their sons (not daughters).

As hunting became cast as ethical, as an expression of man’s “love” for nature, so the slaughter had to be justified. We are familiar enough with the arguments: as in debates about the use of sentient animals in laboratories, suffering and death are given noble cause. Kheel points out how “Whether framed within a moral, political or scientific discourse, the logic of the hunting adventure always subordinated the killing of the animal to a larger moral framework” (p.89).

For Roosevelt and Leopold, particularly, hunting was pivotal to their arguments for conservation. Roosevelt, influenced by reading Darwin as well as his pursuit of big game hunting, engaged in debates about the merits of popular children’s stories about animals. Some of these stories, Roosevelt felt, sentimentalised other-than-humans and did not give accurate facts about natural history, while painting hunters in rather a bad light. Hunting was, to Roosevelt, the pinnacle of masculine heroic achievement, a “playful re-enactment of the lives of the earlier pioneers, whose sweat and blood had forged the greatness of the white race”, comments Kheel (p. 92).

Aldo Leopold - often called the “father” of modern conservation movements - placed similar emphasis on “playing at being pioneers.” His writing undoubtedly emphasised the importance of a love for nature, and he urged readers to learn to “think like a mountain,” to understand better how mountains and all living organisms who live on them are profoundly intertwined. He came to this insight, however, after killing a wolf, described in an oft-quoted passage, where he talks of watching the “fierce green fire” slowly die in her eyes. Somewhat shocked by this, he came to the realisation that both the wolf and the mountain had different perspectives from those of the man who wants to maintain high populations of deer.

Perhaps that horrifying experience did make him think that, indeed, predators too had a point of view. But it didn’t stop him hunting, which he continued throughout his life. It is significant that Leopold continues to be lauded in environmentalist writing for his insistence on conservation: it is also significant that his cavalier disregard for the individual lives lost through his murderous guns is seldom commented upon.

The opportunity to hunt not only gave young men chances for adventure and heroism, it could also imbue them with a sense of wonderment at nature, he believed. In this context, Kheel argues, the prevalent view that Leopold broke with earlier instrumental views of nature should be challenged. He may have identified with the land to the extent of thinking like a mountain, but his philosophy continued to subordinate individual beings to that “greater good.”

Kheel next turns to Holmes Rolston III, believed by many to be a founder of modern nature ethics and a prolific writer; in particular, he has emphasised the existence of values *in* nature, rather than simply accorded value through human use. As such, his approach has been useful to environmentalists, as it provides an intellectual defence against aggressive despoliation. His writing comes in for especial criticism from Kheel, however, for not only does he too

advocate culling in order to “save” species, but his writing implies that nature is somehow incomplete without “fertilisation” brought by human consciousness. Human superiority over others is thus maintained.

Finally, Kheel considers the work of Warwick Fox, drawing on transpersonal psychology, and emphasising deep identification with the natural world around us. We are all, in Fox’s writing, part of nature’s unfolding reality and we must find ways of joining that unfolding. This “Self-realization” is central to the ideas of deep ecology, leading, in supporters’ eyes, to a greater compassion for other living beings through a sense of shared connection and identity. Desirable though that might be, it still bears traces, Kheel suggests, of the masculine heroic struggle, and also does little to address how we relate to individuals.

These four writers obviously have differing approaches. But there is an underlying metaphor of the hunt, which runs throughout. It is fairly explicit in Roosevelt, but it is there, argues Kheel, also in the search for forms of consciousness espoused by Fox. Most writers on nature and ethics do not address the crucial question of psychology - most notably the psychology of masculine identity. No matter that these four writers employ different metaphors - such as the land, or heightened consciousness - there remains, she suggests, a narrative of separation and transcendence, of masculine heroism, in which “nature philosophy is conceived of as a sportnature philosophers adjudicate the competing values of the natural world, declaring winners and losers” (p. 215).

The sporting metaphor does not allow us to learn to live with nature non-exploitatively: someone, as Kheel notes, will always be the loser. In many of the narratives she describes, it is the individual other-than-humans (or other humans, for that matter), who are the losers; including those whose lives are every day entwined with our own. It does not help our understanding of nature when nature theorists deride the needs and suffering of each and every cow or pig sent to slaughter. Nor (to turn the point around) does it help when animal rights spokespeople fail to address other issues, such as feminism or the needs of larger populations, as sometimes happens. All oppressions are interconnected - as Kheel quite rightly emphasises.

Embracing Ecofeminism

Given that she finds fault with the forms of abstract holism espoused by much nature writing, it is not surprising that Kheel turns elsewhere for inspiration - notably to ecofeminism. While ecofeminist writing has also tended to play down individual suffering, there are possibilities here to integrate individual and ecosystem needs. Ecofeminist writers have long been critical of the conservation movement, especially deep ecology, for its masculinist stance and its reliance on problematic notions of “rights.” While there are, inevitably, different forms of ecofeminism, it tends to adopt a holist philosophy, but one which - particularly in the arguments Kheel puts forward here - can move away from an ethics based on rationality.

One particular strength of ecofeminist writing is its insistence on understanding the complex intersections of different forms of domination - not only of nature, but also of various “others,” including women (e.g. Adams, 1999). Those interlocking systems of domination, in turn, are supported in part by unconscious processes, drawing on emotions. “One inference,” Kheel concludes, “is that logical argumentation with the perpetrators of abuse against nature may be of limited use. If hunting, animal experimentation, and other forms of

nature abuse stem from men's feelings of alienation and their unconscious attempt to (violently) forge connections, then these processes must be identified and challenge if violence is to be stopped" (p.211).

That recognition, that emotion is as important as reason, and that psychology matters alongside argument, is central. Feminists in general are well aware of the limitations of "rights" rhetoric, whether applied to people or other-than-humans. An important insight of feminist approaches is that we can begin to understand how aggressive practices toward nature (and others) have arisen, so that we might develop measures for protection. Here, Kheel draws on feminist work which emphasises developing an ethic of *care* and *relationality*. Care for others is emotional work - work which often falls to women in Western culture - and requires that we learn attentiveness to the needs of the other.

There are, of course, problems in developing an ethics based on care/relationality: it can sometimes seem to be essentialist, and it can overlook the fact that abuse can occur in apparently caring relationships. Kheel notes the need to move beyond any dyadic conception of care (A cares for B) and toward a more contextualised idea of caring, which permits us to talk about caring both for nature and for individual animals. When nature ethicists write about caring for nature, we should ask, she urges, just who is the recipient of care? Is it the generic wolf? Or do individual wolves matter too?

It is that concern to find ways of thinking that embrace both nature in general and specific beings in nature - individual animals - that I think is one of the strengths of this book. Kheel is insistent that we not forget the specific lives and experiences in the wild, but also the specific lives of those animals closer to us. Domestic animals are clearly disparaged in the writings of the four authors she discusses: to Rolston, for instance, cattle are only partly natural, "bred to be eaten" - as though that somehow justifies their maltreatment and moves them outside of an ethics of nature. Nature, Kheel reminds us, is not only "out there" - it is also in our homes, in the labs, in factory farms.

Nature is also us. Kheel's analysis of nature theorists makes plain their ambivalence. On the one hand, their writing recognises processes of evolution, which place humans into nature. On the other, the writers she discusses tend to place nature "out there," to be "experienced." While that schism is characteristic of writing about nature throughout the Western world, it is also exacerbated by a particular stance which eulogises "the wilderness." This belief in an abstraction called "wilderness," somehow pristine, is much stronger in North American environmentalism than in European. Here in Western Europe we don't have much "wilderness" left, having wrecked it centuries ago. But that means there will be a different "take" on nature writing in different parts of the Western world, which I would like to have seen addressed more explicitly.

Relatedly, hunting takes somewhat different forms here. In general, the ethos of hunting allows humans to move through and over lands, irrespective of who lives there already. As far as I can see from reading about American hunting, it tends to be a largely individual experience, epitomised by images of men stalking deer through woods or over the western plains. Here in England, the enclosure of fields after the Middle Ages meant barriers being erected - hedges and fences. But no problem - people simply bred horses capable of jumping them. This contributed to the practice of hunting with hounds, on horseback, which is the predominant way that "hunting" is understood here. Hunting in Britain has long been associated with particular rural ways of life, as well as having strong links to social class (see

Latimer and Birke, in press). It is undoubtedly gendered, but does not have the same heroic masculinity that “hunting” does in North America. Perhaps we could pursue these regional differences in our relationship to nature in more detail, and look at how masculinity plays out in different contexts. But Kheel’s central point, that we must find ways to foster care for both nature in general and individual beings in particular, cuts across any geographical boundaries. Wherever we are, we need to learn better ways to care for and about the earth and all its beings.

Personal Politics: Attending To How We Live

“The personal is political” was a mantra of the women’s liberation movement. It is also a strength of Kheel’s position that she writes not only about the abstraction called nature but also about the personal practices that a caring ethic might entail. Occasionally, it seemed to me to be wishful thinking - I am less sanguine about the possibility of effecting change by discouraging young boys from competitive sports, unless we completely isolate our children from the rest of our consumerist culture.

On the other hand, Kheel is clear about dietary choices. She does not seek to argue for veganism as such, nor that persuading people into eating plant food will change the world overnight. But she does emphasise that it is more consistent with the kind of caring ethic we must try to develop to begin to reverse the exploitation we have inherited. In this way, she examines the moral position implied by meat-eating (not surprisingly endorsed, implicitly or explicitly, by pro-hunting conservationists). Meat involves murder on an unimaginable scale; it involves enormous suffering of sentient animals. But it is rarely, if ever, addressed in the rhetoric of nature ethicists. Perhaps they should do so urgently, in the name of the environment they seek to protect: a recent report in the U.K. suggests that to avoid climate change people will “have to be rationed to four modest portions of meat a week” (Jowit, 2008). Even that, of course, is way too much from the point of view of the cattle/pigs/sheep and other beings whose bodies are thus “rationed” out.

Important though personal choices may be as part of developing care, we must also avoid going down the same path as the nature theorists she describes. We do not, Kheel emphasises, want merely to substitute yet another grand drama. One of the strengths of feminist critiques has been the disavowal of unitary narratives, in favour of looking at what has been called “situated knowledges” - the specificities of different beings in time, place and culture (Haraway, 1991; also see Haraway, 2007). Thus, Kheel draws on a metaphor of quilt-making: traditional quilts are a combination of many, eclectic, pieces, brought together in a whole. With regard to nature, she comments:

Whereas the holists in this study situate humans within grand scientific and evolutionary dramas, an ecofeminist holist philosophy seeks to piece together the truncated narratives that exist within patriarchal society and weave them into a tapestry of stories situated within particular social and historical contexts. And just as holistic healing seeks to facilitate the body’s natural ability to heal, so too I argue that ecofeminism can attempt to identify the conditions that facilitate the development and flourishing of appropriate care. (p.14)

There are many, individual, stories in those truncated narratives, and, she urges, we must listen - attentively - to those stories. We must learn to weave them together to create many-

coloured tapestries. Every mouse, every spider, every earthworm, has a story to tell. We should care enough to listen.

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Book Review: *Confronting Cruelty: Moral orthodoxy and the Challenge of the Animal Rights Movement*, Munro, Lyle (Brill Academic 2005)

Nik Taylor¹

According to Lyle Munro, the aim of *Confronting Cruelty* is to address ‘why and how do people campaign on behalf of a species which is not their own’ (and I will return to the inherent anthropocentrism of this question later in the review) utilizing both New Social Movement Theory (NSM) and Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT). Following Stephen Clark, Munro points out that animal protection movements often challenge the ‘moral orthodoxy’ of moderate concern for animals and thus the second aim of the book is to address how social movements achieve their objectives. The book focuses on both grassroots activists/activism and organizational advocacy in Australia, the UK and the US because, according to the author, the animal protection movement has historically been strongest there.

Chapter one locates the study theoretically as utilizing a ‘social construction of social problems/social movements approach’ as this, unlike approaches taken in the few existing studies of animal activists, resonates with the testimonies of the interviewees. Munro points out that he uses both RMT and NSM because the former prioritizes organizational aspects of SM’s and thus allows an analysis of strategy and the latter focuses on ideas and cultural processes facilitating an analysis of identity-oriented issues. Munro then turns to the perennial problems of defining the animal protection movement. He points out that this study includes animal protectionists from the entire spectrum of welfare, liberation and rights and whilst noble in his aims to represent all aspect of the animal protection movements, the author deals with internal differences simplistically. For example, he argues that liberationists espouse Singer’s philosophy whilst rights proponents are linked to Tom Regan’s philosophy. Not only does such an overly simplistic characterization allow no room for maneuver but no acknowledgment of ‘hybrid’ positions, nor any discussion of the current - posthumanist - debate regarding animal protection, is offered. This is an oversight as much of these modern debates are moving toward a position espoused by activists themselves rather than imposed by academics.

The remainder of chapter one forces the reader to confront a number of worrying assumptions about the role/place of animals which underpin this work. For example, on p. 23, Munro in discussing his use of the social constructionist perspective points out that ‘social problems are understood as being formed by the power of certain groups to define a particular issue as a problem that needs to be remedied’ and that all social problems are ‘socially constructed rather than being objective phenomena.’ This seems awfully close to suggesting that the ‘animal problem’ (i.e. the way human beings oppress animals as identified by activists) is not a problem until defined as such by a group with the power to do so. Whilst this may remain faithful to the sociology of social movements it certainly does not remain faithful to a significant body of literature which argues animal oppression is problematic per se or to the motivations espoused by animal activists elsewhere (e.g. see Mann, 2007). In fact, such a substitutive argument has echoes of the often vilified work of Keith Tester who, as Munro himself points out, ‘seriously misrepresented the movement as experienced by activists, advocates and supporters’ by arguing that the animal protection movement was symbolic only in that it was not about animals at all

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but, rather, was a project to classify and define humanity. The second discordant note in this chapter comes on p. 27 when Munro discusses the inherent paternalism of the animal protection movement. He believes that animal protection is 'necessarily paternalistic' as animal activists believe that paternalism is a lesser evil than moral apathy. To be paternalistic is to start from the assumption that the objects of protection/paternalism (e.g. animals, children) can be governed. Notwithstanding feminist objections to this characterization, it is an approach which seems to be based upon the very assumptions that animal activists themselves are trying to refute: that of human superiority (and right to govern) over animals. Finally, this chapter puts forth the idea that animal protection work is actually 'social problems work' wherein individuals concerned for animals aim to transform their individual concern into a public issue. This again has similarities to Tester in that the very things that animal activists do are explained away as a substitution for something else. This seems to be in contrast to the author's novel aim of addressing the 'how' of animal protection work. In effect Munro approaches the 'how' of animal protection work as a structural issue, i.e. how do organizations go about their work, and the 'why' of animal protection work as an individual issue, i.e. why do individuals go about animal protection work. It would have been far more faithful to activists everywhere to look at the 'how' and the 'why' of both organizations and individuals with an acknowledgment that individuals themselves constitute organisations. Taken together these three examples seem to offer an insight to the intellectual foundation for this work which is one still firmly steeped in modernist dualisms. As such it contributes more firmly to the 'us vs. them' explanations of human oppression of animals than it does to a deeper understanding of animal activists themselves.

Chapter three opens with a discussion of animals as social problems and briefly addresses the criminological literature and then moves into a discussion of campaigns against cruelty, which are categorized as a social problem. The sparsity of sociological work in these areas is lamented, yet no real effort is made to assess contributions from other disciplines which would certainly set the scene more effectively. The rest of the chapter, barring a brief discussion of animal exploitation as a social problem, is given over to a discussion of differences between approaches to animal protection, whether they be rights, abolition or 'fundamentalist extremists who use violence.' Again, the simplistic view taken offers little insight, for example, no analysis of 'fundamentalism' or of individual strategies (violent or otherwise) is undertaken. This leaves the reader feeling as though the author is deliberately fence-sitting (in the name of objectivity?) which feels somewhat misplaced in a study which claims to be investigating the 'how' and 'why' of animal activists.

Chapter four starts with a discussion of the motivations given by interviewees for joining animal protection movements and is divided into three areas – intellectual, emotional and practical. This is the first time that a significant amount of data from the study is presented (p. 68). This segues into a discussion on cruelty and speciesism which is not related back to the data gathered from participants until p. 77 when an 'index of speciesism' for the USA and Australia is presented. Whilst of interest, this is a little confusing to the reader as it is not altogether clear that this is drawn from the current study and it is even more unclear how this statistical data collection fits with the overall study aims (how and why people campaign for other species) and methods which at the outset were acknowledged as being based on an interview schedule. The next few pages involve a discussion of activist statements regarding issues such as caring for animals and

commitment to animals which is much closer to the stated aims of the book and presents an illuminating insight into activist motivations.

Chapter five moves to address vivisection, blood sports and factory farming as three main campaign areas of organizational activism. Accordingly, the data this chapter is based on is taken from interviews with those working amongst prominent animal protection agencies. Here organizational strategy, as opposed to individual motivation, is discussed. The chapter presents an interesting overview but does not, in my opinion, offer enough detailed analysis (or even presentation) of what the participants had to say. This holds true for chapter six as well. This is a shame as these two chapters represent the most interesting heart of the book. Had the author presented participants views more often and analyzed them in more depth these chapters would have been much more interesting and would have offered much more insight into the animal protection movement from the perspective of those within it. As it currently stands, however, it feels as though the participants' contribution (which is the most interesting and salient part of any book aiming to address why and how individuals campaign on behalf of species not their own) has been 'intellectualized away'. Chapter seven offers a discussion of emotion within the animal protection movement at an organizational level through the open manipulation of public emotion by organized animal activism and at the individual level by addressing the emotional labour of individual activists.

Ultimately, however, despite being an interesting read and one which raises some important issues - particularly when utilizing the rich data drawn from animal activists - this book does not do what it sets out to do, namely, to analyze why and how people campaign on behalf of a species not their own. Nor does the book have, again as it claims to have, enough focus on the individual activists who make up the movement. In adopting a structural approach to the analysis, (RMT and/or NSM) which sees the power of structures over, as opposed to being constituted by, individuals it was always bound to fail at this latter aim. Similarly one feels as though the 'challenge to moral orthodoxy' that the author claims the animal protection movement (or at least parts of it) offers is never really analyzed. Finally there is an unforgivable anthropocentrism and eurocentrism embedded in the book which it is hard to overlook. This ensures that the analysis throughout the book, as well as its starting point, actually contributes to the mainstream orthodoxy of dualist western thought which underpins current oppressions of nonhumans. For this alone those interested in animal protection issues per se will find the book a challenge to read.

Book Review: *Capers in the Churchyard: Animal Advocacy in the Age of Terror*, Hall, Lee (Nectar Bat Press 2006)

Sarat Colling¹

Lee Hall's *Capers in the Churchyard: Animal Advocacy in an Age of Terror*, is a manifesto written and published by Friends of Animals, an international group that claims to hold an abolitionist position in the animal rights movement's debates of "violence" versus nonviolence and welfare versus abolition. By critiquing the actions and philosophy of a number of activists, academics and organizations in the movement, *Capers in the Churchyard* aims to take an ethical stand for animal rights advocacy today.

The book investigates the emergence and patterns of domination and hierarchy throughout history and attempts to show that these characteristics are implicit in the welfare and "militant" factions (the latter which I argue in this paper, are rather extremists) of the animal rights movement. Hall feels that these two extremes are paradoxically similar with "militants" condoning the same "violence" found in the exploitation that welfarists facilitate, and like the welfarists, partaking in animal husbandry when they try to rescue animals, rather than not interfering.

The book's strongest feature is Hall's uncompromising position that animals have the right to not be interfered with; as she writes, all creatures have intrinsic value and should live free in their natural habitat. As she explains, the alternative of free-range farming is not an option because there would still be a dire environmental impact from the billions of animals that North Americans breed and consume for food, including the fact that wilderness and habitat would need to be pushed away to make room for the animals outside factory farms. And, this alternative would still rely on commoditizing the animals. Her position is that only a movement whose goal is the elimination of animal use will bring real change.

Hall focuses on a critique of "militant" advocacy and equates it with hierarchy, violence and utilitarianism. In activism "there should be no confusion between its end and means; it doesn't throw away its moral standards in the short term and claim that doing so will result in some later moral payoff" (19). She is adamant in her belief that "militant" activism turns people away from the cause.

One example that *Capers in the Churchyard* uses to illustrate this is when, after Bruce Friedrich of PETA told a conference audience that "blowing stuff up and smashing windows" is a "great way to bring about animal liberation," *The Austin Review* (a conservative journal) called for people to remove support from all animal advocacy groups if they had affiliations with radicals. Hall believes that a groundbreaking paradigm shift will come from nonviolent action: "When violence and destruction has, for century after century, been the tedious norm, non-violence is revolutionary" (122). Because food is central to society she explains that the nonviolent action needed must be focused on advocating a vegan diet. And since only 1% of the population is vegan "it's

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premature to say that economic pressure has failed, it has just begun” (126). Thus, reaching Hall’s envisioned just society is based on the premise that our culture will, over time, make a voluntary transition to veganism.

I identified four main critiques of *Capers in the Churchyard*:

- (1) a lack of analysis on the effect of direct action
- (2) an overly simplified anti-violence stance
- (3) misrepresentation of activists who take direct actions
- (4) philosophical contradictions in Hall’s envisioned non-hierarchical society

A Lack of Analysis On The Effect of Direct Action

Hall argues that “militancy” will scare the public, whose support is essential, away from animal rights. As people generally learn about animal rights through the media, this position assumes that “militant” groups like the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) create bad press.

The ALF formed as an underground group in the 1970’s taking direct actions to help animals. Usually, these actions involved liberating animals or obtaining important research documents from laboratories. A science writer named Deborah Blum stated that “those raids changed the way science is done” (Francione 24). One influential case was a break-in at the University of Pennsylvania in 1984 where the ALF removed approximately 45 hours from the Gennarelli lab of the researcher’s own videotapes capturing horrific experiments inflicted on brain-damaged baboons who were conscious and unanesthetized, and sometimes ridiculed by the researchers and their “guests.”

Much of the animal cruelty footage obtained by groups like People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has been recorded by undercover ALF activists and delivered to the organization in anonymous mailings. This was the case in the University of Pennsylvania raid where copies of the tapes were distributed to a number of recipients. PETA created a video that was shown throughout North America and Europe.

The Pennsylvania lab shut down in 1985 and although it reopened in 1993, clearly the ALF had done something useful in releasing the tapes. They made millions more people aware of the horrors that existed behind the laboratories closed doors, and as Gary Francione wrote, the case “served to distinguish the emerging animal rights movement from its welfarist predecessor” (24).

In an “unspoken but pragmatic utilization of each others’ efforts to maximize their own impact” (Jonas 268), the ALF has a mutually beneficial relationship with Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC). SHAC is an international campaign that began in 1999 with the goal of shutting down Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS): Europe’s largest contract animal-testing laboratory in which hundreds of animals are killed every day. Using controversial tactics of intimidations such as email and phone blockades and home demonstrations, SHAC warned that anyone associated with HLS was fair game.

Hall does not have anything good to say about SHAC. She accuses them of misleading the public by focusing on the “worst cases.” She writes: “...it is naïve to think of Huntington as a special case” (39) and that the SHAC campaign’s graphic material and wild tactics distract from meaningful discourse. And, “if the actions of the militants appear to work on some level, it’s neither the level of changing minds nor laws. Indeed, on both counts, they’ve triggered a fierce backlash” (Hall 121).

Unfortunately, “backlash” or retaliation from those who profit from exploiting others is an inevitable component of social revolution. In the case of SHAC, the strategy of focusing on one vivisection laboratory has proven itself to be effective. In September of 2005 the New York Stock Exchange delayed the company’s listing just an hour before it had been scheduled to take effect; the company’s losses as a result of the campaign were unprecedented. SHAC has mobilized activists on a global scale and inspired nonviolent actions.

In Chapter Ten, “Draconian Activism,” Hall goes so far as to compare the rescue actions of animal rights activists to Hitler’s vision of rescuing Germany. She writes: “the view that rescue justifies all forms of harm proved itself a bankrupt philosophy then, and so it is today” (125). This is a truly unfortunate comparison since the former (animal activists) act to defend sentient beings from unthinkable cruelty while the latter (Hitler) inflicted it. If anyone, activists should be compared to the brave resisters who fought against the German occupation and the Nazis.

Further, Hall seems to believe that rescuing animals is done as a personal impulse, having no impact on, and failing to challenge the system of animal exploitation (42). However, taking into account the amount of planning needed to successfully carry out rescues, and the resulting education from these, this is far from the truth.

Clearly the media resulting from direct action plays an important role in raising awareness about animal exploitation. In the case of Friedrich’s remark that “blowing stuff up and smashing windows” is a “great way to bring about animal liberation,” this provided the public with some powerful arguments. As Friedrich wrote:

I’ve been interviewed repeatedly regarding my July 2001 statements. In every instance, I was able to describe the awful abuse of animals involved in the farmed animal and vivisection industries...I was able to paint a vivid picture, pointing out that if these are human beings and laboratories, slaughterhouses, or factory farms, everyone would support burning down the implements of their torture. In fact, if these were dogs and cats, most of the general public would be supportive of such actions. These arguments resonate with people (Friedrich 258).

“If rescue from the cage, while benign, falls short of the true challenge to the system”

asks Hall, “then how much more likely is it that insults and threats and violence will fail entirely?”

The first premise is false; the ALF does challenge the system, not only in risking their freedom to help animals but also by educating the public. And the SHAC campaign has proven highly successful showing that tactics that publicize and shame people about the violent acts they commit on a daily basis is enough for investors to de-invest, and for HLS to land on the New York Stock Exchange pink sheets. But what about the use of “violence” in the movement?

Overly Simplified Anti-Violence Position

Hall not only states that “militancy” will scare the general public away from animal rights, but that it perpetuates a cycle of violence. In an overly simplified dichotomy of violence versus pacifism, she claims that violence can only beget violence and seems to assume that “militancy” is always violent. While I would agree that militancy, which stems from the word military, fosters violence (for the only institutions with militaries are governments), being extreme as Martin L. King Jr. was, is not. King stated, “So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists will we be? Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice?”

In these extremely violent times toward nonhuman animals we do need to be extreme, but extreme with love and nonviolence. The ALF is just that extremist, opposed to violence against any living being. Instead of waiting while our fellow living beings are tortured in front of our faces, the ALF risk their freedom to stand in the way of torture and liberate those who are harmed. They use nonviolent direct action to stop the true violence of treating living beings as mere property. No one has ever been harmed by the ALF, and further, their guidelines are against it.

The book offers no clear attempt to define violence, which would have been useful. Violence is the harming of one’s life which makes it holistically, emotionally, and physically worse. If, upon hearing a human child in the next apartment being beaten to death, one breaks down the door and rescues the child, this is not violence. The question is whether animal rights activists could justify not running into the apartment to save a nonhuman animal as they would for a human child. It would be speciest to say that the “violence” of property destruction is justifiable to defend human life but not nonhuman animal life. From an anti-speciest viewpoint, as Hall claims to hold, if one would save the child then similarly one would rescue any animal in distress, and this should hold equal whether they are in an apartment, factory farm or vivisection laboratory. Therefore, the ALF’s rescue actions which involve property destruction, from a non-speciest standpoint are always justified.

Those who take the position that nonviolent property destruction is more than justifiable, such as philosopher Steve Best (who Hall critiques throughout the book for promoting militancy), extend the notion of liberation to freedom from being property, enslaved, and

imprisoned. Comparing the ALF to the Jewish Resistance and the Underground Railroad, Best writes:

On the grounds that animals have rights and these rights trump property rights, I argue that the ALF are not the terrorists that are demonized by animal exploitation industries, the state, and mass media, but rather counter-terrorists and the newest form of freedom fighters. Like the Nazi resistance movement, they destroy equipment used to torture and kill; like the Underground Railroad, they rescue slaves and transport them to freedom. Like any current human rights struggle, they seek peace and justice.

If Hall is opposed to property destruction proclaiming it as violence, one must assume that Hall is opposed to the tactics that have been key in advancing so many social justice movements. This nonviolent direct action cannot be argued as violent, but ethical and just.

Further, Hall writes that society has always been violent and it is nonviolence that is revolutionary. Yet, whether it be the massive peace protests of the 60's during the Vietnam War, Gandhi's quest for independence in India, or the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., liberation movements have always had strong peaceful factions that are widely accepted. "Violence" in self defense, on the other hand, has been much less accepted by the mainstream. Going beyond the ALF's nonviolent property destruction to armed struggle, which to date only a few have and do advocate, Malcolm X explains beautifully about the difference between violence and armed struggle: "It doesn't mean that I advocate violence, but at the same time, I am not against using violence in self-defense. I don't call it violence when it's self-defense, I call it intelligence."

Misrepresentation Of Activists Who Take Direct Actions

Hall claims that those drawn to "militant" activism are looking for "community or catharsis" (28) and generalizes that the followers of Best are "mostly young and untutored in political history (92)" using the plight of animals to forge identities. In Chapter Six: "The Activist as Superhero" she observes that young activists find a cultural niche in a militant scene. In referring to them as listening to "metal" (Hall 64) in order to escape the banalities of home life, it must be assumed she means punk rock, hardcore, emo, and other types of music that makes people jump around and is loud as well.

Today vegetarianism and veganism are staples in modern punk and hardcore in a number of circles; many focus on the importance of food production, often promoting boycotts through DIY fanzines. For punks, "nowhere is the philosophy of preserving and improving the environment more evident than in discourse on food and diet" (O'Hara 131/132). As the Scottish band Oi Polloi said: "Punk is about freedom for people and animals too. Punk is against discrimination in the forms of sexism and racism and also speciesism. 'Man' has no right to abuse and inflict pain and misery on other living

creatures who have as much right to freedom as we (134).”

Sure, there will be a few who use animal rights as an excuse for anti-social behaviour, but these are far outweighed by the responsible and loving extremists. No activist really wants to use tactics that risk their being indicted under laws such as the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) passed in 2006 that targets underground and aboveground animal rights advocates. In a book about animal rights in the “Age of Terror” it was surprising to see no mention of this act. Unfortunately, when the ALF interferes with profits of corporations—corporations that in fact are also harming the Earth and humans- they, like many peacemakers of the past, are deemed terrorists.

Hall asks “[who] could rely on them [the extremists] to act with the respect and integrity necessary to lead the expansion of humanities moral community” (29)? While I do not think leading the expansion of humanity’s moral community should rest solely on one faction’s shoulders, there is no reason to believe that any other faction would be more effective than the extremists.

Philosophical Contradictions In Hall’s Envisioned Non-hierarchical Society

Hall claims to hold an anti-hierarchical and anti-domination position and here there is inconsistency in the vegan utopia. Because unless Hall could remove the police and lawmakers, it can be assumed that the society she envisions includes enforcement of peace by state authority which is yet another form of domination.

Many extreme animal rights activists are anarchists who, while holding various visions of an ideal society, all hold that the State, which is rooted in vertical hierarchical structures of authority, must be abolished. As an example of how society could look, Hall writes that “within the co-operative movement many residences and businesses employ non-hierarchical models, and even successfully apply them to complex financial decisions.” However, on a large scale the monetary and business model still allows for the exploitation that has been implicit since the state’s conception.

In conclusion, *Capers in the Churchyard* attempts to take a moral stance against “violence” in the animal rights movement, claiming that domination and hierarchy are implicit in the welfare and “militant” factions. But those whom the book argues are “violent” are, rather, loving extremists.

Property destruction in order to liberate animals from torture and from being killed is justifiable, desirable and necessary. Contrary to creating violence, it prevents it. The nonviolence stance that Hall presents is overly simplistic and does not address the distinction between extremists liberating animals and the systematically permitted violence of the state. Further, unless Hall follows anarchist principles and does not support authority to enforce peace, her anti-hierarchical position is flawed. Pacifism without anarchism is contradictory.

Capers in the Churchyard advocates veganism as the path to transform society, yet offers

no proof that a vegan utopia will come solely by boycotting animal products. The remaining 99% of the population will not voluntarily transition to a vegan diet if only asked nicely. Nor will the multi-billion dollar corporations torturing and killing nonhumans for profit simply walk away from their business. And while I agree with Hall's sentiment that more focus on veganism is essential—she provides a sound critique of free-range farming and some welfarism can do more harm than good—no respectable abolitionist will oppose all welfare reforms. If opportunities for incremental steps arise, as long as they do not compromise the statutes of nonhuman animals as rights holders, they must be implemented.

Finally, the book offers an unfair portrayal of the intelligent and dedicated activists who risk their freedom to help others. Social justice history has shown extreme nonviolent direct action leads to liberation. For those interested in critiques for and against the ALF, and the history and current state of extremists in the movement, I recommend the anthology *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflection on the Liberation of Animals* which looks at extreme animal rights activism from a diversity of perspectives.

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Book Review: *Igniting a Revolution: Voices in Defense of the Earth*, Best, Steven, and Nocella, Anthony J., II, ed. (AK Press 2006)

Sarat Colling¹

Igniting a Revolution is a contemporary anthology that argues for a new wave in the history of environmentalism that its editors Steven Best and Anthony J. Nocella, II claim as revolutionary environmentalism: a collective movement that seeks total liberation by building expansive alliance networks and understanding between all radical social struggles. The book is both a reflection of the new multi-issue-alliance-based politics that emerged during the 1990's and a call and catalyst for their intensification. It provides a platform for revolutionary voices from all different camps—Black liberationists, Native Americans, eco-feminists, queers, people with disabilities, animal liberationists, anarchists and many more. Offering academic analyses and activists' accounts in over 40 diverse essays, *Igniting a Revolution* roots out and explores solutions to today's global environmental crises.

As a grassroots collaboration, *Igniting a Revolution* is appropriately published by AK Press, a collectively owned and independent book publisher and distributor. Books and other media distributed by AK press are published by independent presses rather than corporate giants. Their goal is not to make a profit but rather to supply radical information to as many people as possible. This is reflected in the Friends of AK Press program where for \$25 a month members regularly receive a package filled with books, videos and CDs. Likewise, the objective of *Igniting a Revolution* is to provide radical ideas to a large audience and to give support to those in the movements with profits going to political prisoners and prisoners of war defense committees as well as aboveground environmental and animal liberationist organizations that support revolutionary environmentalism.

The book is organized into several sections that explore issues the editors feel are essential to the study of revolutionary environmentalism. These include the topics of environmental history, sustainability and consumption, religion and spirituality, critiques of civilization, government repression, direct action and militancy, social movements and alliance politics. Interwoven with each section are collections of somber and beautiful poetry by renowned activists such as political prisoner Marilyn Buck, which make a powerful contribution to the book's holistic compilation.

In their introduction, Nocella and Best provide a useful overview of the western environmental movement starting from its conception in the early 19th century, through the modern environmentalism of the 1960's to the emergence of revolutionary environmentalism in the 1990's. They lay out the framework of revolutionary environmentalism. A collective multi-issue movement, its support of illegal tactics ranging from economic sabotage to guerrilla warfare is what sets revolutionary environmentalism apart from other approaches. While the authors may not support such tactics as a first choice, they recognize that in the reality of today's global ecological

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crises “the violent methods of resistance are often appropriate against fascist regimes and right-wing dictatorships” (Best and Nocella 20).

Throughout *Igniting a Revolution* its contributors emphasize the connection between deep ecology, social ecology, animal liberation and revolutionary action. All of the authors reject environmental activism that views nature as a resource to be maintained and fails to see it as intrinsically valuable. With environmental destruction rapidly escalating, extreme approaches that accept “no compromise” are often viewed as most effective. While the essays in this book highlight a variety of opinions and objectives, the authors appreciate that the current capitalist system is inherently unsustainable and unjust and their essays favor an alternative of decentralized and autonomous communities guided by ecological and anarchist principles.

Compiled during an era of ecological devastation and intense repression from the industrial state complex, many of the book’s contributors now sit imprisoned for their actions defending the Earth. Contributions from current and former political prisoners like Free, Critter, Ashanti Alston and Josh Harper, to name a few, outweigh any book I have seen. And their stories are some of the most endearing. As Bron Taylor, author of the foreword writes, “with a little imagination, this book may provide the next best thing to joining radical activists in the trees, urban neighborhoods, prisons or what Edward Abbey called “nightwork”—that is, sabotage under the cover of darkness” (3).

One of my favorite essays is “Armed Struggle, Guerilla Warfare, and the Social Movement Influences on Direct Action,” written by past political prisoner Ann Hansen that tells the story of the Canadian guerilla group that bombed power sources and pornography stores in the 1980’s. While groups like Direct Action intersected concerns such as feminism and ecology, it wasn’t until the 1990’s with the emergence of groups such as the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) who actively sought to bridge alliances with other movements that revolutionary environmentalism really came into its own. Crossing gender, class and species lines, the ELF encouraged debate about the need for the liberation of people, animals and Earth and called for solidarity with struggles in developing countries.

One great example that *Igniting a Revolution* provides of alliance building is the partnership between the ELF and ALF. These sister groups often work together on behalf of animals and the Earth. The largest ELF action to date (the igniting of the Vail Colorado ski resort that cost \$14,000,000 in damages (Molland 57)), was aimed at preventing the destruction of sensitive lynx habitat and was fueled in part by outrage at the fur industry that cares “only about fur equality and maximum ‘production’ and death” (Becker 81). Expanding the alliance further, Rod Coronado (whose ALF activism is linked with his identity as an indigenous North American) explains that “the fur trade today is the modern incarnation of those very same people who murdered and destroyed my people and my homelands” (Schnurer 357).

Throughout the book, the writers often use themselves as points of reference in their own understanding of revolution. In his article “Mojo Workin’” political prisoner Ashanti

Alston of the Black Liberation Army writes movingly of his experience crossing the lines of animal liberation and Black liberation. While Alston had “never really thought about [animal liberation] in such a way against the background of my own people's struggle,” he resonated with the “vision that expanded ones understanding of the kind of world we wanted to create out of this madness. It was a call to the simplicity of indigenous folks world view. Yet, it is almost the direct outgrowth of the insanity of this over technologically developed capitalist systems drive to manufacture all forms of life as it deemed profitable” (224).

Articles such as Robert Jensen’s “What is a Morally Defensible Level of Consumption?” explores questions that those living in a capitalist system are inclined to ask, and provides useful philosophy for daily living. Other articles analyze past social justice movements using biographies or communiqués to better understand their role in society.

Maxwell Schnurer’s article—They Took Ulrike Meinhof’s Brain: A Comparative Study of the Causes of and Justifications for Militant Direct Action—looks at the case of the Red Army Faction’s Ulrike Meinhof, a woman reporter-turned-urban guerilla whose brain was studied for 30 years in order for scientists to find biological justification for the “social pathology” of an armed extremists (348). Likewise, often labeled as “crazy terrorists,” Schnurer explains how today’s misunderstood radicals are also deemed as pathological. His work helps to counteract the terrorist rhetoric from state officials and corporate media.

Igniting a Revolution challenges the reader to go further. What actions are most effective to bring fundamental change? Some stress the need for radicals to build a strong vision to articulate to society. Mark Somma writes that “while tactics such as direct action and ecotage may be “radical,” they are not revolutionary because they cannot by themselves bring about a qualitatively new social system. Such transformation requires a *new social movement* and a *positive vision of a new society*” (38). Former ELF press officer Leslie James Pickering now focuses on building a revolutionary community that educates the public, and Adam Weissman writes in “The Revolution of Everyday Life,” “...if revolutionary environmentalists ever hope to radically alter human society, we must do more than simply resist ecological destruction—we must demonstrate new and better ways to survive and thrive, as we actively begin to create a new and better world” (127).

While the revolutionary environmental movement has not been articulated in such a way to educate the general public, *Igniting a Revolution* provides a perfect starting point for this dialogue. Yet, while the book has a lot to teach, looking around today’s predominantly mass-consumer, ipod-generation, I must ask, “Who’s to listen?”

Things are further complicated with the advent of the internet, evolution in different technologies and formidable state powers. A lot has changed since the inception of groups like Direct Action and the Red Army Faction. Do the tactics espoused by revolutionary environmentalism stand a chance in today’s Orwellian society? Conversely, activist methods can be adjusted to fit the culture around them. “The tools of resistance are changing fast, with *hacktivism* and other technological methods becoming more

frequent in undermining corporatism and government policy within the 21st century” (Garland 69).

A collection of Earth Liberation Front communiqués are found at the end of the anthology. Following in the footsteps of all those who have acted on a natural intuition to defend the Earth, the ELF is one group whose actions reflect the kind that must escalate against the destructive forces of capitalism. One ELF communiqué states: “Welcome to the struggle of all species to be free. We are the burning rage of a dying planet.”

With its amazing bridge-building approach, fascinating academic as well as activist voices and articulation of a multi-issue global movement, *Igniting a Revolution* is a one of a kind work in its field. The book explores what it means to be a revolutionary, the emerging manifestations of revolutionary environmentalism and the future potential. The authors’ consensus seems to be that a diversity of tactics are necessary: education to foster understanding, building organic communities and engaging in protest and extreme activism which for some inevitably include armed struggle. With daunting obstacles ahead, only time will tell if revolutionary environmentalism will succeed. Still, it is the most promising and increasingly necessary progressive social movement in history.

In stressing the need for solidarity, strategic direct action and encouraging a powerful eco-resistance, *Igniting a Revolution* fuels the fire. Well deserving of a place in every progressive library and social justice classroom, and fittingly published by the radical publisher AK Press, *Igniting a Revolution* is an exceptional contribution to environmental studies, the pursuit of animal liberation and anarchist literature.