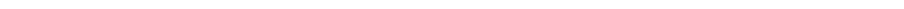




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THE INSTITUTE FOR CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES (ICAS) REPORT - OCTOBER 2009

The idea of a Critical Animal Studies (CAS) is to counter the pervasive reticence of the academy generally, and mainstream animal studies in particular, to challenge the dominant relationships between human and other animals in political and normative terms through theoretical and activist means. We wish to underline the contemporary urgency of this project (to re-politicise animal studies) with reference to the twin crises of species genocide (and extinction) and global climate change. We support an ethic of abolition in regard to human violence against other animals.

CAS is committed to producing and publishing literature that consolidates the body of academic research around intersectionality, and challenges the domestication of critical thought in the contemporary academy. Part of this project necessarily involves attempts to institutionalise dialogic interaction across the scholar/activist and theory/practice divide, which challenges systems and institutions of domination and industrial complexes. CAS also works to collaboratively embed shared concerns with numerous other strands of thought including, but by no means limited to critical posthumanism, anarchism, ecofeminism, anti-racism, queer studies, disability studies, and political economy. CAS collaboration is the academic act of working together, which activists conduct through solidarity, alliance politics, and bridge building. CAS advocates for change within higher education in regard to the role the academy plays in fostering speciesist discourses and practices such as vivisection and dissection. Significantly, any group that self-consciously labels itself 'critical' must also keep itself open to constructive self-critique and reflexivity. The point is not to become the self-ghettoized superego of animal studies but to engage constructively and critically with the aims and vision of animal studies as a whole.

We are pleased to be able to report in this issue of the *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* (JCAS) several significant developments at the Institute for Critical Animal Studies (ICAS) in recent months. These augment our vision for ICAS in important ways. Some of

the positive developments to report centre on our own Journal for Critical Animal Studies (JCAS). Much credit is due to the new editor-in-chief Richard White (Sheffield Hallam University, UK) for the way in which he has professionally knocked the journal into shape. Elsewhere, JCAS now has a renewed and impressively large list of international editorial board members, and has expanded its capacity in film and book reviews. There are plans to move to a standard four issues per year and potentially to secure funds for a hard copy version. Please note that we now have an ISSN for JCAS. This is an excellent development, and one which will be crucial for promoting the journal to new audiences, not least as it enables JCAS to be formally listed in libraries and other mainstream resource centres.

Credit for many of the other developments in ICAS must go to Anthony J. Nocella II. Firstly his work has led to ICAS being awarded 501c3 non-profit organization status ensuring under US law that donations are tax exempt. Secondly he has secured a CAS book series with the publisher Rodopi, including the formation of an international interdisciplinary editorial board for the series. Helena Pedersen (Malmö University, Sweden); and Vasile Stanescu (Stanford University, USA) have taken a lead here as Senior Editors.

Thirdly there has been an impressive overhaul of the ICAS web presence. The main site remains at <http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/>. There is an ICAS blog (<http://libnow.org/>) which is headed by Sarat Colling (the Editor and Founder of Political Media Review). Whilst the journal web-site is available here <http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/JCAS/current.htm> also there is an active ICAS present on Facebook with a group and blogger page, and MySpace. Other developments include the launch of a CAS film series at Brock University, Canada.

Two ICAS conferences shall take place in 2010 – including the first to happen outside North America (Liverpool, UK April 23rd), with the location/venue of the North American conference TBC. The groundbreaking Minding Animals conference which took place in Newcastle, Australia during July 2009 was attended by several CAS

scholars (for example Carol Gigliotti, Richard Twine, Vasile Stanescu & Sherryl Vint) and provided an unprecedented opportunity for networking, discussion and the overconsumption of vegan food. A second Minding Animals conference will take place in Europe in the summer of 2012. So, you have time to both think up panels, and to start saving! CAS is growing on an international level beyond ICAS with working groups, student organizations, conferences, film and lectures series at other universities. At SUNY Cortland, USA in the Spring of 2010 there will be a CAS Lecture Series.

Finally, we have also introduced a new membership scheme for ICAS. A nominal donation of \$20 will allow you voting rights at the annual election of the 'Board of Directors', and a say in the future direction of ICAS. Donations will be used for maintaining costs of outreach material, hosting conferences and other events, websites, listserves, keeping the *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* free, and publishing other important CAS publications. Please join up by following the instructions found here: www.criticalanimalstudies.org/?page_id=331

There are numerous other ways to get actively involved with the Institute and critical animal studies. ICAS has compiled a very useful '20 ways to help ICAS' on the blog. We are constantly on the lookout for new publicity ideas, sources of funding, ideas for potential initiatives, assistance with our web-site and with our newsletter. To find out more about CAS philosophy please visit the theoretical principles on the 'About' page of the ICAS website.

- **ICAS Board of Directors**

EDITORIAL

This issue of the *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* (JCAS) covers an impressively broad range of themes and subjects, all of which are firmly positioned within the burgeoning literature focused in and around critical animal studies. Following on from the ICAS Report, I will use this space to offer a brief insight into the central topics that form the individual focus of the essays, book reviews and film reviews.

In the opening essay, "The Animal Voice behind the Animal Fable", Naama Harel addresses the representation of nonhuman animals in popular fables. In the discussion that follows, Naama draws on a wide range of literature to demonstrate exactly how and in what ways these representations offer authentic and critical insights centred around animal behavior and the (negotiated, problematic) relationship between humans and other animals. Significantly, this line of argument runs firmly against the current grain of thinking which dismisses the dominant representations of animals in animal fables, by condemning them as yet another form of exploitation by humans. To support her argument Naama weaves into her discussion a range of examples which includes reference to Aesop's fables and Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The result is an extremely engaging and persuasive series of arguments, which ultimately end with the conclusion that fables can - and do - encourage multilevel representations of other animals; representations that can be used to understand them, without nullifying them.

Zipporah Weisberg's essay, "The Broken Promises of Monsters: Haraway, Animals and the Humanist Legacy", is highly impressive on many levels. Ambitious in scope and content, the essay explores the arguments that are made by Donna Haraway, a leading feminist theorist. In particular, the essay concentrates on Haraway's contribution to the depoliticized approach that characterizes much of the mainstream animal studies literature. Zipporah builds an emotive yet clear-sighted essay which embraces a wide range of violent practices against animals including animal experimentation, genetic engineering, dog breeding and training, killing animals for food, and hunting. Zipporah's contextualisation of these practices draws on a range of dominant discourses, including

(but not limited to) the sado-humanist project of domination, anthropocentrism, and Levinasian ethics. This in turn leads to an excellent and important discussion focused on the ethico-political implications of the development of OncoMouse™. The central conclusion - which seeks to reconcile the discussion at hand with the broader implications for Animal Studies - is devastatingly simple and straightforward.

"The Great Unity: Daoism, Nonhuman Animals, and Human Ethics" serves as an excellent introduction to the many animal-friendly teachings that lie at the heart of Daoism. In her essay, Lisa Kemmerer develops an accessible and engaging discussion which considers that the treatment of animals (and nature) is not merely of passing interest to Daoist teaching on philosophy and morality, but fundamental to it. Crucially, the relationship between humans and other animals should not be perceived as hierarchical and exploitative (as it has been in much of the mainstream teaching steeped in the Judeo-Christian tradition). Rather the relationship is much more equitable and reciprocal, as evidenced for example in the way nonhuman animals can teach human animals important things about themselves (*jian*). Moreover, all life is subject to the same wider and timeless forces that culminate in the rhythms of life that are part of a much greater (eternal) transformation. Ultimately Daoist teachings exemplify the highest universalistic ethics: do not kill or harm any living being. This ethic has significant implications for the way (most) people live their lives today, and with respect to the way they (ab)use other animals in particular. Lisa's essay ends on a passionate and rational appeal for animal activists to look more deeply into their religious traditions to discover animal friendly teachings, and use this to draw strength, direction and inspiration from.

This JCAS issue also includes the publication of an extended essay by David Sztybel, titled: "Normative Sociology: the Intuitionist Crisis and Animals as Absent Referents". This essay is the first of two parts focused on animals and normative sociology. The decision to formally include one *extended* essay (up to 15,000 words) per issue is, I believe, a constructive and important one, not least in that it permits a more full-blooded consideration of relevant and important issues. At the heart of David's first essay is the challenge to distinguish between positive normative sociology and negative normative

sociology, with the wider aim of harnessing a normative sociology. Responding to this, David constructs a series of wonderfully clear, critical and persuasive lines of argument that address an extremely wide and broad literature. The essay critiques a range of influential approaches (such as ethical relevatism, critical theory, discourse ethics, structural-functionalism, and Marxism) and individuals (including Horkheimer, Comte, Durkheim, Mead, Marcuse, Parsons, Marx, Gramsci, Adorno, Harbermas, and Nibert). The result is an impressively robust sociological foundation from which David will then build on in the next issue of JCAS.

Following the extended essay, we are pleased to be able to publish Lisa Kemmerer's thoughtful and considered book review of "Aftershock: Confronting Trauma in a Violent World: A Guide for Activists and their Allies" by Pattrice Jones, published in 2007. Sarat Colling and Anthony Nocella II review the activist film "Behind the Mask" (2006), which includes a discussion centred on the ways in which this film effectively challenges and undermines the popular public perception that those who take direct action to help animals are terrorists. Finally, Nicole Pallotta reviews the documentary film "Winged Migration" (2001). In her review, Nicole notes that while she is not without reservations about the execution of the film, the filmmakers' overarching goal (not least in transforming birds from objects into *subjects*) is admirable, and important.

I hope that you will get a great deal from engaging with the themes, arguments, and conclusions that are proposed in this issue, and that you can meaningfully use this information to help make an effective, positive and lasting difference.

- **Dr. Richard J White, Editor-in-Chief**

ESSAYS

The Animal Voice Behind the Animal Fable

Naama Harel¹

Introduction

It seems that the most common representation of nonhuman animals in literature is found in fables. Moreover, the term "fable" has often been understood as "animal story" (Brown 1997, 123). When asking for familiar fables, the first ones that may come to mind are animal fables, such as "The Ant and the Grasshopper" or "The Tortoise and the Hare". But do animal fables actually represent nonhuman animals? Do they have any relevance to nonhuman animal experience? In reality, grasshoppers do not play the violin and hares do not challenge tortoises. It seems that the only authentic details about the nonhuman animals in fables are easily perceived and very basic: some physical characteristics, such as their appearance and size, and a few of their ecological characteristics, such as their status in the food chain. However these descriptions are trivial – they do not give the readers any new insight about nonhuman animals. One does not need to read animal fables in order to learn that tortoises are slow walkers or that lions are predators.

Fable is defined as a short allegoric story, which hold a lesson (Baldick 1996, 80). Readers are supposed to learn the lesson, which is relevant to their own life, from the situation that is described in the fable. Although most animal fables hold positive educational messages (not to be lazy, not to be arrogant etc.) it seems that the message regarding the treatment towards nonhuman animals is quite negative – they are mere means to an end. Unlike the positive explicit messages, the anti-educational messages, regarding our treatment towards nonhuman animals, are not explicit, but they also take place in the act of reading and interpreting the fable.

¹ Naama Harel has recently completed her PhD at the department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature, University of Haifa, Israel. Her doctoral dissertation analyzed nonhuman animal representations in Franz Kafka's oeuvre. Her published articles critically examine the representation of animals in literature, dealing with anthropomorphism, interspecific liminality, hybridity, metamorphosis literature, and other relevant issues. Naama is also an animal rights activist, and her examination of nonhuman representation in literature is conducted from a critical animal rights viewpoint. Contact: rl.naama@gmail.com

Therefore a widespread observation in animal studies criticism is that animal fables exclude nonhuman animals; that the animal characters have become "absent referents", which is – in Carol Adams terms – anything whose existence is transmuted into a metaphor for human existence (Adams 1999, 42). Erica Fudge, one of the few literary scholars who explore animal fiction from an animal rightist point of view, does not see any potential for interest in animal fables (Fudge 2002, 71-2). Similarly John Simons writes in his book about *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*:

The role of animals in the fable is almost irrelevant. They are merely vehicles for the human and are not, in any way, presented as having physical or psychological existence in their own right [...] The fable has little to offer and can teach us nothing about the deeper relationships between the human and the non-human. (Simons 2002, 119)

Harriett Ritvo, a historian who examines the relation between humans and nonhuman animals, claims that "animal fable has little connection to real creatures" (Ritvo 1987, 4), and Nicolas Howe is even more censorious – he considers the use of nonhuman animals in fables as another form of their exploitation by humans:

That we burden animals by asking them to teach us how to behave like human beings seems no more than yet another way of exploiting them. We force animals to do physical labor, we raise them under cruel conditions, we mistreat them in all sorts of ways, and then we domesticate them most fully by moralizing them. Far better, it would seem, to read accounts by naturalists who observe animals in their own environments to learn about the natural world, who resist treating animals as figures to be written into beast fables to confirm our moral categories. (Howe 1999, 231)

Contrary to these views, I would like to claim that animal fables do not necessarily exclude the nonhuman animals and at least some of them describe some authentic nonhuman animal behavior or enable critical view regarding human treatment towards other animals. The instrumental treatment towards nonhuman animals in fables is not obliged, as the traditional reading in fables, which excludes the nonhuman protagonists, is not the exclusive reading. I would like to present two alternative reading strategies in animal fables, which do not exclude the nonhuman animals. These strategies enable us to

read at least some fables without ignoring the existence and experience of nonhuman animals. The first strategy is focusing on the literal level of the fable and the second is extending the lesson and applying it not only on relationships within the human community but also on our relations with other animals. Applying these strategies on at least some fables offers us a new perspective on the nonhuman animal condition as well as on the relationship between humans and other animals.

The First Reading Strategy: Focusing the Literal Level of the Fable

Each fable holds two levels – literal and allegorical. Nonhuman animals function often as the protagonists of the fable literal level, which is the actual plot of the fable, but they are excluded from the allegorical level, which is considered as the significance of the fable and traditionally deals with humans exclusively. By reading fables we tend to ignore its literal level, subordinating it entirely to the allegorical level. However, a common claim among allegory theorists is that allegories, like other literary texts, have also an independent literal level, which is not to be reduced to the allegorical level. William Empson claimed that one of the allegory functions is to let the reader feel that the work has two distinctive levels, which interlaced one another (Empson 1961, 140). Angus Fletcher argued in his seminal work that the literal level of the allegory can be free from the allegorical intention and the reader can stop there (Fletcher 1993, 317).

Following the claims of Empson and Fletcher regarding the autonomic status of the literal level in allegories, and as fable is an allegorical text (actually, it is sometimes considered as the prototype for allegorical text), I would like to suggest a reading in animal fables that focus on its literal level. To illustrate this option I would like to deal with Aesop's famous fable "The Country Mouse and the City Mouse" (Aesop 1941, 131). In this well known fable, a city mouse invites a country mouse to join him in the city for a feast. They sneak into a house and are about to taste some homey delicacies; alas, suddenly the door opens and a human being comes in. The country mouse is terrified and declares that he prefers his poor but peaceful hole. Unlike many other nonhuman animals protagonists in

fables the mice in this fable behave quite authentically; they seek food and cooperate with members of their species and fear humans, as real mice do. Additionally, while in most human cultures mice are considered as vermin, "The Country Mouse and the City Mouse" significantly demonstrates a different attitude. It describes the interaction between the humans and the mice from the mice's perspective. The mice are the characterized figures in the fable. They start and conclude it, and their feelings and thoughts are described as well. The man who enters the room is described from their point of view – as an intimidating intrusion on their feast. Readers can definitely sympathize with the mice, and even learn a thing or two about their real lives and experiences. All this might help them to be more compassionate toward such unexpected visitors in the real life.

Another example is Aesop's "Jupiter and the Ass" (Aesop 1941, 69). In this fable, an ass, which is exploited by a gardener and is suffering from the heavy load, asks Jupiter's permission to work for a neighbor potter. Jupiter grants his request, but after a short while the ass finds out that the potter burdens him with even heavier loads. He prays again, asking to leave the potter and to become a tanner's servant. Jupiter grants, but soon the ass realizes that once again the change is for the worse: besides being hard worked, he is also often cruelly treated. In addition, the poor ass understands that his new master would not spare his skin. Although asses do not pray, realistic aspects in this fable are easily revealed: asses are indeed used by humans, carrying heavy loads, and they suffer as a result. The fable provides us with an educational catalog of beasts of burden's suffering, so to speak. Furthermore, reading a detailed report about the well-known reality of ass' exploitation from the unexpected perspective of the ass himself encourages us to sympathize with the ass in the fable; this, in turn, might lead to sympathy for concrete asses in the real world.

Following these readings, a question arises: what makes the nonhuman animal insignificant in some fables and significant in others? The answer is not just a matter of the interpreter's personal interests – it depends on the fable's content as well. Two possible types of content issues come to mind: first, are the nonhuman animals that are

represented in the fable domestic or wild? And second, does the interaction in the fable occur between humans and other animals or between nonhuman animals only? Most humans – fable writers included – hardly know any wild animals and are barely familiar with interactions among nonhuman animals. By writing about them, humans are using mainly their imagination and cultural stereotypes of those animals. Nevertheless, fables writers were most likely familiar with some domestic animals and their interactions with people – they presumably knew, for example, how people mistreat asses and how mice fear humans. That may explain why fables that describe interactions between domestic animals and humans have a realistic effect, while other fables do not.

It is important to note that the fact that the nonhuman animals talk does not necessarily exclude their experience and subordinate it to human content. It is very difficult to represent nonhuman animals, whose consciousness is nonverbal, in the literary medium, which is nothing but literal, as Gillian Beer phrased it "How is it possible to be true to animal experience, even if that were the wish, if your medium of description is written human language?" (Beer 2005, 313). Due to this difficulty in many cases nonhuman animals are bestowed with a voice that they do not hold in reality. This phenomenon is common also in non-allegorical literary works, which deal with nonhuman animals. For example, Richard Adams' famous novel *Watership Down* (1984) arouses sympathy towards real rabbits, although the rabbits in his novel use human language. Their description – aside the anthropomorphized elements – includes also many elements which deal with the authentic lives of rabbits, such as their struggle to survive after their natural habitat became a human construction site. In these cases the nonhuman animals are indeed partly anthropomorphized, but their experience is not excluded. Actually, the partial anthropomorphism functions as an instrument which helps us to understand the nonhuman viewpoint.

In their seminal work on metaphor George Lakoff and Marc Johnson argue that anthropomorphism, which is defined as attributing human characters to a nonhuman subject, is a case of metaphor, which is defined as attributing one subject the characters of other subject (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 33). We use metaphors to discuss unfamiliar

subjects in familiar terms and likewise we use anthropomorphism in order to discuss unfamiliar subjects, such as the nonverbal consciousness, in familiar terms – human verbal consciousness.

The Second Reading Strategy: Broadening the Lesson of the Fable

In addition to focusing on the literal level of the fable, constructing an alternative thematic level is also possible. This alternative thematic level would not focus on human only, but also question their treatment towards other animals. Indeed, the lesson of many classical fables is present explicitly as part of the fable, but the fable is not necessarily restricted to this lesson. In many cases the lessons were added to the fables in a later period, not by their original writers, and therefore many fables hold in different versions different – and sometimes even converse – lessons. Therefore I would like to suggest a reading in fables, in which the thematic level does not exclude nonhuman animals.

As I have just argued before, fables which deal with interactions between nonhumans and humans have a potential of focusing on the literal level of the fable. Additionally, these fables have also potential for broadening the lesson also to interspecific issues. Fables which present interactions only among nonhuman animals have no moral implication; nonhuman animals (as well as human babies and some brain-damaged people) are moral *patients*, as they can feel pain and pleasure, but they are not moral *agents*, as they cannot make ethical decisions (Regan 2004, 295). Therefore ethical judgment of nonhuman acts is irrelevant. If a fox "mistreats" a stork in a fable, it cannot have a moral implication on the lives of real foxes and storks. The only possible moral implications in this case exclude the nonhuman animals by allegorizing them and focus on human relations solely. But when an animal fable deals with relationships between humans and other animals, it may have moral implications about interspecific relations as well.

As aforementioned, when a human mistreats an ass in a fable, we may allegorize it, but we may also judge this treatment literally. However, animalistic aspects of fables do not

end with factual descriptions and realistic effect – animal fables might have an alternative thematic function as well. While the common thematic function concerns the human condition, an alternative thematic function might concerns the nonhuman animal condition and the relationship between humans and other animals. Consider for example Aesop's "The Forester and the Lion":

A Forester meeting with a Lion one day, they talked together for a while without differing much in opinion. At last a dispute happening to arise about the point of superiority between a man and a Lion. The man, wanting better argument, showed the Lion a marble monument, on which was placed the statue of a man striding over a vanquished Lion. "If this," says the Lion, "is all you have to say for it, let us be the carvers, and we will make the Lion striding over the man". (Aesop 1941, 86-7)

The literal meaning of the fable lacks any realistic credibility regarding nonhuman animal representation as lions do not talk to humans and are not concerned with the idea of superiority over humankind. But in this literal level of meaning, humans are actually authentically represented; human individuals and human culture are indeed concerned with human superiority over other species. Therefore, we can see the forester as a symbol of humanity, while the lion's function is to cast a doubt on anthropocentrism and to criticize it. We can also read this ancient fable in the light of Canon Criticism. Such criticism exposes the fact that the bulk of historical and artistic representations are produced by dominating social groups, reflecting their perspective and interests. Other voices, which were too weak to represent themselves, were consequently excluded from cultural representation. Therefore what we can learn from these representations is more about the dominating group's perspective than about the social reality itself (Ross 2000, 516). In the fable, the lion's words point at the same idea: that the artistic representation of a man striding over a defeated lion does not represent reality but only its maker's perspective, which is in this case the human perspective.

If so, the lion becomes a symbol of political groups, whose perspectives are culturally ignored. This reading also fits common claims in fable criticism accordingly the fable expresses the philosophy of the weak and the rightless and prefers the victimized side

over the powerful (Spoerri 1942, 32; Friederici 1965, 932). Since Romanticism, the relation between the signifier and the signified within the poetic symbol is considered as the relation between a prototype member and its class (Fletcher 1993, 17; Frye 2000, 89). Nonhuman animals are the prototype of excluded political group, due to their ultimate weakness in culture. Even lions, which are considered as very strong animals, are profoundly weak, because they cannot represent themselves and tell their own story. As Horkheimer and Adorno write in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: "Escape from the dismal emptiness of existence calls for resistance, and for this speech is essential. Even the strongest of animals is infinitely weak" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1997, 247).

Having reviewed classical fables, I would like to discuss a modern animal fable – Orwell's *Animal Farm*.¹ This work can be divided into two parts: the first one describes the events leading to Mr. Jones' abandonment of the farm, and the second part deals with the self-government of the animals. According to the principle that I have just drawn, the first part – which describes the suffering of the farm animals under the reign of the human farmer – is characterized by a high degree of realism, while the second part – which describes their suffering under the reign of the pigs – is characterized by a low degree of realism.² Although the description of the animal suffering under the human farmer husbandry has an obvious allegorical function – it stands for the Russian people suffering under the czar's reign – we can also read this description literally. Major's speech in the beginning of the story can refer to the real situation of farm animals:

Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: Our lives are miserable, laborious and short. We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies; and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength; and the very instant that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty. No animal in England knows the meaning of happiness or leisure after he is a year old. No animal in England is free. The life of an animal is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth. (Orwell 1999, 5)

1 Although *Animal Farm* defiantly does not match the basic definition of the genre – a brief tale that conveys a moral lesson – it does hold some animal fable characteristics, primarily the allegorical use of nonhuman animals, which is the most relevant aspect to this essay.

2 I use the term "realistic" here as oppose to "fantastic" – as a representation that compatible with our common-knowledge regarding its object.

In contrary to other common representations of farm animals in literature (mainly in children literature), where the relations between the farmer and the nonhuman animals is described as symbiotic, the relations between the farmer and the animals in *Animal Farm* are presented as exploitative. The fact that the nonhuman animals claim it by using a human language does not lessen its power and validity; we can distinguish between the context of the claim, which is not realistic because of the animals' linguistic expression, and the content of the claim, which reflects a valid and horrible reality.

Most of the critical reviews of *Animal Farm* focus on the analogy between the explicit components of the story and the Russian Revolution of 1917: Major is Marx, Napoleon is Stalin, Snowball is Trotsky, Mr. Jones is the czar, Manor Farm is Russia, the song Beasts of England is The International and so on (Ferguson 1990, 109-10; Rai 1990, 113; Meyers 1984, 135). But every analogy necessarily contains both similarity and difference – otherwise the two contexts would not be analogical but identical. This differential gap prevents us from reducing the nonhuman condition to the human condition and therefore completely excluding it. Most critics, anthropocentric orientated, pre-assume that the only function of nonhuman animal experience in literature is to illuminate human experience. Therefore, they reduce animal experience to human experience and neglect the non- reducible aspects.

Major's speech, for example, can mostly refer to the human condition – "We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies; and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength animals are worked". This sentence well describes both animal and human worker exploitation. But the next sentence – "and the very instant that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty" – cannot refer to the human condition, but only to the condition of nonhuman animals. This description cannot exclude the nonhuman animals, because as much as human workers are exploited, at least in most cases they are not slaughtered when they are no longer viewed as efficient.

One of the most remarkable and well-known sayings in Marx and Engels' *Manifesto of the Communist Party* is that "proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains" (Marx and Engels 1998, 37). Marx and Engels use the word "chains" metaphorically, while in *Animal Farm* the chains are concretized and used literally:

Their first act was to gallop in a body right round the boundaries of the farm, as though to make quite sure that no human being was hiding anywhere upon it; then they raced back to the farm building to wipe out the last trace of Jones's hated reign. The harness-room at the end of the stable was broken open; the bites, the nose-rings, the dog-chains, the cruel knives with which Mr. Jones had been used to castrate the pigs and lambs, were all flung down the well. The reins, the halters, the blinkers, the degrading nosebags, were thrown onto the rubbish fire, which was burning in the yard. So were the whips. (Orwell 1999, 13)

This elaborated description demonstrates the difference between the metaphorical chains, which the proletarians are restrained by, and the concrete chains, which are used to control nonhuman animals. The comparison does not exclude the nonhuman animal exploitation, but demonstrates its uniqueness and raises attention to it.

As I mentioned before, the second part of *Animal Farm* has no realistic effect – in reality pigs do not rule other animals. It is obvious that the function of the later events in the story is allegorical. But the anti-Soviet interpretation is not the only possible interpretation. A common claim regarding the thematic function of *Animal Farm* is that it is much wider than the critique of the Soviet Union – it condemns dictatorships as they are. The fact that the pig-dictator in the story is called Napoleon supports this approach (Ferguson 1990, 112; Meyers 1984, 135). So once again we can see the nonhuman animals' slavery (and farm animals in particular) as the symbol, as the prototype, of slavery in general. This is indeed a very reasonable choice once we acknowledge that agriculture includes incomparable practices of control and exploitation, such as maiming, killing, separating parents from their offspring, preventing mating or forcing reproduction, and genetically distorting the animals by artificial selection.

In his preface to the Ukraine edition of *Animal Farm*, Orwell describes the circumstances of writing the story:

I saw a little boy, perhaps ten years old, driving a huge cart-horse along a narrow path, whipping it whenever it tried to turn. It struck me that if only such animals became aware of their strength we should have no power over them, and that men exploit animals in much the same way as the rich exploit proletariat. I proceeded to analyze Marx's theory from the animals' point of view. To them it was clear that the concept of a class struggle between humans was pure illusion, since whenever it was necessary to exploit animals, all humans united against them: the true struggle is between animals and humans. From this point of departure, it was not difficult to elaborate the story. (Orwell 1970, 458-9)

It seems that Orwell himself was interested in the implications of his story on the nonhuman animal condition. We cannot tell for sure whether other fable writers were also interested in such implications, but at least some of the animal fables – usually those which present relationship between humans and other animals – provide us with the means to expose the nonhuman animal voice behind the animal fable. Nonhuman animals do not have to be see-through; we can choose to see them instead of seeing through them. As any other literary text, the meaning of the fable and its significance do not originate from the written text exclusively but they are produced within the interaction between the text and its readers. Therefore the traditional anthropocentric understanding of fables is at least partly a result of the speciesist bias of their interpreters. In many cases the anthropocentric understanding of fables is not inevitable. Some fables enable us an alternative understanding, which does not exclude the nonhuman animals and does not reduce them to human figures and issues. If we try to notice the nonhuman existence behind the anthropomorphized figures, we will be able to learn about nonhuman animals and our relations with them. We could still use animal fables in order to understand allegorically human issues, but we could do so parallel to our interest in the nonhuman animals, without nullifying them. This way, instead of a reading, which is based on animal stereotypes and passive understanding of explicit messages, we reach a multilevel understanding, which develops both empathy for nonhuman animals and critical reading methods.

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The Broken Promises of Monsters: Haraway, Animals and the Humanist Legacy

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Introduction

Beginning in Fall 2009, Harvard University will offer its first General Education course in Animal Studies. This reflects the academic community's increasing recognition of Animal Studies as a legitimate scholarly discipline. However, the nascent field is as yet not fully formed, and there are different perspectives on what its content and objectives should be. On the one hand are scholars and activists who maintain that Animal Studies should be defined by a radical animal liberationist theory and praxis. Such scholars call for an openly "critical" Animal Studies, by which they mean scholarship which aims to directly intervene on behalf of the billions of nonhuman animals who are tortured and killed systemically around the world each year. On the other hand are scholars who are more reluctant to adopt an abolitionist position—or one of total opposition to all forms of systemic animal exploitation. This paper represents a critique of this latter position and a defense of the former, via a close examination of the recent post- or anti-humanist writings of Donna Haraway.²

Haraway is one of the best known contemporary figures working in feminist theory, Science and Technology Studies, and Animal Studies. She first rose to prominence with

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² While Haraway states unequivocally "I am not a posthumanist," she also tells us, during her discussion of laboratory experimentation, that she pays heed to what she calls "the posthumanist whisperings in [her] ear" (*When Species Meet* 19;73). As a result, it is fair to say that although she may not explicitly identify as a posthumanist, her thought is clearly informed by posthumanism.

her early scholarly deconstruction of primatology in *Primate Visions* (1989) where, among other things, she pointed out the relationship between misogyny, anthropocentrism, sadism and modern humanism.³ More recently, in texts such as *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) and *When Species Meet* (2008), Haraway has engaged more directly with Animal Studies than in her earlier work. Here, against what she regards as the violent legacy of humanism, she attempts to develop what she terms “nonhumanism” (*When Species Meet* 92). At the center of nonhumanism, and forming the pivot on which her critique of humanism turns, is her theory of “companion species.” In this paper, I argue that companion species not only falls far short of any real challenge to the most problematic aspects of humanism outlined by Haraway, but reveals a disturbing collusion with the very structures of domination she purports to oppose. In particular, I argue that Haraway’s attempt to develop a theory and ethics of companion species within an instrumental framework is itself born out of the humanist project of domination she ostensibly disavows. By, in essence, providing ideological cover for such violent practices as animal experimentation, genetic engineering, dog breeding and training, killing animals for food and hunting, Haraway undermines what might otherwise be construed as an effort to overcome the speciesist ethos which characterizes humanist ideology and the normalization of brutality against animals that it fosters.⁴ I conclude that Haraway’s disturbing writings on the animal question represent a serious threat both to the development of a truly *critical* Animal Studies and, more generally, to the cause of animal liberation. It is therefore important that we gain a better understanding of where her work goes wrong, and why.

³ The term “modern humanism” in Haraway’s writing effectively encompasses the articulations of humanism in the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment.

⁴ It should be noted that while I agree with Haraway’s critique of the anthropocentric and chauvinist aspects of modern humanism, I do not think that we should throw the humanist baby out with the humanist bathwater, so to speak. While humanism has many problematic elements to it, it can also be reformulated to discourage rather than encourage speciesism and violence against animals. Unfortunately, the scope and focus of this paper preclude a longer discussion of my views on the merits of humanism.

Haraway contra Humanism

As noted, throughout her career, Haraway has aimed to both expose and offer socialist-feminist alternatives to what she considers to be the combined misogynist, racist and anthropocentric tenets of humanism. In “Situated Knowledges” (1991) Haraway outlines one of her principle grievances against humanism: its perpetuation of the illusion that “man,”⁵ like God, is ultimately capable of “seeing everything from nowhere”—what she has famously termed the “god-trick” (189). Yet, despite his self-appointed omniscience and omnipotence, man does not actually see the world as such, but rather sees himself projected onto the world. Man further imitates God, not just by claiming omniscience, but also by claiming ultimate *creative* power. As all-seer and all-knower, man is also all-maker. Like God, man produces the world *in* or *as* his own image. Haraway therefore identifies humanism with productionism. As she explains:

...productionism is about man the tool-maker and -user, whose highest technical production is himself. . . . Blinded by the sun, in thrall to the father, reproduced in the sacred image of the same, his reward is that he is self-born, an autotelic copy. That is the mythos of enlightenment and transcendence. (“Promises of Monsters” 67)

To the humanist, in other words, the world of the nonhuman is both a cosmic mirror for self-reflection and the raw material for self-reproduction.

This narcissistic preoccupation with self-reflection and self-reproduction, Haraway contends, also defines sadism—thus sadism and humanism are of a piece (*Primate Visions* 233). As she writes, “Sadism produces the self as a fetish, an endlessly repetitive project. Sadism is a shadow twin to modern humanism” (ibid.). She develops this comparison in the context of her analysis of American psychologist Harry F. Harlow’s “maternal deprivation” experiments on infant rhesus monkeys at the University of Wisconsin-Madison from the late 1950s through the early 1960s. With his large team of

5 Although I would normally use the gender-neutral term “human” to refer to humanity as a whole, throughout this essay I employ the term “man” instead, in order to highlight and reflect the patriarchal bias underlying the humanist worldview under scrutiny in our discussion.

assistants, Harlow used baby rhesus monkeys as substitutes for human children to examine the psychological impact of the denial of maternal contact and other traumatic experiences among human beings. Harlow separated the young monkeys from their biological mothers, and invented various “surrogate mother” models to replace them. The surrogate mothers were made from wood, sponge and rubber, and covered with terry cloth (*ibid.*, 239). Some had big doll heads with smiling clown-like faces, or heads attached in reverse, while others had no heads at all (*ibid.*, 239f). Some produced milk from a single “breast,” while others emitted extreme heat or extreme cold (*ibid.*, 40). One shot out compressed air, another contained a catapult which would throw the animals into the air and another, which Harlow referred to as “iron maiden,” contained brass spikes which were periodically projected out of its frame to poke the infant monkeys (*ibid.*, 238). Among Harlow’s other inventions was what he called the “well of despair,” a narrow stainless steel isolation chamber with sloping sides and a wire mesh bottom in which he would place the baby monkeys for several days in order to observe the effects of their solitary confinement (*ibid.*, 242). For these experiments, as well as for his invention of the “rape rack” (as again, Harlow himself termed it), a device designed to immobilize female monkeys in order to impregnate them artificially (*ibid.*, 238), Harlow received numerous prestigious awards, some of them the most celebrated in his field (*ibid.*, 242). What these experiments demonstrate, in Haraway’s view, is not that sadism is solely about revelling in the torture of another being. The battered rhesus monkeys in Harlow’s lab were not necessarily the objects of some twisted mode of pleasure-seeking. Rather their bodies functioned as the template upon which Harlow reproduced and imprinted man’s triumphant narrative of scientific ingenuity, prowess and conquest. In Haraway’s words, Harlow’s sadistic experiments are “about the structure of scientific vision, in which the body becomes a rhetoric, a persuasive language linked to social practice. The final cause, or telos, of that practice is the production of the unmarked abstract universal, man” (*ibid.* 233). Written on the animals’ bodies was the rhetoric of the absolute power of the disembodied omniscient and omnipotent man/god personified by Harlow. Thus, Harlow is the exemplary sado-humanist: by inducing depression and psychosis in the baby monkeys to prove a hypothesis—e.g., that maternal deprivation, abuse and total

isolation will lead to severe trauma in infants—he achieved the productionist god-trick with resounding success.

In her later work, Haraway elaborates on these themes. In particular, she argues that narcissistic sado-humanism fosters a sense of “human exceptionalism,” or the view that “humanity alone is not [part of] a spatial and temporal web of interspecies dependencies” (Haraway, *When Species Meet* 11). The god-trick enables man to at once reproduce himself through or project himself onto nature, while at the same time remaining at one remove from it. Borrowing from Bruno Latour, Haraway suggests that humanism operates by placing humans and nonhumans (as well as “nature” and “culture”) on either side of a so-called “Great Divide” (ibid., 9).

From Cyborgs to Companion Species

In opposition to the anthropocentric and dualist sado-humanist worldview which mercilessly pits an “abstract universal man” over and against the nonhuman, Haraway offers us nonhumanism and “companion species.” The latter concept is an outgrowth of Haraway’s famous “cyborgs” or what she defines as “chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism” (“A Cyborg Manifesto” 150). In “A Cyborg Manifesto” (1985), Haraway attempted to challenge patriarchal, misogynist and anthropocentric thought by exploring what she saw as the transgressive socialist-feminist potential of cyborgs. In particular, she argued that through an “ironic appropriation” of these “cybernetic organisms,” it was possible to dismantle or at least significantly disrupt the dualist humanist framework (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 4). More recently, Haraway has described cyborgs as “junior siblings in the much bigger, queer family of companion species” (“Cyborgs to Companion Species” 300). Cyborgs and companion species, she tells us, “are hardly polar opposites” (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 4). Rather, both figures “bring together the human and non-human, the organic and technological, carbon and silicon, freedom and structure, history and myth, the rich and the poor, the state and the subject, diversity and depletion, modernity and postmodernity, and nature and culture in unexpected ways” (ibid.). In other words,

cyborgs and companion species both represent areas of ambiguity and contradiction otherwise prohibited in the bifurcated framework of the Great Divide. The main difference between cyborgs and companion species, then, is that the latter draws particular attention to the ethical and phenomenological inter-relationality of humans and animals.⁶

Haraway develops her conception of the inter-relationality of companion species by borrowing heavily from Continental philosophy in general and phenomenology in particular. For example, Haraway explains that companion species hold “the relation as the smallest unit of being and analysis” (*When Species Meet* 165). Similarly, she suggests that in companion species, “the partners do not precede the meeting; species of all kinds, living and not, are consequent on a subject- and object-shaping dance of encounters” (*ibid.*, 4). Gesturing to phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Haraway further suggests that companion species consist of “‘infoldings of the flesh’” (*ibid.*, 249). In a similar vein, she explains that they are figures engaged in “mortal world-making entanglements” (*ibid.*, 4) and “constituted in intra- and interaction” (*ibid.*), and “te[II] a story of co-habitation, co-evolution, and embodied cross-species sociality” (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 4). In language reminiscent of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s conception of becoming-animal,⁷ Haraway also explains that companion species constitute a “tapestry of shared being/becoming among critters (including humans)” (*When Species Meet* 72), and that “animals are everywhere full partners in worlding, in becoming with” (*ibid.*, 301).⁸ Although she is critical of what she considers to be an anthropocentric bias in Emmanuel Levinas’ ethics, she follows Jacques Derrida in extending Levinas’ ethical phenomenology to the nonhuman by suggesting that

⁶ It should be noted that dogs figured more prominently in Haraway’s earliest discussion of companion species in *The Companion Species Manifesto*. However, in *When Species Meet* Haraway addresses a much broader range of animals.

⁷ See Deleuze and Guattari, 232-310.

⁸ While Haraway acknowledges that her language of “becoming” in this context recalls Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of “becoming-animal,” she is quick to assert that she will have “no truck with the fantasy wolf-pack version of ‘becoming-animal’” (*When Species Meet* 26). She even describes herself as “angry” at the fact that Deleuze and Guattari show “disdain for the daily, the ordinary, the affectional rather than the sublime” (*ibid.*, 29). Haraway also laments the fact that Deleuze and Guattari express condescension towards “domestic” animals such as dogs and cats, and that they write off both companion animals and their human companions as “sentimental,”—“especially” (she adds) “if these people are elderly women” (*ibid.*, 30).

companion species have *face*, and are in “face-to-face” relationships with each other (ibid., 76; 88). In defiance of the tendency to lump nonhuman animals into one large amorphous category, “Animal,” she also adopts from Derrida the emphasis on the *singularity* of other animals (ibid., 19).

On the surface, Haraway’s notion of companion species is a refreshing challenge to the anthropocentrism and narcissism of sado-humanist thought. Her suggestion that humans and nonhumans are co-constituted and co-evolving would seem to destabilize any claim that humans might make to having absolute superiority and precedence over other beings. Rather than treat nature as raw matter onto which we project our own image, we find ourselves a part of, or a folding into, nature, i.e. as one among many other embodied beings who stands neither above nor outside the nonhuman. By invoking phenomenology, Haraway seeks to dispose of the patriarchal “mythos of enlightenment and transcendence” that conditions our relations with other beings. However, Haraway ultimately undermines, if not renders null and void, these otherwise crucial challenges to the most problematic aspects of modern humanist thought. She does this by configuring companion species within, and thereby reinforcing, the very framework of instrumentality that has been so central to the sado-humanist legacy of domination.

Instrumental Species

While suggesting that other animals and humans are entangled, co-constituted and so on, Haraway in fact reinforces the anthropocentric logic of mastery over nonhuman human others by naturalizing unequal instrumental relations between species—that is, relations in which humans are the *users* and nonhumans are the *used*.

Haraway attempts to describe a mutually beneficial instrumentality between species which does not necessarily privilege the human. “Instrumental intra-action itself is not the enemy. . . . Work, use, and instrumentality are intrinsic to bodily webbed mortal earthly being and becoming” (ibid., 71). By this account, instrumentality and inter-

relationality need not conflict. Bees and flowers, for example, can be said to be involved in an instrumental relationship with one another in which both gain and neither lose from being used by and using the other for their own respective purposes. Similar symbiotic relationships between and among different species, in which they use each other for their own advantage without harming each other, can be readily observed in any ecosystem. This kind of instrumentality is indeed free, to use Haraway's words, of "unidirectional relations of use, ruled by practices of calculation and self-sure of hierarchy" (ibid.). As a result, Haraway is not wrong to suggest that instrumentality as such is not necessarily equivalent to domination. As she correctly observes, "To be in a relation of use to each other is not the definition of unfreedom and violation" (ibid., 74).

However, Haraway's attempt to distinguish between instrumentality defined by mutuality, and instrumentality defined by unfreedom and violation, becomes increasingly problematic as she develops her argument. She goes on to acknowledge that in modern Western civilization most instrumental relationships between humans and animals are based on a structure of *inequality* in which humans alone have power over and license to use other animals as instruments. As she writes, instrumental relations between humans and animals "are almost never symmetrical ('equal' or calculable)" (ibid.). While this is also true, Haraway does not, as one might expect, go on to suggest that this inequality, asymmetry and calculability are part and parcel of the unfreedom and violation avoided by the mutually beneficial instrumental relationships described above. Instead, she suggests the opposite: that unequal and non-mutual instrumental relations between humans and animals do *not* necessarily translate into animals' unfreedom or violation (ibid.). She writes, "I resist the tendency to condemn all relations of instrumentality between animals and people as necessarily involving the objectifications and oppressions of sexism, colonialism, and racism" (ibid.). While there may be some occasional *exceptions*, Haraway's claim that not all instrumental relations between humans and animals constitute the same fundamentally oppressive nature as those among humans cannot be vouchsafed in the context of human-animal relations in contemporary society. Simply put, as a result of the sado-humanist and techno-capitalist projects, the reduction of other animals to instruments and objects of calculation is *inherently* interchangeable

with their inequality with humans, which is, in turn, *inherently* interchangeable with their total unfreedom and violation at our hands. As critical theorist Herbert Marcuse pointed out in his critique of the joint domination of humans and nature in advanced industrialized nations, instrumental reason operates precisely by reducing human and nonhuman beings to the “mere stuff of control” and to “quantifiable qualities . . . units of abstract labor power, calculable units of time” (156f). Reduced to the stuff of control, nonhuman (and ultimately also human) beings are degraded to “instrumentality which lends itself to all purposes and ends—instrumentality per se, ‘in itself’” (ibid., 156). In other words, as Marcuse sees it, instrumentality *is* hierarchy, *is* calculability, *is* inequality, *is* violation, *is* unfreedom.

Haraway’s own examples of (supposedly benign) instrumentality only bear Marcuse out. For instance, Haraway is an outspoken proponent of dog breeding. Haraway withholds any judgment concerning the mass-breeding of dogs—by “pure bred puppy mill producers” and “backyard breeders”—and instead suggests that she limits her research and analysis to, and personal involvement with, people claiming to do “what they call ethical breeding” (*When Species Meet* 139). She applauds these “‘lay’ people who breed dogs” for the fact that they are “often solidly knowledgeable about science, technology and veterinary medicine, often self-educated, and often effective actors in technoculture for the flourishing of dogs and their humans” (ibid., 140). While such lay breeders may be knowledgeable, and may not operate puppy mills, the practice of breeding as such is nonetheless a direct product of the sado-humanist and techno-capitalist projects which have jointly normalized the exploitative instrumentalization (and commodification) of nonhumans. We manipulate dogs’ (and other animals’) reproductive and social patterns and so on in order to see (the fantasy of) our ingenuity and omnipotence reflected back to us through their “improved” bodies—and also to make a profit. Breeding is a practice built directly out of humans’ entitlement to the bodies and lives of other animals and to the latter’s reduction to the mere stuff of control. Moreover, animals are bred for the most part to serve humans, often as instruments for the enslavement of other animals. As Haraway herself points out, breeders often “place puppies they have bred” into, among other things, “livestock guardian jobs” (ibid.). Finally, while Haraway admits that the

notion of “‘improvement’ is one of the most important modernizing and imperializing discourses” she nevertheless suggests that she “cannot be dismissive of these commitments” towards “improving” certain breeds of dogs (ibid.). Her refusal to abandon the modernizing and imperializing discourse of improvement, is tantamount to her avowal of it.

Haraway is also both a supporter and avid practitioner of so-called “agility” dog training. In a section in *The Companion Species Manifesto* entitled “Positive Bondage,” Haraway lauds Susan Garrett for her “widely acclaimed training pamphlet called *Ruff Love*” (43). She writes, “I have never read a dog-training manual more committed to near *total control* in the interest of fulfilling human intentions, in this case, peak performance in a demanding, dual species, competitive sport” (*my italics*) (ibid., 44). What could exemplify instrumental domination—or instrumentality *as* domination—more than a training manual which is dedicated to gaining “near total control” over other animals to “fulfil[I] human intentions”?

A closer examination of Garrett’s method exposes even further the logic of instrumental domination upon which it is based. It requires that the trainer employ harsh disciplinary tactics to ensure absolute submission from the animals. To this end, the dogs under Garrett’s regime are confined in crates for part of the training period and free play is not permitted (ibid.). As Haraway explains, “forbidden to the pooch are the pleasures of romping at will with other dogs, rushing after a teasing squirrel, or clambering onto the couch—unless and until such pleasures are granted for exhibiting self control and responsiveness to the human’s commands at a near 100% frequency” (ibid.).

Haraway offers no critique of these examples of instrumental domination, and indeed refuses to recognize them as instances of domination at all. While she admits that in her effort to adhere to Garret’s training methods with her own dogs she has “made enough well intentioned training mistakes—some of them painful to my dogs and some of them dangerous to people, not to mention worthless in succeeding in agility” (ibid., 45f), she remains unapologetically committed to the method. Indeed, she proudly proclaims: “I

still lend my well-thumbed copy of *Ruff Love* to friends, and I keep my clicker and liver treats in my pocket” (ibid., 46).

Haraway also undermines any objection to the confinement and coercion of dogs which Garrett’s method requires, and states that “while romantics might quail in the face of requirements to keep one’s dog in a crate. . . . There is no room for romanticism about the wild heart of the natural dog or illusions of social equality across the class Mammalia in Garrett’s practice and pedagogy” (ibid., 44). Such a remark is in marked contrast to what appears in other passages to be her embrace of non-hierarchical cross-species “entanglement” apparently so integral to the notion of companion species. Indeed, by writing off as “romanticism” the goal of equality between species, Haraway unfairly dismisses the struggle for equality, without any substantive examination of the issue. She also reinforces the misogynist and speciesist stereotype that those who are opposed to the unequal treatment of animals are sentimental and irrational.⁹ (Haraway’s comment also appears to fly in the face of her own critique of Deleuze and Guattari for disavowing sentimentality [*When Species Meet* 30; See also note 8]).

Haraway further seeks to disassociate Garrett’s “training” practices from domination by suggesting that dogs who undergo her technique enjoy “legion” compensations, and get “rewarded by the rapid delivery of treats, toys, and liberties” (ibid., 44f). While this may be so, the real motive for “rewarding” the dogs—to create incentive for further obedience—has not changed. In fact, Haraway goes on to explain enthusiastically that the rewards are “all carefully calibrated to evoke and sustain maximum motivation from the particular, individually known pupil” (ibid.). Slaves received occasional “rewards” too, for much the same reason.

In a final attempt to redeem Garrett’s technique, Haraway suggests that the conception of companion species is wholly compatible with this practice. While, as we have seen, it is clear that training other animals through force to submit to one’s commands and to “fulfill human intentions” is, by its very definition, a form of instrumental domination,

⁹ See Donovan and Adams 6.

Haraway frames it as harmonious interspecies relationality. For example, she refers to the trainer and dog under Garrett's method as "a team that is highly motivated, not working under compulsion, but knowing the energy of each other and trusting the honesty and coherence of directional postures and responsive movements" (ibid., 44). This image of "highly motivated" and mutually voluntary teamwork flatly contradicts Haraway's earlier unapologetic characterization of the training method as a system of total control—wherein the dog's every move is orchestrated and compelled by the trainer in order to ensure the former's unequivocal submission. With her support of coercive dog training in general and Garrett's technique in particular, Haraway undermines the supposed challenge to instrumental domination which she claims to offer through the discourse of companion species.

Perhaps nowhere is Haraway's support for the instrumental domination she purports to oppose more evident than in her extensive and disturbing comments on animal experimentation in *When Species Meet*. Although Haraway attempts to disassociate animal experimentation from the Western humanist project of instrumental domination in a number of ways, none of them prove convincing. Haraway begins by arguing that animal experimenters are not, as commonly perceived, necessarily preoccupied with expanding knowledge of the human species (*When Species Meet* 70). The scientist, she writes, is "engaged not in the heroics of self-experimentation (a common trope in tropical medicine histories) but in the practical and moral obligation to mitigate suffering among mortals—and not just human mortals" (ibid.). As Haraway frames it here, the experimenter is not limited to the Baconian conception of experimentation, which is to use nonhumans as *models* by which "we may gain knowledge about what may be wrought upon the body of man" (Bacon, "New Atlantis" 263), but has animals' interest to avoid suffering in mind too. What Haraway does not address is the fact that whether or not animal experimentation may be performed to advance veterinary research, for example, the practice of experimentation itself presumes the prior speciesist reduction of nonhumans into powerless objects and instruments.

Haraway further undermines the weight of her claim that experimentation has other animals' benefit in mind as much as that of humans, when she goes on to suggest that animal experimentation in general and "wicked action" (viz., harming other animals) is also justified on the grounds that it satisfies human "curiosity." As she writes, "Curiosity, not just functional benefit, may warrant the risk of 'wicked action'" (Haraway, *When Species Meet* 70). Can one "satisfy" one's "curiosity" about animals in a laboratory setting without denying their freedom or without incarcerating them and violating their bodies? Whether or not human "curiosity" or even nonhuman interests are fueling experimentation, it is only possible to begin with because of the humanist view of the nonhuman as the mere stuff of control. As a result, Haraway's line of reasoning here does not disprove the view that unfreedom and violation are the basis of the instrumentalization of other animals in laboratories. Rather, it reveals the particularly disturbing truth that we subject billions of other animals to a life of hell in labs, often simply to entertain what amount to *arbitrary* human whims.

In a particularly disturbing move, Haraway attempts to redefine as progressive, rather than to challenge outright, the inequality between humans and other animals in the laboratory. She writes, "Inequality in the lab is, in short, not of a humanist kind, whether religious or secular, but of a relentlessly historical and contingent kind that never stills the murmur of nonteleological and nonhierarchical multiplicity that the world is" (ibid., 77). In other words, so long as the inequalities of the laboratory environment are neither construed as the product of a secular humanist outlook ("The Human" over and above "The Animal"), nor cast in quasi-religious terms (e.g., as "sacrifice")—so long as, instead, we view such inequalities as being "of a relentlessly historical and contingent kind," then they are justified and even contain subversive potential. What Haraway posits here is at best a futile theoretical exercise, and at worst a discursive adventure with potentially catastrophic ethico-political consequences. We cannot simply *theorize* the laboratory into being a haven of the putative "nonteleological and nonhierarchical multiplicity" of the world. By attempting to do so, we mask and thereby perpetuate the actual inequality produced by the sado-humanist project of domination which puts animals in labs in the first place.

In an equally bewildering move, Haraway attempts to distance experimentation from the humanist project of instrumental domination she decries by suggesting that it is in the unequal and instrumental framework of the laboratory that animals actually *transcend* calculability. In her words, laboratory animals can occupy “unfilled spaces” where “something outside calculation can still happen” (ibid., 73). To demonstrate this, she claims that lab animals “have many degrees of freedom.” An example of this “freedom,” she writes, is “*the inability of experiments to work if animals and other organisms do not cooperate*” (my italics) (ibid.). If there is a more perverse conception of freedom than this, however, it is hard to imagine. To have any ethico-political import should freedom not mean freedom *from* exploitation and violence and freedom *to* fulfill one’s potentialities?¹⁰ The reader is left to wonder how rabbits or dogs whose heads are locked into holds, or monkeys exposed to nerve gas and given electroshocks, can *not* cooperate in the experiments. Even if such victims do manage to squirm and wriggle out of their hold, or to bite their tormenter, it is absurd to equate their acts of desperation and anguish with the exercise of freedom. Haraway’s claim that animals experience degrees of freedom in the modern laboratory is not only unsupported by evidence (as well as by common sense), it serves to occlude the actual state of unfreedom to which they are subjected. It thereby manages to legitimate, in the realm of high theory, their oppression.

Haraway makes a similarly untenable claim about the “refusal” of intensively farmed animals to cooperate with the forces of their oppression. She writes, “Even factory meat industries have to face the disaster of chickens’ or pigs’ refusal to live when their cooperation is utterly disregarded in an excess of human engineering arrogance” (Haraway, *When Species Meet* 73). Although she correctly highlights that it is an “excess of human engineering arrogance” upon which the factory farming industry is built, by suggesting that the death of these creatures is a “refusal to live,” Haraway attributes to them an agency which they are denied in reality. In the same discussion, she admits that

¹⁰ This definition of freedom is borrowed from John Sanbonmatsu’s conception of freedom as “freedom from oppression” and “freedom to the creative fulfillment of our natural capacities” (Sanbonmatsu 248). It is also based on Marcuse’s suggestion that freedom is at least partly defined by the capacity for beings to be themselves, “‘by themselves’ and ‘as themselves’” (Marcuse 125).

factory farming “is a very low standard for thinking about animal freedom in instrumental relations” (ibid.). Yet this admission does not hold her back from suggesting that “freedom” is still possible in this context. Such a claim, presented without evidence or logical argument, ultimately dissolves into little more than discursive posturing.

Other critics have similarly pointed out that Haraway’s endorsement of animal experimentation seems to identify her position with the very sado-humanist outlook she purports to reject. For example, in *When Species Meet* Haraway reprints her own correspondence with Sharon Ghamari-Tabrizi in which the latter emphasizes that the imbalance of power between humans and nonhumans in the laboratory derives from and is excused by a specifically early modern humanist worldview. In Ghamari-Tabrizi’s words, “In the lab, not only is the relationship [between humans and animals] unequal and asymmetrical; it is wholly framed and justified, legitimated, and meaningful within the rationalist materials of early modern humanism” (cited in Haraway, *When Species Meet* 86). By way of response, Haraway effectively admits to, but also rationalizes, what we can only call the hypocrisy of her position. In her reply to Ghamari-Tabrizi, she writes,

Yes, all the calculations still apply; yes, I will defend animal killing for reasons and in detailed material-semiotic conditions that I judge tolerable because of a greater good calculation. And no, that is never enough. I refuse the “choice” of “inviolable animal rights” versus “human good is more important.” Both of these proceed as if calculation solved the dilemma, and all I or we have to do is choose. (ibid., 87)

This response is problematic for a number of reasons. To begin, while, as we saw above, Haraway stated that she opposes the instrumentalization of animals when linked to “calculability,” here she affirms a crude utilitarian calculus of her own (“the greater good”). Though she admits that this calculus is “never enough,” she still allows herself to rely on it in part and thereby legitimizes it. Relatedly, Haraway falsely represents the critique of animal experimentation as an either/or choice between inviolable animal rights or human good. Opposition to animal experimentation does not pit human and animal rights against each other. Nor does it necessarily require a belief in animal *rights* at all. Many animal studies scholars such as Peter Singer suggest that the language of rights,

though appropriate in an earlier iteration of the struggle against animal exploitation, is “in no way necessary” to the cause of animal liberation today (8). Furthermore, opposition to animal experimentation does *not*, as Haraway claims, “proceed as if calculation solved the dilemma.” Indeed, feminist care ethicists Carol J. Adams and Josephine Donovan, among others, oppose both rights-based and utilitarian ethics because they “ten[d] to be abstract and formalistic, favoring rules that are universalizable or judgments that are quantifiable” (6). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Haraway simply avoids responding to Ghamari-Tabrizi’s main point: that laboratory experimentation is part and parcel of the modern humanist legacy of the domination of nature. Haraway appears to have no answer.

Discursive Deceptions

Haraway’s tendency to revert to discursive wizardry to conceal rather than reveal the structure of domination fostered by the sado-humanist tradition, is also evident in her use of euphemisms to characterize animal victims and their torturers. In particular, Haraway takes up the Latourian designation of nonhuman entities, both inanimate and animate, as “actors” or “actants,” or active participants in a nature-culture-science-politics mish-mash.¹¹ Haraway suggests that we ought to view lab animals not as victims, but as “lab actors,” “significantly unfree partners” (*When Species Meet* 72) and “workers” (ibid., 62; 71). She does concede that animals do not work in labs by choice (ibid., 62) or “under the conditions of their own design” (ibid., 73). However, Haraway’s recognition of animals’ lack of choice in these matters does not prevent her from ascribing agency—i.e., “actorship”—to them. In reality, animals in labs are not workers—not even alienated workers—but worked-*on* objects, *slaves* by any other name. To call them anything else is to gloss over the brutal reality of the total denial of their ability to act in any meaningful way—namely, as self-determining *subjects*. Yet, Haraway insists that while animals in labs can be workers on one hand, they cannot be slaves on the other, simply because

11 See Latour 10; 23. For Haraway’s detailed discussion of her interpretation of Latour’s conception of actors and actants, see also “Promises of Monsters” 89..

“they have paws, not hands”—that is, because they are not human (*ibid.*, 56). A glaring double-standard appears to be at play here.

Finally, Haraway attempts to redeem animal exploiters themselves by euphemistically labeling them animal “caretakers” or “caregivers” rather than experimenters (*ibid.*, 59). She thereby falsely reconfigures the whole relationship between the nonhuman experimental object and the scientist not just into worker and employer, but into caregiver and patient. In her discussion of experiments on “bleeder dogs”—dogs used in research for hemophilia—at a lab run by Kenneth Brinkhous at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Haraway outlines the so-called caregiver-patient relationship in more detail:

The principal problem Brinkhous faced in his lab when he brought in male Irish setter puppies who showed the stigmata of bleeding into joints and body cavities was keeping them alive. The puppies had to become patients if they were to become technologies and models. . . . Lab staff could not function as researchers if they did not function as caregivers. Dogs could not work as models if they did not work as patients. (*ibid.*)

This passage could not be more revealing of the irrational logic of instrumental domination that Haraway espouses, despite her claims to the contrary. The only reason the experimenters had to find a way to keep the bleeding puppies alive was to continue their experiments successfully, not out of any actual concern for the puppies’ well-being—the latter was at best secondary to maintaining them as instruments. Thus, the lab staff are not caregivers in any true sense of the word, but thorough experimenters who sustain their victims until they are no longer useful and can be disposed of permanently. By labeling them caregivers however, Haraway absolves the experimenters of any sense of responsibility for the harm they are actually doing to the puppies, while at the same time detracting attention from the substantive ethical questions surrounding the appropriateness of inflicting violence on helpless creatures—questions which are in urgent need of addressing.

Ethics or Excuses?

Haraway makes a number of theoretical gestures in the direction of an ethics that might inform our relations with other animals. However, upon closer examination, Haraway's "ethics" prove to further reinforce rather than challenge instrumental domination and the institutionalized torture of animals.

Central to Haraway's ethics is what she terms the "sharing" of suffering (*ibid.*, 75). At first glance, the notion of sharing suffering might indicate an ethics which fosters human empathy for animal suffering, and a subsequent rejection of all practices which cause animals harm. However, we soon learn that sharing another animal's pain does not, as Haraway conceives of it, translate into any struggle for the abolition of violence against animals. In fact, as she frames it, the conception of sharing suffering amounts to no more than an *apology* for systemic animal abuse.

As with her views on instrumentality, Haraway develops her conception of sharing suffering in the context of a discussion of animal experimentation—in this case, through the analogy of a fictional experiment she read about in a novel by Nancy Farmer entitled *A Girl Named Disaster* (1996). In the novel, a man named Baba Joseph is said to have overseen an experiment "at a little scientific outpost in Zimbabwe around 1980" in which "guinea pigs were held in tight little baskets while wire cages filled with biting flies were placed over them, their skin shaved and painted with poisons that might sicken the offending insects" (*ibid.*, 70). Baba Joseph was not immune to the animals' suffering but rather, sought to "share" in it, by sticking his arm in the cage so that he too would be bitten by the flies (*ibid.*, 75). However, Baba Joseph's gesture of sharing—or what Haraway also refers to as his show of "solidarity" with the guinea pigs—was not, as one might expect, also one of protest against their instrumentalization and torture. Rather, his gesture served as an avowal of the very ethos of instrumental domination which produced the conditions for the guinea pigs' suffering in the first place. As Haraway explains, "Baba Joseph's bitten arm is not the fruit of a heroic fantasy of ending all suffering or not causing suffering, but the result of remaining at risk and in solidarity in instrumental

relationships that one does not disavow” (ibid.). If sharing suffering is not meant to *stop* suffering, what can its purpose really be? What is empathy with the victims of violence, if it does not lead to action to abolish that violence? Indeed, to claim, as Haraway does, that the goal to end and prevent suffering is a “heroic fantasy” is unfairly dismissive and weakens her credibility.

The notion of sharing suffering is rendered increasingly dubious when we consider the fact that it would simply never occur in reality between an experimenter and their experimental subjects: none of the scientists involved in the torture of the estimated 100 million animals who perish in laboratories each year around the world would poison, irradiate or electrocute themselves and so on in false solidarity with their victims. An ethics based on sharing suffering such as Haraway describes, therefore, appears, once again, to be more of a discursive exercise than an attempt to create the conditions for any concrete ethico-political transformation.

Indeed, it turns out that it is the abuser, not the abused, who benefits from an ethics of shared suffering. As Haraway explains, Baba Joseph “sustained bites not to stand in as experimental object but to understand the rodents’ pain so as to do what he could about it, even if that was only to serve as witness to the need for something properly called forgiveness” (ibid.). In other words, in reaching into the guinea pigs’ cage, Baba Joseph was not lending a hand to the animals, so to speak, to end or even mitigate their misery, but was really grasping for his own absolution. Certainly, Baba Joseph did not need to “stand in as experimental object” to relieve the guinea pigs of their suffering. Haraway is thus not wrong to insist that sharing suffering is “nonmimetic” (ibid.). However, if he really wanted “to do what he could about it,” all he needed to do was to set the guinea pigs free.

Outside the notion of sharing suffering, to the extent that Haraway offers any ethics for our encounters with other animals, she tends to rely, as noted, on the ethical phenomenology of Emmanuel Levinas. In particular, Haraway repeatedly invokes the Levinasian language of the “face.” In simple terms, the face for Levinas is the abject

Other—such as “the stranger, the widow, the orphan”—whose corporeal vulnerability is always already greater than one’s own (Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* 215). The very fragility of the Other is what paradoxically lends it the authority to insist on one’s compliance to the primordial ethical command “Thou shalt not kill” (Levinas, “Ethics as First Philosophy” 83). One’s “response” to this command is its fulfillment. This obedience in turn constitutes one’s ethical “responsibility” (Levinas, “Paradox of Morality” 169). While one is obliged to protect the Other from harm, the Other has no comparable responsibility to oneself (Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity* 98). Thus, the face-to-face relationship is deemed “asymmetrical.”¹²

Haraway directly adopts these key Levinasian concepts to form her ethics. Following Derrida, however, she pushes beyond the speciesist limitations in Levinas’ own thought and ascribes face to nonhumans (Haraway, *When Species Meet* 22f). For example, she writes: “The animals in the labs . . . have face; they are somebody as well as something, just as we humans are both subject and object all the time” (ibid., 76). Elsewhere she states, “Respect is *respecere*—looking back, holding in regard, understanding that meeting the look of the other is a condition of having face oneself” (ibid., 88). In similarly Levinasian terms, she emphasizes the centrality of response and responsibility in companion species relationships. For example, she explains that in interactions between companion species “response . . . grows with the capacity to respond, this is responsibility” (ibid. 71).

At first glance, Haraway’s use of Levinas is an important contribution to the urgently needed development of a non-anthropocentric ethics. If we actually recognized other animals as having face, as being *subjects* of ethical concern rather than *objects* of manipulation, the systemic exploitation of nonhumans could no longer be justified. Moreover in emphasizing, along with Derrida, that animals are capable of *responding*—understood both as communicating and expressing in general, and making ethical

¹² It should be pointed out that Levinasian asymmetry is not the same as that associated with the inequality inherent to instrumental domination, discussed above, but rather has the opposite meaning. For Levinas, the notion of asymmetry encapsulates the dynamic between oneself and the Other in which the Other is both more vulnerable than oneself and commands an (ethical) authority over oneself which one does not command over it.

demands in particular—Haraway helps to undermine the Cartesian claim that nonhumans are automatons capable only of *reacting* (ibid., 19).¹³

The problem is that Haraway misappropriates these important Levinasian concepts by suggesting that they are consistent with instrumental relationships. For example, Haraway suggests that one can recognize the face of the Other while still treating the Other as an object for one's use. Once again with the laboratory in mind, Haraway writes, "to be in response to [the face] is to recognize copresence¹⁴ in relations of use and therefore to remember that no balance sheet of benefit and cost will suffice" (ibid., 76). But, as we have seen, genuine response and responsibility in any Levinasian sense precludes the objectification, instrumentalization and certainly the torture of the Other, it does not permit these abusive practices. Whether or not we *feel* or *believe* that we are "in response" to the animals that we are terrorizing in laboratories, or purport to "recognize copresence in relations of use," does not *do* anything to help dismantle the system which reduces them to calculations on a "balance sheet of benefit and cost." The positing of face in this framework is therefore self-contradictory.

Haraway further corrupts Levinasian ethics by suggesting that nonhuman animals in exploitative environments are equally responsible to people as people are to them. She states:

Human beings are not uniquely obligated to and gifted with responsibility; animals as workers in labs, animals in all their worlds, are response-able in the same sense as people are; that is, responsibility is a relationship crafted in intra-action through which entities, subjects and objects, come into being. (ibid., 71)

It is certainly fair for Haraway to suggest that other animals are equally "*response-able*"—that is, capable of responding. As we have noted, it is crucial to recognize that nonhuman animals do not merely react, but also respond to us. If we actually "listened" to what they were "saying" we might be less inclined to reduce them to automata operating out of blind instinct. However to claim, as Haraway does, that they are equally

13 See Derrida, "The Animal that Therefore I Am" 8-9; 51. See also Descartes, 74f.

14 Haraway attributes the term "copresence" to biologist Barbara Smuts (*When Species Meet* 76).

responsible, particularly in a site of brutal domination such as the laboratory, is to once again project onto them an agency they are denied, and to undermine the requirement of non-reciprocity upon which Levinas' ethics is built. In what way could a burnt, bleeding, wounded, and terrorized laboratory (or factory farm) animal be "responsible" to its abuser? While many animals exhibit the capacity for moral behavior, the mutual reciprocity Haraway sets up here within the framework of a laboratory is not only absurd, but it is also an affront to any meaningful attempt to abolish their oppression.

Haraway delivers her greatest blow to the integrity of Levinasian ethics, however, by suggesting that one can kill those with face. She goes so far as to make the startling claim that in order to stop mass killing we should not *adopt* but *abandon* the absolute prohibition on killing which is central to Levinasian ethics. As she writes, "I think what my people and I need to let go of if we are to learn to stop exterminism and genocide, through either direct participation or indirect benefit and acquiescence, is the command "Thou shalt not kill" (ibid., 80). Instead, she suggests, this absolute command should be qualified to read: "Thou Shalt not make killable" (ibid.). The latter command is more appropriate, first, because killing, she claims, is unavoidable, and second, because it is not the act of killing other animals per se that holds one ethically accountable, but whether or not one does so "responsibly." In her words:

The problem is live to learn responsibility within the multiplicitous necessity of labor and killing. . . . Human beings must learn to kill responsibly. And to be killed responsibly, yearning for the capacity to respond and to recognize response, always with reasons but knowing there will never be sufficient reason. (ibid., 80f)

By claiming that one can kill another with whom one is in a face-to-face relationship, and by suggesting that responsibility *facilitates* rather than *prohibits* killing, Haraway distorts the very basis of Levinas' ethics. If the Other is refused the authority to assert "Thou shalt not kill," and to insist on one's obedience to this command, the Other is reduced to yet another *faceless* victim of brutality. There can be no ethics of face as Levinas intended it without a total ban on killing.

Haraway further normalizes and justifies killing in non-Levinasian terms. For example, she states that “there is no way to eat and not to kill” (ibid., 295). This is only true, however, in a narrow and pedantic sense. If it is not entirely possible to eat without harming other sentient beings (e.g., inadvertently killing field mice while harvesting corn), we can at least do our utmost to avoid killing. Haraway does not provide any concrete alternatives to factory farming, nor does she attribute much potential to vegetarianism or veganism¹⁵ as worthwhile pursuits. Indeed, she suggests condescendingly that to assume that one cannot eat without killing others is “to pretend innocence and transcendence or final peace” (ibid.). Haraway does credit vegans with coming the closest to living without causing other animals to “die differentially” (ibid., 80). However, she also suggests derisively that veganism “would consign most domestic animals to the status of curated heritage collections or to just plain extermination as kinds and as individuals” (ibid.). Such a claim represents a blatant distortion of one of the central aims of veganism, which is, of course, to *end* not encourage the extermination of animals as kinds or individuals.

After having dismissed vegan abolitionism in this way, Haraway goes on to congratulate organizations like the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) because they “deman[d] effective action for animal well-being in transport, slaughter, and marketing” (ibid. 273). She tells us that another of RBST’s achievements is that it “analyzes breeds for their most economical and productive uses” (ibid.). Once again, Haraway validates sado-humanist productionist practices—the breeding, selling and killing of other beings for our consumption—rather than offering us concrete strategies out of the bind of domination.

Further defending killing, but this time drawing on the Derridian conception of “eating well,”¹⁶ Haraway suggests that we must learn to “kill well.” As she writes, “outside Eden, eating means also killing, directly or indirectly, and killing well is an obligation akin to

¹⁵ The lifestyle choice in which one strives to avoid the consumption of any food, clothing, or other products which contain animal products, were tested on animals, or otherwise involve confining, harming, or killing other animals.

¹⁶ See Derrida “Eating Well” 96-119. The scope of this article does not permit a more detailed discussion of Derrida’s conception of eating well so I have limited my comments to Haraway’s interpretation of it.

eating well” (ibid. 296). Haraway explains that among other things, eating well involves having an “excessive” sense of responsibility for the other that one eats (ibid., 295). Haraway also describes eating well as avoiding “self-certainty,” not “relegating those who eat differently to a subclass of vermin,” and not “giving up on knowing more, including scientifically, and feeling more, including scientifically, about how to eat well together” (ibid.). She defines killing well along similar lines. To illustrate her conception of killing well, Haraway points to her friend and colleague Gary Lease who hunts wild pigs on supposedly ecological grounds (ibid.). He kills well, she argues, because he “knows a great deal about those he kills, how they live and die, and what threatens their kind and their resources” (ibid.). In other words, Lease kills well in Haraway’s view because he kills with a sense of ecological “responsibility” and because he takes pains to learn about the animals he hunts. While this may be so, one wonders what difference his alleged sense of responsibility makes to those whose lives he is destroying. “Killing well” is still *killing*. Indeed, this conception of killing well, much like that of sharing suffering, appears to be more concerned with assuaging the conscience of killers than protecting their potential victims. Elsewhere, Haraway reiterates that killing and causing pain are not necessarily unacceptable. Rather, what is important is that those doing the harm are not “[left] in moral comfort, sure about their righteousness” (ibid., 75). As above, this claim is indicative of the speciesist and anthropocentric prioritization of how humans feel about killing other animals, not about how *animals* might feel as the victims of killing, no matter how “well” it is done.

Haraway also attempts to diminish the brutal reality of killing by suggesting that we “become with” the animals we kill and consume. Just as there is, in her view, no way to eat and not to kill other mortal beings, there is also “no way to eat and not to become with other mortal beings to whom we are accountable” (ibid., 295). In truth, the only way one can “become with” the animals one tortures and kills is by consuming them - hardly a desirable mode of “becoming” for the animals in question. Indeed, the supposedly benign consumption of animal corpses is another face of the sado-humanist myth. The animal subject-turned-meat is a product of our project of domination: its carcass tells the story of our ongoing conquest of the nonhuman; in its charred flesh, we see our own self-

appointed absolute power over other animals reflected back to us. What Haraway's "ethical" ruminations signal, therefore, is not the outline of a new relationship to nonhuman others but, on the contrary, a deep commitment to the assumptions and practices of the brutal sado-humanist legacy.

Haraway Meets Bacon

Haraway's unacknowledged debt to sado-humanism is cast into yet greater relief in her enthusiasm for genetic engineering and the development of transgenic animals, such as OncoMouse™. OncoMouse™ is a genetically engineered mouse implanted with an "oncogene"—or cancer-producing DNA taken from the genome of another animal—intended to serve as a model for breast cancer in women, and now used in laboratories throughout the world (Haraway, "Race" 273).

Haraway is not wholly uncritical or unreflective about the problematic ethico-political implications of the development of OncoMouse™. For example, she acknowledges that OncoMouse™ is the emblem of what she calls "secularized Christian salvation history" which perilously integrates the Christian logic of sacrifice—and the "solace" it provides to our otherwise potentially troubled collective conscience—with the joint pursuits of scientific progress and economic gain (Haraway, *Modest_Witness* 47). In particular, Haraway contends that in this religio-secular framework which, in her view, characterizes modernity, the transgenic mouse is implicitly portrayed as a sacrificial figure whose "birth" and "death" is seen to fulfill the "promises of progress; cures; profit; and if not of eternal life, then at least of life itself" (ibid.). Similarly, she writes, "s/he is our scapegoat; s/he bars our suffering. . . . s/he suffers, physically, repeatedly, and profoundly, that I and my sisters might live" (Haraway, *When Species Meet* 76). Haraway also criticizes our tendency to find consolation for the violence we commit in genetically engineering other animals by appealing to what she calls the "majesty of Reason," or the notion that the supposed development of human rationality and/or the pursuit of progress, cures, and so on, are the only criteria for determining whether or not enacting violence on other beings

is permissible. Finally, Haraway points to the problem of the commodification of OncoMouse™ by highlighting that it is “an ordinary commodity in the exchange circuits of transnational capital” (*Modest_Witness* 79).

Haraway’s characterization of the rationalizations which fuel the development of transgenic animals is accurate. It goes without saying that the animals that are genetically manipulated (and experimented on in general) in laboratories are often characterized as necessary sacrifices for the greater (human) good, while their genetic alteration or manipulation is hailed as a laudable advance in scientific knowledge.¹⁷ Moreover, as is well known, these creatures are often developed by private profit-seeking mega-corporations such as DuPont which developed and patented OncoMouse™ (*ibid.*, 9). However, Haraway ultimately short-circuits the power of her own critique by merely *replacing* the Solace of Sacrifice and the majesty of Reason with what amounts to the consolation of “mundane reasons” (*When Species Meet* 76). As she writes:

I may (or may not) have good reasons to kill, or to make, oncomice, but I do not have the majesty of Reason and the Solace of Sacrifice. I do not have *sufficient reason*, only the risk of doing something wicked because it may also be good in the context of *mundane reasons*” (*ibid.*).

We certainly do not have sufficient reason, as Haraway suggests, to alter animals at the ontological level. But this realization should *end* not *enable* their violation by easing our conscience. What impact can the discursive shift from capital “R” Reason to lower case “r” reasons have on other animals as long as *any reason* is still found to justify their exploitation? Indeed, beyond exciting our curiosity or fulfilling a (twisted) desire to toy with other animals’ lives by seeing what bizarre hybrid configurations we can come up with, it is difficult to imagine what these “mundane” reasons might actually be. In any case, the exact nature of those reasons is besides the point: from the standpoint of ethics,

17 While, to be sure, there is controversy surrounding genetic engineering and transgenics, the debate tends to revolve around the ethics of genetically manipulating humans, not animals. The discussion following the announcement in 1997 of British scientist, Ian Wilmut’s, “creation” of the cloned sheep, “Dolly,” is a case in point. See, for example, Gina Kolata’s article (23 February 1997) in the *New York Times* describing Wilmut’s “feat.”

mundane reasons, whatever their content, are as problematic as “majestic” Reason if they ultimately serve to legitimize violence.¹⁸

Haraway further attempts to distinguish mundane reasoning from majestic Reason by suggesting that unlike the latter, the former does not exclude affect. In her words, “Those mundane reasons are inextricably affective and cognitive if they are worth their salt” (ibid.). It is undoubtedly important that we reconfigure our conception of reason against its typical sado-humanist characterization as disembodied, transcendent and unemotional if we hope to overcome the prejudicial thought and practices against other creatures that such a conception of reason promotes. However, Haraway’s reformulation of rationality as including affect ultimately only helps to perpetuate the violent domination of other animals, precisely because she uses it to *justify* not to *protest* their exploitation. Indeed, Haraway goes on to explain that redefining rationality so that it is not mutually exclusive with feeling and, she now adds, care, is important because it highlights the importance of never feeling fully (self-)satisfied with our ethical reasoning. As she reiterates, “Felt reason is not sufficient reason, but it is what we mortals have. The grace of felt reason is that it is always open to reconsideration with care” (ibid.). Of course it is always important to reconsider our ethical choices, particularly with a view to prioritizing care, so that we can be sure, for example, that we have done our utmost to avoid causing others harm. However, we have already seen the true face of Haraway’s conception of “care”—viz., that it facilitates further abuse. As a result, once again, her conception of reason informed by feeling and care falls flat. And, contrary to what Haraway claims here, we *do* have more than “felt reason” which permits systemic torture. We can take “felt action”—or action inspired by empathy—to eliminate it. From a liberationist perspective, Haraway’s “felt reason” and “mundane reasons” are thinly veiled rationalizations, in all senses of the word, of violence.

¹⁸ Indeed, as Hannah Arendt has so convincingly shown us in her investigation of Adolph Eichmann’s trial and conviction for orchestrating the mass deportation of Jews to their deaths during the Nazi Holocaust, resorting to banal reasoning is a particularly effective vehicle for enabling the commission of atrocities and the evasion of responsibility. See Arendt.

Haraway further vindicates the genetic engineering of other animals by claiming that hybrid animals such as oncomice embody transgressive, boundary-blurring and anti-humanist politics. OncoMouse™, she tells us, need not be viewed as a product of, but can be seen as a challenge to, the anthropocentric dualism of the modern sado-humanist tradition. No longer must nature and society be artificially divided, or treated as ontologically distinct as befits the Great Divide. Rather, once again following Latour, Haraway suggests that our world is made up of “naturecultures” and hybrids—of which we could say OncoMouse™ is the apotheosis (*When Species Meet* 16; 32). She writes, “symbolically and materially, OncoMouse™ is where the categories of nature and culture implode for members of technoscientific cultures” (Haraway, “Race” 273). In the same vein she says of OncoMouse™ that s/he is “my sibling, and more properly, male or female, s/he is my sister” (Haraway, *Modest_Witness* 79). Like female humans, “her essence is to be a mammal, a bearer by definition of mammary glands, and a site for the operation of a transplanted, human, tumor-producing gene” (ibid.). By suggesting that OncoMouse™ is her “sister” Haraway in fact papers over and minimizes the actual gap between herself and this transgenic creature and the techno-capitalist apparatus which allowed OncoMouse™ to be created in the first place. By calling OncoMouse™ her sister without wholly opposing its development to begin with, Haraway does not actually shrink the Great Divide which separates OncoMouse™ from herself. Rather, she reinforces it by setting up what amounts to nothing more than a *false* identity between herself—a relatively free and inviolable human subject—with a totally unfree and utterly violated subject-turned-object. In the end, Haraway’s characterization of this creature as her “sister” seems to serve primarily as another consolation for supporting violence that is committed against animals in the name of techno-science.¹⁹

Indeed, we must seriously question Haraway’s very assumption that dissolving boundaries as such inherently contains radical political possibilities. The supposed collapse of the humanist binary between nature and culture turns out not to be really a collapse at all, but a one-sided imposition of culture (man) onto nature (mouse). The

19 Regrettably, Haraway’s invocation of “sisterhood” and feminist solidarity to describe human-animal relations in the laboratory has found a great deal of traction in the works of other cultural studies theorists. See Braidotti 99-101.

ontological distortion of the genetically engineered creature is nothing more than the productionist god trick—man making himself by remaking nature—in a new guise. In fact, it is the culmination of Francis Bacon’s early modern humanist vision of Nature made wholly available to the claims and desires of instrumental reason in general, and the fulfillment of his call to the mastery of nature through its ontological transformation in particular. As Bacon wrote, “On a given body to generate and superinduce a new nature or new natures, is the work and aim of human power” (“New Organon” 148). The genetic engineers at Charles River Labs who, with DuPont’s support, produced OncoMouse™, are today’s “Fathers of Solomon’s House” or “Fathers of the College of the Six Days Works,” the scientist-priests featured in Bacon’s utopian “New Atlantis.” For Bacon, not only does man treat nature as a model for himself, but he can alter nature in defiance of natural laws, further imprinting himself on it. In the words of the Father of Solomon’s House:

By art likewise we make [nonhuman beings] greater or taller than their kind is, and contrariwise, dwarf them, and stop their growth. We make them more fruitful and bearing than their kind is, and contrariwise barren and not generative. Also we make them differ in colour, shape, activity, many ways. We find means to make commixtures and copulations of different kinds, which have produced many new kinds. We make a number of kinds of serpents, worm, flies, fishes, by putrefaction, whereof some are advanced (in effect) to be perfect creatures, like beasts or birds, and have sexes, and do propagate. (ibid. 263f)

As we can see, for Bacon, nature is not tied to any rigid ontological rules but is infinitely alterable by man. In splicing beings at the genetic level, the makers of OncoMouse™ take this Baconian fancy to the next level. By casting other creatures into the mold he has designed for them, the Father of Solomon’s House indirectly reproduces his own image as the all-powerful man of reason and science. It is no wonder that Bacon’s fictional character is *both* priest and scientist—he is the god/man of reason par excellence. While this excerpt from “New Atlantis,” therefore, attests to the validity of Haraway’s earlier critique of the productionist aspect of sado-humanism, her subsequent celebration of OncoMouse™ as a challenge to sado-humanism, signals a regrettable inversion of her original analysis.

In the end, Haraway's glorification of the dissolution of boundaries supposedly represented by OncoMouse™ amounts to what Eileen Crist describes in her excellent critique of postmodern constructivist views of nature, as the tendency to treat the nonhuman as "ontologically indeterminate . . . white noise . . . an elusive trickster amenable to indefinite registrations," and as totally reliant on humans to assign it meaning (8).²⁰ The postmodern renaming of nature—or, in our case, nonhuman animals—which occurs through this designation of meaning, is indistinguishable from the Judeo-Christian heritage of human supremacism and exceptionalism which it aims to undermine: the "naming-and-working" of humans onto nature or the nonhuman, confers a special status on human beings (*ibid.*, 11). Comparing the otherwise antagonistic schools of positivism and postmodern constructivism, in particular, Crist explains that "for both the primary locus of meaning is human categories *cum* techniques—in Biblical terms, naming-and-working" (*ibid.*). While Haraway is not a postmodern constructivist *per se*, the same parallel can be drawn between her anti-humanist "material-semiotics" of companion species and humanism: for both, the primary locus of meaning is the human, and human *discourse about* the nonhuman, not the *nonhuman itself*.

As Crist further points out, the tendency towards boundary dissolution is symptomatic of colonialism - political, cultural, and ecological. In particular, she reminds us that the colonization of other peoples and of the environment have always involved "the violation of rightful boundaries—first annihilating and then assimilating the other, whether nonhuman or human" (*ibid.*, 22). The discourse of boundary blurring so lauded by Haraway is representative of what, as Crist explains, Vandana Shiva calls the "politics of disappearance" and which Crist argues is endemic to postmodern constructivism (*ibid.*, 21). For the postmodern constructivists the nonhuman *referents* themselves—such as "self-determining nonhuman habitats" (*ibid.*, 21), or in our case, self-determining nonhuman animals—are "denied existential/ontological standing" and are thus made to "disappear" (*ibid.*, 21f). Indeed, as Crist and other outspoken critics of postmodernism have highlighted, there is a direct correlation between the *theoretical* and *actual*

20 For Haraway's use of the term "trickster" in this way see, for example, *Modest_Witness* 127.

destruction of “nature” or the nonhuman. In Crist’s words, “As the biosphere is colonized—settled, paved, mined, burnt, dammed, drained, overfished, poached, and roundly used—diversified conceptions of how ‘nature’ and ‘society’ (should) relate are more facilely bulldozed by a monolithic image of ‘nature-society’ hybridization” (ibid., 19). Or as John Sanbonmatsu puts it, referring specifically to the postmodern annihilation of the subject as such, “the main trouble with the postmodern rejection of the subject in theory . . . is that it has fatefully coincided with the obliteration of the individual human or nonhuman subject in social or historical fact” (239). Although Haraway does not necessarily advocate the total annihilation of the subject per se, and indeed suggests that we recognize other animals as subjects (*When Species Meet* 67), her conception of subjectivity is dubious if it permits the reduction of other animals to ontologically indeterminate, infinitely transformable and boundary-less objects.

Technoscience as Technological Rationality

Haraway’s celebration of the dissolution of boundaries between beings in particular, and between science fiction and reality in general,²¹ is also symptomatic of the irrationality of what Marcuse calls “technological rationality.” Loosely defined, technological rationality is the subordination of language and thought, sexuality, art and labor to the forces of capitalist production and the technological apparatus which supports them. This process relies on the collapse of former areas of contradiction such as those among humans, things and animals. For example, Marcuse explains that in the universe of technological rationality, people “recognize themselves in their commodities,” while the natural world itself is viewed as an “extension of man’s mind and body” (9). The conflation of formerly contradictory beings and ontological categories also inhibits or eliminates the capacity for “negative” or critical thinking, thus preventing political and social resistance and the realization of freedom—understood, to reiterate, as freedom from exploitation and violence and freedom to fulfill one’s potentialities (ibid., 125). Nature or the nonhuman is one of these areas of contradiction. As Marcuse writes, “When cities and highways and

²¹ See Haraway, “Promises of Monsters” 70.

National Parks replace the villages, valleys, and forests, when motorboats race over the lakes and planes cut through the skies—then these areas lose their character as a qualitatively different reality, as areas of contradiction” (ibid., 66). When we splice one animal with a gene from another, we cut through another qualitatively different reality and therefore lose yet another area of contradiction by which to cultivate critical thought.

Marcuse goes on to suggest that in a world governed by technological rationality, illusion and reality, science and magic, and imagination and progress merge together and are jointly subsumed into the project of domination. He continues:

The willful play with fantastic possibilities, the ability to act with good conscience, *contra naturam*, to experiment with men and things, to convert illusion into reality and fiction into truth, testify to the extent to which Imagination has become an instrument of progress. . . . The formerly antagonistic realms merge on political grounds—magic and science, life and death, joy and misery. (ibid., 247f)

Transgenic animals are, once again, the perfect examples of these dangerous confluences of formerly antagonistic realms. Haraway’s enthusiastic claim that “Like it or not, we are catapulted into the narrative fields that contain Frankenstein and his monster and all the other alluring scenes of night births in the mythological culture of science” (“Race” 275), strikes a decidedly sinister note in light of Marcuse’s critique. Indeed, the outcome of the self-perpetuating logic of irrational technological rationality in which former areas of contradiction have collapsed is the loss of both our critical vantage point and the possibility of acknowledging our guilt in the perpetration of atrocities. We no longer see brutality, violence and horror for what they are. Rather, in the illusory ethical neutrality of science and technology we allow more and more heinous acts of cruelty to take place. Thus, Marcuse asserts, in modern industrialized societies “guilt has no place” (79). Haraway’s enthusiasm for biotechnology, genetic engineering, transgenics and technoscience reflect the ethico-political myopia and impotency which Marcuse so poignantly suggests are inherent to technological rationality.

Haraway further glaringly exemplifies the “false consciousness” endemic to technological rationality by investing radical power in the laboratory, the site of the production of the most enormous wealth and power in the age of technoscience. She asks rhetorically, “How could feminists and antiracists in this culture do without the power of the laboratory to make the normal dubious?” (Haraway, “Race” 275). The laboratory might “make the normal dubious” by producing hybrid creatures, but it does so only through the enactment of domination, violence and power on the bodies of helpless nonhuman beings and with major corporate sponsorship from the biotech, agribusiness and pharmaceutical industries. If feminists and antiracists find a home in the laboratory in which animals are experimented upon, they do so at the expense of any real challenge to the structure of domination which put animals there at their mercy in the first place.

Equally irrational is Haraway’s *naturalization* of the laboratory setting which she portrays as a “scene of evolution.” With reference again to oncomice she writes, “Inhabiting the nature of no nature, OncoMouse™’s natural habitat is the fully artifactual space of technoscience” (ibid.). Making a similar claim about other laboratory animals, she suggests that “Like fruit flies, yeast, transgenic mice, and the humble nematode worm . . . [a laboratory rabbit’s] evolutionary story transpires in the lab; the lab is its proper niche, its true habitat” (Haraway, “Promises of Monsters” 72). Haraway’s avowal of the laboratory as a site of evolution of rabbits, flies, transgenic mice and worms, eerily recalls the Father of Solomon’s House in Bacon’s utopia who eagerly proclaims that “we have also places for breeding and generation of those kinds of worms and flies which are of special use” (Bacon, “New Atlantis” 264). Haraway is not wrong to suggest that OncoMouse™ and other genetically manipulated or vivisected animals are artificial constructs of the laboratory. It is true that such creatures “evolved” in the laboratory setting and not by some other natural evolutionary development. However, while it is one thing to acknowledge this, it is another to endorse it, as Haraway implicitly does.

Since technological rationality operates by dissolving areas of contradiction, it is the restoration of *essence*—or the capacity for a being to *be* itself, *by* itself, *as* itself—which constitutes political resistance, not the erasure of ontological distinctions. In Marcuse’s

words, “In this universe, there are modes of being in which men and things are ‘by themselves’ and ‘as themselves,’ and modes in which they are not—that is, in which they exist in distortion, limitation or denial of their nature (essence)” (125). If transgenic animals have any essence at all it is to be dominated. As Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer argue, “In their transformation the essence of things is revealed as always the same, a substrate of domination” (6). Beyond manifesting the “essence” of the dominated, transgenic creatures assume the form of the de-essentialized and therefore unfree beings described by Marcuse. They indeed exist in total distortion, limitation and denial of their nature. The genetic engineer may think that the essence of the mouse he is genetically manipulating is to-be-genetically-manipulated, but in truth, its essence is *to-be-mouse*—to fulfill its natural behaviors and to live amongst its own kind in its natural environment. If we allowed mice and all other animals to be themselves, by themselves, and stopped transforming them into the monsters that populate science fiction novels and films, we would revive one of the areas of contradiction which technological rationality has fatefully eliminated. Perhaps then we would be a step closer to, rather than further from, the realization of freedom for both nonhumans and humans.

Ironically, though, as Crist aptly points out, for those adopting or working from postmodern discourse, such as Haraway, “anti-essentialism . . . is perceived as the high ground of the intellectual elite” while the “essentialist view of wilderness [and I would add, nonhuman animals] is deemed as an anachronism held by naïve romantics—or by those uninitiated into the abstruse mediations of the postmodern illuminati” (22). As Marcuse similarly pointed out, because the techno-capitalist apparatus is identified with rationality itself, critique is considered a kind of madness—“the intellectual and emotional refusal ‘to go along’ appears neurotic and impotent” (9). Hence Haraway’s telling condescension toward animal rights activists—her dismissal of those who would object to hybridization as “pure of heart,”²² or to other brutal practices as “romantic”—as if to rebuke them for indulging in “anachronistic” sentiments like compassion, or a commitment to justice, and substantive ethico-political critique.

22 See Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 4.

Haraway's enthusiasm for transgenics and technoscience ultimately leaves the framework of techno-capitalist domination unscathed. As such, she can be said to participate in what Crist contends is the "redemption" of the destruction of nature or the nonhuman, "through icons of . . . a technologically remade world" (19), thus joining the ranks of those whom Carol Gigliotti calls "apologists for an inevitably biotechnological future" in advanced capitalist society (1).

"Wrong Laughter"

Haraway further aligns herself with the forces of domination by participating in the sadistic tendency to laugh at the victims of oppression. This is both ironic and unfortunate, since in her earlier work Haraway illuminated for us how Harlow's sado-humanist commitments came through in the jocular misogynistic asides which run through his reports. For example, Haraway cites the following quip in which Harlow compares the "surrogate mothers," described above, to frigid women: "There is only one social affliction worse than an ice-cold wife, and that is an ice-cold mother" (cited in Haraway, *Primate Visions* 240). Harlow's plays-on-words reflected his plays-on-reality. Indeed, Haraway describes Harlow's experiments themselves as "functional artifactual jokes" and concludes, "No wonder the style of the Harlow labs reads as burlesque parody. The simultaneously literal and jocular quality of Harlow prose is part of its fascination, as the scientist translates metaphor into hardware" (ibid., 233).

Haraway's critique of Harlow is, once again, in many respects highly insightful. The use of humor to reinforce and legitimate the exploitation of the powerless is in fact one of the most disturbing weapons in the arsenal of the powerful. As Adorno and Horkheimer observed, "Ringing laughter has always denounced civilization" (88). In their discussion of de Sade's *Juliette*, they describe Juliette—who sets out to torture and murder as many people as possible, ostensibly to rebel against rigid Christian mores—as the emotionless, calculating, rationalist bourgeois figure par excellence. Juliette who "loves systems and logic," plans and inflicts tortures on her victims with great efficiency (ibid., 74). Totally

devoid of pity or compassion for her victims, Juliette is a perfect Nietzschean (ibid. 76). Laughter explodes out of efficient torturers like her who have long since purged pity. Moreover, as Adorno and Horkheimer further explain, laughter always has an object. In their words, “Laughter about something is always laughter at it, and the vital force which . . . bursts through rigidity in laughter is, in truth, the irruption of barbarity, the self-assertion which, in convivial settings, dares to celebrate its liberation from scruple” (ibid., 112). Weakness especially attracts laughter. Adorno and Horkheimer continue: “A creature which has already fallen attracts predators: humiliation of those already visited by misfortune visits the keenest pleasure” (ibid. 88). In the fascist state, in the death camp, in the torture chamber and in the laboratory, factory farm, breeding facility and so on, “there is laughter because there is nothing to laugh about” (ibid., 112). Having drained himself of pity or compassion, particularly for the nonhumans who would serve as his experimental subjects, in order to fulfill his role as impartial objective observer/creator, Harlow laughed his way through his career of torturing. Or perhaps Harlow’s laughter represents a flight from the residue of that feeling that he sought so virulently to expunge from himself; or perhaps a flight from the fear of the accusation of guilt he read on the baby monkeys’ anguished faces and battered bodies. Whatever the case, like the sadists, the fascists and the bourgeois rationalists that Adorno and Horkheimer decry, Harlow cheated the monkeys he tortured over the course of a decade, and possibly also cheated himself, of any semblance of happiness.²³

In light of Adorno and Horkheimer’s critique, Haraway is right to underscore the troubling role of humour in Harlow’s lab. However, she once again diminishes the strength of her own critique by engaging, herself, in the very sadistic laughter she attributes to Harlow and the “wrong laughter” described by Adorno and Horkheimer. Whether in her cavalier discussion of animal rights, or in her display and celebration of cartoons which trivialize the suffering of animal victims, Haraway’s tone is irrepressibly mocking. In one cartoon which she discusses, a wolf with an “electronic communications pack” attached to her body enters a forest and approaches a pack of other wolves. The

²³ For Adorno and Horkheimer’s discussion of the way in which wrong laughter “cheat[s] happiness,” see Horkheimer and Adorno 112.

caption reads, “We found her wondering at the edge of the forest. She was raised by scientists” (cited in Haraway, *When Species Meet* 13). For any one attuned to the heinous cruelty necessarily involved in the use of animals for experimental purposes, this cartoon should register as deeply disturbing and upsetting. Instead, Haraway glosses over the wolf’s humiliation and pain and, reducing the wolf to a symbol, makes herself the focus of analysis:

I find myself also in that female telecommunications-packing wolf. This figure collects its people through friendship networks, animal-human histories, science and technology studies, politics, anthropology and animal behaviour studies, and the *New Yorker’s* sense of humor. (ibid.)

Just like Harlow, Haraway is imprinting herself onto this wolf and making light of its actual suffering.

In another cartoon included in *When Species Meet*, caged laboratory mice have set up a giant mouse trap with a McDonald’s take-away bag strategically placed to lure in the unsuspecting experimenter. One mouse cries out, “Quiet, Everyone! The test subject is coming!” (ibid. 68). The cartoon is obviously poking fun at the expense of the all-knowing scientist, who gets his comeuppance. At the same time, however, the humor depoliticizes that power relation: we can poke fun at our hubris, without however threatening our right to power. In fact, the false empowerment ascribed to these fictional laboratory animals is reminiscent of the false empowerment Haraway ascribes to the real laboratory animals discussed earlier. The cartoon also recalls Haraway’s claim that humans too, can share in the suffering of laboratory animals. Such an act of rebellion would never take place. And that is the humour of the cartoon. As their oppressors we can laugh heartily at this fictional ruse, knowing it could never occur in reality. Our position of domination is still perfectly intact. Indeed, as noted in the discussion of Harlow above, after a raucous laugh any trace of guilt or responsibility at the misery we might have caused other creatures is effectively obliterated.

As we have already witnessed, Haraway belittles animal rights much as she belittles the animals themselves. Just as Haraway came close to valorizing veganism only to ultimately undermine it, she also appears to at least gesture towards a validation of the animal rights movement as a whole, only to eventually invalidate it as well. For example, she acknowledges that animal rights activists are “committed” to their cause (ibid., 295), and at one point even admits that her sleep is “haunted by the[ir] murmurings” (ibid., 297). However, such comments are overshadowed by what can only be described as her otherwise sardonic attitude towards animal rights. Haraway suggests, for example, that the “demands individual animals might make” are “ventriloquized in animal rights idiom” (ibid., 296), implying that animal rights activists and scholars unconsciously treat other animals as puppets, projecting their own voices of outrage and indignation onto the animals themselves. Finally, in addition to condemning animal rights to the ranks of the “romantic” and “pure of heart,” as noted above, she also disparages the movement by condescendingly describing animal rights discourse as “rights besotted” (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 48). While a serious critique of animal rights would be an important contribution to Animal Studies, Haraway does not offer this. Instead, she shrugs the entire movement off with a jeer at its expense and, therefore, also at the expense of the animals it seeks to defend.

Conclusion

As I outlined at the outset, Donna Haraway’s work has become paradigmatic of a largely depoliticized approach within Animal Studies. Rather than discuss the co-constitutive, entangled, responsible, and responsive relationships that we might form outside of and against the structure of domination (e.g. as in fact occurs today in places such as farm sanctuaries which are dedicated to rescuing and protecting animals from institutionalized violence), or legitimize the dedicated work of animal liberators and rescuers, Haraway instead chooses as her heroes animal dominators such as animal “trainers,” experimenters and hunters, and as her sites of interspecies inter-relationality, sites of total domination and violence such as laboratories. Indeed, for all her discussion of companion species and

progressive politics, Haraway seems strikingly often to be on the side of the victors in the sado-humanist project of domination.

In the end, then, while we can still learn from Haraway's analysis of sado-humanism in *Primate Visions*, her recent conception of companion species falls dramatically short of any substantive, transgressive and progressive ethico-political critique which strikes at the roots of domination. To be sure, Animal Studies can and should draw inspiration from the same thinkers on which Haraway claims to build her conception of companion species such as Levinas, Derrida and Merleau-Ponty. Phenomenology, as many other Animal Studies scholars have shown, is particularly conducive to rethinking human-animal relations along non-speciesist lines. However, it is a fatal ethical and political mistake to combine phenomenological conceptions of intersubjectivity, co-constitution, and so on with an affirmation of institutionalized violence against animals, as Haraway does. If we are to truly end the brutality and domination brought about by the sado-humanist tradition, we will need to develop an ethical phenomenology that is coupled with a radical political critique to yield a wholesale rejection—a total *refusal*—of domination. Unless Animal Studies takes as its premise that instrumental domination of nonhuman animals is politically and ethically unacceptable—full stop—then it has little to offer beyond frivolous excursions into the limits of discourse.

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The Great Unity: Daoism, Nonhuman Animals, and Human Ethics

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Save all that wriggles and runs, all the multitude of living beings. Allow them all to reach fulfillment and prevent them from suffering an early death.
(Great Precepts of the Highest Ranks)

Abstract: This article explores Daoist teachings that are friendly toward nonhuman animals, focusing on philosophy and morality, including such central concepts as Dao, ci, jian, bugan wei tianxia xian, and wuwei, as well as Daoist understandings of unity, harmony, and ultimate integrity. Daoism teaches people neither to harm, nor to kill, and therefore anticipates a vegan diet.

Introduction

Religions exist within cultures. Racist, sexist, and speciesist tendencies do not indicate a divine sanction of racism, patriarchy, or the exclusive importance of humans. While scriptural passages have been used to justify each of these practices, the preponderance of the world's great religious teachings speak against exploitation and cruel domination of any kind. This article exposes strongly animal-friendly teachings that lie at the heart of Daoism. This article does not discuss aspects of Daoism that might be considered unfriendly to nonhumans for three reasons. First, these arguments are easy to come by. Most people (whether in China or the U.S.) grow up believing that human exploitation of other creatures is religiously sanctioned. Most people within a given religion can and

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will readily provide a handful of worn-out justifications of the status quo—even of a diet that exploits other creatures—in spite of abundant, nutritionally sound, non-animal food options. I do not present these arguments because others can and will do so. People tend to defend their way of life, *whatever* that might be, even if their religion is rich with teachings to the contrary. Second, Daoist arguments posed in favor of exploiting nohumans—as in any religious tradition—are embarrassingly unconvincing in light of a richer understanding of religious teachings, writings, ideals, and exemplars, as I believe this article demonstrates. Arguments that support nonhuman exploitation tend to be both shallow and specific; they run counter to the deepest moral convictions of a religious tradition. Third, this article is quite long enough.

Daoist Philosophy and Morality

Dao

Daoism postulates no definitive, personal creator, no teleological goal, no intelligent design, and no judge to plan, punish, or even favor one activity over another. Dao simply “abides in all things” (Jochim, 1986: 8). Dao is

the final source and ground of the universe Dao runs through the whole universe and human life and is both the transcendent and the immanent. Therefore, as the model for human behavior and as the object of the ultimate concern of human beings, Dao is similar to God. The difference is that Dao has nothing to do with will, feelings, and purposes. (Xiaogan , 2001: 322–23)

Dao permeates all that exists. Dao is infinite, eternally changeless, nonbeing (Wu , 1991: 26–27). Dao is ultimate reality (Henricks, 1989: xviii). The Dao (or Way) is that reality, or that level of reality, that exists prior to and gave rise to all other things, the physical universe (Heaven and Earth), and all things in it The Way in a sense is like a great womb: it is empty and devoid in itself of differentiation, one in essence; yet somehow it contains all things in seed-like or embryo form, and all things “emerge” from the [D]ao . . . as babies emerge from their mothers But the Way does not simply give birth to all things. Having done so, it continues in some way to be present in each

individual thing as an energy or power, a power that is not static but constantly on the move, inwardly pushing each thing to develop and grow in a certain way, in a way that is in accord with its true nature. (Henricks, 1989: xviii–xix)

According to Zhuangzi, Dao is everywhere: in the ant, in the weeds, in “excrement and urine” (Chan, 1963, 203). Works attributed to Zhuangzi note that “The Way [Dao] has never known boundaries” (Watson, 2009). Dao resides in every long-tailed shrike and Chinese sturgeon, every old deer and crested ibis (one of the most endangered birds in the world). Each creature shares Dao—the ultimate reality—and is shaped by Dao, moved by Dao. Dao thereby offers a measure of perfection and perfectibility to everything that exists, every skink and Chinese paddlefish (though apparently now extinct).

Ci

Daoist philosophy harbors three important moral treasures: *ci* (compassion or deep love), *jian* (restraint or frugality), and *bugan wei tianxia xian* (“not daring to be at the forefront of the world”) (Kirkland, 2001:294; Xiaogan, 2001: 330). All three of these concepts are deeply interconnected, and together they provide powerful protection both for nature generally and for nonhumans specifically.

While the basic meaning of *ci* is love, “*ci* is deeper, gentler, and broader than love” (Xiaogan, 2001: 330). *Ci* manifests as “gentleness, motherly love, commiseration,” and is not limited to one’s own species (Xiaogan, 2001: 330). *Ci* requires “fostering life,” a concept that is central to Daoist morality. Consequently, Daoists ought to avoid harming any living being, even the wriggling worm. Daoism teaches respect for nature, which requires people to maintain habitat, where the channel Catfish and the Chinese water dragon live. The second to the last sentence in the *Daode jing* reminds readers, “The Way of Heaven is to benefit others and not to injure” (Chan , 1963:176).

Jian

Ci and *jian* (restraint, frugality), practiced together, help people to live simply out of compassion—so that others can live without being harmed or crowded from the planet. Those who exemplify compassion live simply, avoiding the destruction of habitat, and do not exploit other lives for their purposes.

Daoist philosophy holds that the natural state is the ideal state, and teaches humans to behave in a way that is harmonious with that which is natural (Marshall, 1992: 19). Nature shows us how to live—the preferred way to live. Daoist philosophy discourages people from striving or grasping at material wealth, while encouraging people to live gently on the earth, causing little disturbance, taking our example from nature. To live with great aplomb—to draw attention or make a fuss—is the way of nature, and is not consistent with a long and peaceful life.

Nature says few words.
For the same reason a whirlwind does not last a whole morning,
Nor does a rainstorm last a whole day.
If even Heaven and Earth cannot make them last long,
How much less can man? (*Lao-Tzu* #23)

Nonhumans teach *jian*. They reveal that which is necessary to existence, and expose that which is superfluous (Anderson, 2001: 278). Zhuangzi criticizes the sacrifice of other animals as superfluous and frivolous, making fun of coveted and much revered Chinese ceremonies, blatantly pointing out that pomp and circumstance are not a fair trade for another creature's life. No amount of ritual balderdash justifies unnecessary killing. Like the sacrifice of other creatures, factory farming is not necessary. Exploiting nonhumans for profit is therefore not consistent with *jian*.

Bugan Wei Tianxia Xian

Ci and *jian* stem from *bugan wei tianxia xian*: compassion for other creatures, and a life of restraint and frugality, stem from “not daring to be at the forefront of the world.” When we place ourselves in the forefront, we push other creatures to the back. If we imagine that our needs are more important than the needs of any other species, or any other individual, then our lives become cruel and exploitative. If we imagine ourselves to be superior to other creatures, we are likely to consider other creatures expendable, and exploit them for our purposes. *Bugan wei tianxia xian* helps us to take our humble place in the universe, allowing other creatures to do the same.

Transformation

Daoism holds that no individual is isolated or enduring; everything that exists is part of a great and ongoing transformation (Thompson, 1996: 6). The constant flux of the universe ties each individual to all other beings, binding “all things into one, equalizing all things” (Chan, 1963: 177).

Every aspect of this great cosmos interacts and participates in a self-generating process of ever-fluctuating life (Tu, 1989: 67). Every part “of the entire cosmos belongs to one organic whole” that interacts as “one self-generating life process” (Tu, 1985: 35). No one stands outside of the great process of transformation; all of us are bits and pieces of everything else. “Now a dragon, now a snake, / You transform together with the times, / And never consent to be one thing alone” (Zhuangzi, in Parkes, 1989: 92). Our bodies are recycled back, after death, into the world of matter and life. The “chain of being is never broken,” and a link exists between each entity and every other entity, whether agamid lizard, euploea, human, or red-headed vulture (Tu, 1989:70). All things—all beings—are bound together by this transformation process, by coming and going from the same matter, from one Great Unity (Parkes, 1989: 91).

We may prefer not to see ourselves in nose-picking apes or scrapping children, we may prefer to envision ourselves as civilized, educated, mature, or highly intelligent, but at the end of the day, we are animals, creatures of the earth who decompose to become yet other elements of this ever-transforming cosmos. I am only Lisa Kemmerer for a handful of decades, but like all other beings who exist at this point in time, or who have ever existed, my being is forever part of this ever-transforming universe.

Unity of Being

Ongoing, endless transformation results in Unity of Being. Every link in this web of life is critical to every other link; everything that exists in the universe is “intrinsically related to and thus constitutive of ‘self ’” (Ames, 1989: 120). In the words of Zhuangzi: “Although the myriad things are many, their order is one” (Chan , 1963: 204); “universe and I exist together, and all things and I are one” (Chan, 1963: 186). Humans, and all other aspects of this universe, are part of a much larger whole (Tu, 1989:74–75).

Daoism fosters a sense of self as an intimate part of a larger whole, in which people are of no greater importance than any other species (Thompson, 2006: 6). Everything that exists in this cosmos benefits all else, and no particular species or individual is favored in the impersonal process of transformation (Tu, 1989: 71–73). In the Daoist worldview, humans are “one of the myriad kinds of beings” (Wu , 1991: 37)—*only one* of the myriad kinds of beings. Each bar-tailed tree creeper and black spined toad is necessary to this larger whole, this Great Unity of Being (Tu, 1989: “The Continuity” 71). People and the mountain bamboo-partridge can *only* exist as part of this larger whole. Zhuangzi notes “Heaven and earth are one attribute; the ten thousand things are one horse. . . . For this reason, whether you point to a little stalk or a great pillar, a leper or the beautiful Hsi-shih, things ribald and shady or things grotesque and strange, the Way [Dao] makes them all into one” (Watson, 2009).

Harmony, Ultimate Integrity and Peace

Harmony is central to Daoism. The Daoist universe is ordered—harmonious—so that “alternating forces and phases” shape “rhythms of life” (Kleeman, 2001: 67). Harmony pervades the cosmos, which *is* union, integration, and synthesis, rather than exclusivity, individuality, and separation. Humans sometimes make the mistake of getting caught up in their individual lives, like a wave tearing across the ocean; Daoism discourages such a shortsighted lifestyle, instead encouraging *bugan wei tianxia xian*—a life harmonious, mindful that our short existence is part of a great and ongoing transformation. Shallow, human disharmony stems from the error of neglecting, or forgetting, our deeper, shared unity with the larger world. In contrast, harmony is envisioned as reaching the depths of quietude on the ocean floor. However much we might behave like an independent wave, we are the ocean, the Great Unity, along with the rest of nature, which functions in harmony. Spiritual advancement requires people to *know* and *act* on this understanding. It is our duty to live “for the fulfillment of the health and harmony of all living things” (Kirkland, 2001: 296). Harmony is the Chinese ideal.

Daoist writings envision a time of harmony, somewhere in the future, when the various communities of varied species will live together in peace. Zhuangzi notes: “Left to their own devices, human beings and animals would form harmonious natural communities” (Mair, 1994b: 80). If people would leave other beings alone, as we ought, we would live in a golden age of “ultimate integrity”—side by side, together and separate. In this world nonhumans would not fear humans, nor would they be domesticated. Writings of Zhuangzi state:

In such an age mountains have no paths or trails, lakes no boats or bridges. The ten thousand things live species by species, one group settled close to another. Birds and beasts form their flocks and herds, grass and trees grow to fullest height. So it happens that you can tie a cord to the birds and beasts and lead them about, or bend down the limb and peer into the nest of the crow and the magpie. In this age of Perfect Virtue men live the same as birds and beasts, group themselves side by side with the ten thousand things In uncarved simplicity the people attain their true nature. (Watson, 2009)

Wuwei

The Daoist concept of *wuwei* dovetails with *jian* (restraint, frugality), *bugan wei tianxia xian* (not daring to be at the forefront of the world), and the Daoist conception of harmony. *Wei* refers to “human action intending to achieve results,” and more specifically results thought to be “superior to what would result if nature were simply allowed to take its own course” (Kirkland, 2001: 295). *Wu* is a prefix that negates what comes after. Therefore, *wuwei* means “not to engage in human action intending to achieve results superior to those that would naturally occur.” *Wuwei* is generally translated as nonstriving, acting without acting, nonaction, or perhaps most appropriately, “action as non-action” (Xiaogan, 2001: 316).

Wuwei “refers to a higher standard of human actions and their results,” instructing practitioners to abandon human intrigue and live “in accordance with nature” without attempting to control or change the surrounding world or other creatures (Xiaogan, 2001: 315–316). *Wuwei* is consistent with our ordinary place in a much larger universe, it is consistent with keeping a low profile and maintaining harmony. In the *Daode jing*, the greatest accomplishment is no accomplishment.

[T]he sage desires to have no desire.
He does not value rare treasures.
He learns to be unlearned, and returns to what the multitude has missed
([D]ao).
Thus he supports all things in their natural state but does not take any action.
(*Lao-Tzu* #64)

Dao functions by *wuwei*; to practice *wuwei* is therefore to behave according to Dao (Xiaogan, 2001: 323). The *Daode jing* reminds Daoists to keep “hands off the processes at work in the world” because the world is a “spiritual vessel, and one cannot act upon it; one who acts upon it destroys it” (Kirkland, 2001: 296). “[D]ao invariably takes no action, and yet there is nothing left undone” (Henricks, 1989:37).

Wuwei advocates living “in harmony with . . . all other creatures” (Kinsley, 2001: 79). Acting without action embodies “the spirit of naturalness,” which coincides with harmony and is “directed toward the realization of natural harmony both among human societies and between humans and nature” (Xiaogan, 2001: 321).

Dao represents forever the unknown final reason of the world surrounding us, reminding human beings of their limitations. As average members of the . . . universe, humans have no power to do what they wish without facing unexpected consequences. Therefore, prudent behavior and action, namely [*wuwei*] are important and beneficial. (Xiaogan, 2001: 232–34)

Humans are not to dominate or control. Zhuangzi writes:

“What do you mean by Nature and what do you mean by man?” . . .

“A horse or a cow has four feet. That is Nature. Put a halter around the horse’s head and put a string through the cow’s nose, that is man. Therefore it is said, “Do not let man destroy Nature.” (Chan, 1963: 207)

In this great sage’s view, training horses is an interference that turns happy equines into “brigands” and ultimately destroys their lives (Mair, 1994b: 82):

Horses’ hooves are made for treading frost and snow, their coats for keeping out wind and cold. To munch grass, drink from the stream, lift up their feet and gallop this is the true nature of horses. Though they might possess great terraces and fine halls, they would have no use for them.

Then along comes Po Lo.

“I’m good at handling horses!” he announces, and proceeds to singe them, shave them, pare them, brand them, bind them with martingale and crupper, tie them up in stable and stall. By this time two or three out of ten horses have died. He goes on to starve them, make them go thirsty, race them, prance them, pull them into line, force them to run side by side, in front of them the worry of bit and rein, behind them the terror of whip and crop. By this time over half the horses have died. (Watson, 2009)

Wuwei reminds that nature requires no changes or refinements, and that any such attempts will only lead to ruin (Kinsley, 1995: 80). The *Daode jing* notes that “Racing and hunting cause one’s mind to be mad” (#12) and that “Fish should not be taken away from the water” (#36) (Chan, 1963: 145, 157). Breeding to acquire fatter cattle, debeaking, artificial insemination, and genetic manipulation are all examples of *wei*—“human action intending to achieve results,” thought to be “superior to what would result if nature were simply allowed to take its own course” (Kirkland, 2001: 295). The Daoist practitioner allows for the ongoing harmonious unfolding of the universe, where “everything develops or is accomplished naturally” (Xiaogan, 2001: 321). Daoist traditions teach that what is natural is ideal. Other creatures (like people) are best left in their natural state (Anderson, 2001: 279).

Humans sometimes imagine that wild critters are better off in human care, where food and water are abundant. Of this, Zhuangzi writes that the “swamp pheasant has to walk ten paces for one peck and a hundred paces for one drink, but it doesn't want to be kept in a cage. Though you treat it like a king, its spirit won't be content” (Watson, 2009). Though the wild pheasant must work for water and food, such menial tasks are natural—they are the pheasant’s life, the pheasant’s *te*, the pheasant’s Dao. The wilds are where such fowl belong, and in Daoist philosophy, where the pheasant will always prefer to remain. Even if we imagine that we improve the lives of other animals, our meddling in their lives is harmful.

Wuwei speaks against development and meddling with natural wild populations to benefit human interests, such as the interests of hunters or ranchers. *Wuwei* requires human beings to leave other creatures alone (Kinsley, 1995: 79), and *wuwei* reminds people that the only “wise and beneficent behavior” for humans—the only way to achieve harmony—is *bugan wei tianxia xian* and *jian*, “humble and enlightened self-restraint” (*jian*) (Kirkland, 2001: 296). Daoist wisdom reminds people of their limitations, and instructs people to be mindful (if not leery) of factory farming and other meddling with the planet and nonhumans (Xiaogan, 2001: 232). What do we know of the unfolding of

the universe? How often have humans discovered too late the ill effects of their manipulations?

Daoist Precepts—Do Not Kill or Harm

Daoism speaks clearly against killing, and provides a “universalistic ethic” that extends “not only to all humanity, but to the wider domain of all living things” (Kirkland, 2001: 284). Daoist precepts specifically promote “compassion, empathy, and kindness” toward other creatures (Kohn, 2004: 71). For example, the *Record of Purgations of Precepts* (8th century) teaches Daoists to be compassionate, nurturing, caring, and selfless “for the sake of all beings” (Kohn, 2004: 68). The first precept of *The Scripture of the Ten Precepts* (5th century) requires Daoists to be “always be mindful of the host of living beings” (Kohn, 2004: 185). Nonhumans are explicitly protected by a multitude of Daoist precepts, lists of rules which define “who Daoists [are] and where they fit into the greater network of society, world, and cosmos” (Kohn, 2004: 135).

The many lists of Daoist precepts are generally very similar, usually containing five foundational precepts, the first of which is an injunction not to kill (Kohn, 2004: 67). For example, *The 180 Precepts of Lord Lao (Yibaibashijie, 5th century)* is one of the oldest Daoist compositions and remains foundational to Daoism; other “extensive community codes recapitulate its rules in one form or another” (Kohn, 2004: 137). The Daoist injunction against killing is repeated frequently in *The 180 Precepts* in varied forms, warning against “killing in general, killing birds, killing animals, eating meat, [and] eating animal flesh” (Kohn, 2004: 136). Additionally, *The 180 Precepts* warn against harming other creatures, whether insects, birds, or mammals, whether by disrupting their homes, destroying their families, or abuse and overwork (Schipper, 2001: 84–85):

1. Do not keep many animals
4. Do not kill or harm any being
8. Do not raise pigs or sheep
24. Do not . . . eat meat
39. Do not engage in killing

- 40. Do not encourage others to kill
- 49. Do not step on or kick . . . domestic animals
- 79. Do not fish or hunt and thereby harm and kill the host of living beings. .
- 95. Do not in winter dig up insects hibernating in the earth
- 97. Do not wantonly climb trees or plunder nests and destroy birds' eggs . . .
- 98. Do not catch birds or beasts in cages or nets.
- 129. Do not wantonly whip the six domestic animals.
- 130. Do not ride a horse or drive a carriage without good reason
- 132. Do not startle birds or beasts
- 142. Always be mindful of purity and remember the divine law, honor the pure and wise, and [sparingly] eat like a deer and drink like cattle
- 150. Always diligently avoid being cruel
- 172. If someone kills birds and beasts, fish or other living beings for you, do not eat them.
- 173. If something has been killed for food, do not eat it
- 176. To be able to cut out all meat of living beings and the six domestic animals is best; without doing this, you will violate the precepts.
- 180. Practice these precepts without violation, and if you violate one make sure you repent properly. Then change your behavior [W]idely pursue the salvation of all beings. (Kohn, 2004: 137-144)

Interestingly, *The 180 Precepts* “specifies particular situations in which killing might be indicated but should not be pursued” (Kohn, 2004: 36). For example, #172 and #173 indicate that eating flesh is inadmissible *even if*, as a guest, one is served the wings of a hen or part of a pig’s leg. To eat flesh is to “violate the precepts” (Kohn, 2004: 144).

Similarly, *Precepts of the Highest Lord Lao* (sixth century) state: “The precept to abstain from killing means that you must not kill any living being, . . . be it flying or merely wriggling” (Kohn, 2004: 148). *The Precepts of the Three Primes* (medieval) specifically denounces slaughtering domestic beasts and also forbids killing any living beings (#68), shooting wild beasts and birds (#69) setting traps to catch fish (#71), and setting fires to hunt (#70) (Kohn, 2004: 137-144).

Great Precepts of Self-Observation (sixth century) also forbid harming nonhumans, including harm caused by raising “domestic animals” (#33), destroying small creatures by burning (#39), riding horses or using carriages (#138), startling nonhumans or digging them out of the earth (#146), or capturing wild beasts or birds and putting them in cages

(#153) (Kohn, 2004: 205-211). This same text contains equally clear prohibitions against harming wild lands—habitat.

Chinese precepts tend to be stated in the form of prohibitions, but *The Great Precepts of the Highest Ranks* (5th century) offers a list of affirmative actions under the title of “The Highest Precepts of Wisdom for the Salvation of All Living Beings.” Three out of six of these precepts focus on *munificence* in our interactions with nonhumans:

Precept 4. Give wisely to the birds and beasts, to all species of living creatures. Take from your own mouth to feed them, let there be none left unloved or not cherished. May they be full and satisfied generation after generation. May they always be born in the realm of blessedness.

Precept 5. Save all that wriggles and runs, all the multitude of living beings. Allow them all to reach fulfillment and prevent them from suffering an early death. May they all have lives in prosperity and plenty. May they never step into the multiple adversities.

Precept 6. Always practice compassion in your heart, commiserating with all. Liberate living beings from captivity and rescue them from danger. (Kohn 175)

The explicit goal of these precepts is to “help all living beings realize the Dao” (Kohn, 2004: 168). The previously mentioned *Great Precepts of Self-Observation* also require adherents to “place the myriad beings first and not . . . attain the Dao only for” oneself (Kohn, 2004: 215).

The Daoist school of Complete Perfection (Quanzhen) gained state sanction under the rule of the Mongol, Genghis Khan, in the thirteenth century, and soon became the leading branch of Daoism. Complete Perfection has remained China’s “major monastic organization” ever since (Kohn, 2004: 134). This Daoist order maintains “strong continuity” with earlier “Daoist ethics and behavior models” and exemplifies core Daoist teachings, nourishing and protecting all that exists in the larger world (Kohn, 2004: 134).

Wang Konyang (1622-1680), of the Complete Perfection branch of Daoism, compiled manuals and precepts that remain “an indispensable means to enlightenment and an important element in the education of the Daoist clergy” in contemporary society (Kohn, 2004: 253). In traditional Daoist style, the initial precept in his *Precepts of Initial Perfection* require that members “not kill any living being” (Kohn, 2004: 255). The precepts that follow reiterate this primary law: “Do not kill or harm anything that lives in order to satisfy your own appetites [22a]. Always behave with compassion and grace to all, even insects and worms” (Kohn, 2004: 255, 256).

Diet

The Ten Precepts of Initial Perfection forbid monks from partaking of flesh (Kohn, 2004: 256). In *The Great Precepts of Self-Observation*, among thoughts that one ought to cultivate, the first is a commitment to vegetarian food (Kohn, 2004: 214). Ko Hung (fourth century) wrote that adherents ought to “entirely abstain from flesh” (Thompson, 1996: 85). Given the above precepts, many of which explicitly denounce eating flesh under any circumstances, it is not surprising that Daoist monks continue to enjoy a peaceful life fueled by a fleshless diet.

Monastic practice forbids violence of any kind, including killing and the taking of flesh (Kohn, 2004: 50). Monastery meals consist “largely of rice, wheat, and barley, combined with various vegetables and tofu. In Daoist religious literature, meat is not even mentioned among the five main food groups” (Kohn, 2004: 51). Members and leaders of the school of Complete Perfection continue to live in wild places, embracing Daoist simplicity and celibacy, and maintaining a vegan diet (Komjathy, 2009 *forthcoming*).

Generally speaking, the dishes tend to be simple combinations of vegetables with minimal amounts of seasoning, supplemented with rice, millet, or *mantou* (steamed buns). At times, one also finds *doufu* (tofu). Generally speaking, monastic meals go beyond modern conceptions of “vegetarianism”; they are vegan (no eggs or dairy products).

Historically speaking, dairy products have always been scant in China, so the avoidance of eggs is most noteworthy. (Komjathy, 2009 *forthcoming*)

Daoist ritual purity also “requires the avoidance of animal slaughter and blood sacrifice”—not just on the altar, but on the kitchen counter (Komjathy2009 *forthcoming*). Daoists stand before the universe as a sacred vessel filled with the numinous presence of the Dao; ritually-informed Daoist vegetarianism extends Daoist views of cosmic harmony and “salvation” to include all sentient beings. In such a place of reverence and realization, one discovers that the altar is simultaneously temple platform, celestial locale, mountain peak, and internal center The altar is simultaneously in the world and in the self. (Komjathy,2009 *forthcoming*)

If bloodshed is spiritually impure, spiritual impurities *within* our bodies, the bodies in which we live and express our spiritual lives, prevent eating of flesh, or other body products inevitably linked with slaughter in Western markets, such as dairy and eggs. Daoism teaches of a “subtle body” an “energetic ‘body’ within the body,” which requires “attentiveness to what one ingests and circulates” (Komjathy2009 *forthcoming*).

This Daoist view has clear implications for sentient beings through vegetarianism: what one ingests is what one is. To consume the meat of slaughtered animals is to make suffering, injury, and violent death part of oneself. Such is not the practice of priest or immortal; such is not the practice of “adepts *of* the Dao” or realized beings. (Komjathy2009 *forthcoming*) Louis Komjathy, a contemporary Daoist scholar and practitioner, practicing for fifteen years, is ordained in the order of Complete Perfection, and is also an academic who focuses on the subject of Daoism. He notes that:

“(F)or *anyone* who claims to have ecological commitments or environmental concerns, vegetarianism is a *minimal requirement*” and that “‘animal industries’ should be systematically undermined and eventually extinguished through a shift in consumption habits” (Komjathy2009 *forthcoming*):

Anyone who understands the realities of modern slaughterhouses (“meat-packing plants”) and still has access to the core goodness of innate nature, the Dao made manifest in/as/through us, will accept the responsibility of vegetarianism The consumption of meat enmeshes one in an interconnected system of suffering, exploitation, and murder. One’s lack of direct killing does not lessen one’s karmic involvement in slaughter. The actual, personal consequences of that involvement will differ for each person, but the consequences for the animals involved (human and non-human), for society, and for the world, are clear.

One consequence is suffering. This suffering is clearly audible, as is the inner call to relieve suffering. The choice of compassion for sentient beings, especially those who are unheard and unseen, has other effects: one begins to free oneself from karma; one becomes part of a different community, lineage, and reality, a community in which reverence, sacred presence, and energetic aliveness are nourished and expressed. One’s decision to rectify detrimental patterns and to cultivate beneficial patterns may also exert a transformative effect on one’s family, community, and society. (Komjathy, 2009 *forthcoming*)

Komjathy views “all of life as a ‘ritual process,’ as a form of *communitas* and as an expression of reverence for the sacred” (Komjathy 2009 *forthcoming*). By choosing what he eats, he frees not only nonhumans who are confined and prematurely killed, but also those who confine and kill such creatures. Komjathy views this as a spiritual process:

Liberating oneself from a context of violence liberates those who inflict violence, those upon whom the violence is inflicted, and every being entangled in this pattern of distortion. Such are the perils of domination and domestication. Through dietary shifts, one becomes less material and more rarified. Through a process of cosmicization, a state of trans-personal interconnection develops; one abides in the primordial undifferentiation of the Dao in which personal selfhood and selfish desires disappear, and beings are able to abide in their own natural places. (Komjathy, 2009 *forthcoming*)

Kinship and Community

Daoism teaches that all creatures share “the numinous presence of the Dao” (Komjathy 2009 *forthcoming*). We are one community in Dao, which “abides in all” (Jochim, 1986 8). Of “Daoist Truths,” Wang Chong wrote in the first century CE, “Man is a creature . . . ; his nature cannot be different from that of other creatures” (Mair, 1994a 65–66). Daoist traditions do not envision a “barrier between people and animals, or, more generally, between humanity and nature In a deep and basic sense, *Dao* unites humans and animals, and teaches us to treat them with respect” (Anderson, 1989: 286). In the Daoist worldview, human beings “experience nature from within” (Tu, 1989: 77).

Zhuangzi understood that nonhumans, while unique individuals, are also our kin; they share consciousness, and experience life similarly to how we experience life. There is a specific experience in being a butterfly, according to Zhuangzi, and also in being human. There is also *shared* experience between the different species, and constant transformation provides a certain ambiguity about individual existence that might keep us guessing who we are at any one moment.

Zhuangzi’s writing indicates that there is enough commonality between species to have a strong sense of what other creatures prefer (Anderson, 2001: 278). A love of freedom, and life itself, reaches across species, and this shared interest in life is an excellent guide for understanding the preferences of others. While we cannot assume that a bird likes music, we can be absolutely certain that a bird prefers life to death, freedom to confinement, and health and welfare to injury and illness. Northern snakehead fish, human beings, hill mynas, and water deer share a preference for remaining alive, free from pain, and in a state that is natural to their species—to their *te*. Subduing or training other beings is inherently harmful and cruel. Freedom—the ability to live one’s life without disturbance or the control of another—is understood to be no less ideal for horses than it is for human beings (Anderson, 2001: 278). If “taming” other creatures doesn’t turn them into brigands, Zhuangzi suggests, it will kill them. In our love of freedom and

autonomy, we are kin. Each creature prefers to be what he or she is born to be—what is natural, to follow Dao—and not to be exploited for the purposes of others.

Zhuangzi expresses this viewpoint with characteristic humor, explaining how he refused an invitation to become a powerful administrator, which he recognized would bring fame and notoriety, but not happiness. He responds to the invitation by comparing himself to a long dead but much venerated tortoise:

"(w)ithout turning his head, [Zhuangzi] said "I have heard that there is a sacred tortoise in Ch'u that has been dead for three thousand years. The king keeps it wrapped in cloth and boxed, and stores it in the ancestral temple. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its bones left behind and honored? Or would it rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud?"

It would rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud," said the two officials. [Zhuangzi] said, "Go away! I'll drag my tail in the mud!" (Watson, 2009)

Zhuangzi understood that animals—human and otherwise—share fundamental qualities, but he also understood that no two species are identical, and that even within one species, no two individuals are identical. All living beings share the quality of individual uniqueness within the larger community. Zhuangzi takes this wonderful ambiguity of kinship and difference yet one step further in a story where he and a disciple are standing on the bridge over the river Hao, observing the fishes:

Chuang Tzu and Hui Tzu were strolling along the dam of the Hao River when Chuang Tzu said, "See how the minnows come out and dart around where they please! That's what fish really enjoy!"

Hui Tzu said, "You're not a fish - how do you know what fish enjoy?"
Chuang Tzu said, "You're not I, so how do you know I don't know what fish enjoy?"

Hui Tzu said, "I'm not you, so I certainly don't know what you know. On the other hand, you're certainly not a fish - so that still proves you don't know what fish enjoy!"

Chuang Tzu said, “Let's go back to your original question, please. You asked me how I know what fish enjoy - so you already knew I knew it when you asked the question. I know it by standing here beside the Hao.” (Watson, 2009)

In this beautiful and tricky bit of writing, Zhuangzi indicates “that people and fish share enough basic similarity that humans can understand them” (Anderson, 2001: 278). In this story, Zhuangzi highlights shared creatureliness (Anderson, 2001:278). Zhuangzi’s fleeting interaction over the river Hao leaves readers aware that there is something questionable about challenging anything so obvious as another person’s ability to understand or relate to shared creatureliness in a fish or any other nonhuman. Indeed, writings attributed to Zhuangzi encourage people to take the point of view of others, including the point of view of nonhumans. Zhuangzi also indicates that to lack this ability, or to doubt this ability, is a spiritual failure.

Other creatures play an important role in Daoist literature, where they are understood to be similar enough to humans for great spiritual adepts to draw meaningful parallels across species (Anderson, 2001: 165–66). All beings share the Dao, which abides in all beings (Komjathy, 2009 *forthcoming*).

Conclusion

Daoism encourages people to love deeply and live compassionately (*ci*), to exercise restraint and frugality (*jian*), to seek harmony, and practice *wuwei*. Daoist philosophy teaches that the great transformation brings about a Great Unity, in which all things are part of one organic whole. Zhuangzi highlights basic similarities between humans and nonhumans, and encourages people to treat other beings thoughtfully. Daoist precepts speak often and strongly against harming living beings, whether by disturbing their homes or eating their bodies.

In a world in which religious leaders and the bulk of religious adherents overwhelmingly support the status quo – institutionalized exploitation of nonhumans – it is remarkable

that more animal activists do not look deeply into their religious traditions to discover animal friendly teachings. The world's largest religions, at their heart, encourage adherents to live gently, and to understand their place in the world not as exploiters, but as a small and humble part of much larger, and more important, spiritual whole. Daoism is but one example of strong animal-friendly tendencies in the world's great religions.

Key Authors and Texts

There are two key authors/texts that are critical to studying Daoism. In each case the author and the text share a name, and the author is merely assumed, and not certain:

The most important author is the pseudo-historical Laozi (sixth century BCE), considered the founder of Daoism, and assumed author of the text which has been given his name, *Lao-Tzu*. Zhuangzi was a Daoist mystic, second only to Laozi in importance, and the assumed author of the *Zhuangzi* (fourth century BCE).

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EXTENDED ESSAY

Normative Sociology: the Intuitionist Crisis and Animals as Absent Referents

Part I of II essays on animals and normative sociology

David Sztybel¹

...the aim is to construct a normative sociology.

— Bryan S. Turner

Abstract: Let us newly distinguish between positive normative sociology, which holds that sociologists should assert ethical norms such as social justice, and negative normative sociology, which defends the Weberian thesis that sociologists should not assert any moral values or norms. Ethical relativism, endemic to so much sociological work, equally affirms (animal) liberation and oppression. However, the current methodology of ethics—intuitionism—is not enough to counter moral relativity. Thus far, positive normative sociologists do not effectively meet objections from their negative counterparts. This state of affairs invites the question as to whether an anti-intuitionist sociology can be articulated that transcends ethical relativism while also defeating Weberian objections (a project reserved for Part 2).

Introduction

Max Horkheimer, co-founder of critical theory, was a German sociologist and philosopher of Jewish extraction. He wrote in *The Eclipse of Reason*:

The real individuals of our time are the martyrs who have gone through infernos of suffering and degradation in their resistance to conquest and oppression, not the inflated personalities of popular culture... These unsung

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heroes consciously exposed their existence as individuals to...terroristic annihilation...The anonymous martyrs of the concentration camps are the symbols of the humanity that is striving to be born. The task...is to translate what they have done into language that will be heard, even though their finite voices have been silenced by tyranny. (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 161)

Thankfully, Horkheimer resided in the United States during the Holocaust. His thoughts appear relevant to me, as an “indirect Holocaust survivor.” Bernard Sztybel, my father, barely escaped the Nazi murder machine. His father, David Sztybel, Senior, led his family out of Zamosc, Poland while under attack by planes and tanks. Still, the suddenness of the strike meant that many other relatives were left behind. My Aunt Helen remembers holding my father’s small hand as they ran through a field, bombs exploding all around. They made it onto a train into what was then the Soviet Union.

Knowing almost nothing of the relatives who did not escape (they are thoroughly shrouded by the pains of survivors who prefer not to speak on such matters) I picture those who were caught in the concentration camps, perhaps awaiting execution for being Jews, or being worked to death. They likely longed for a liberation that never came, although my Great Uncle, Harry Sztybel, the brother of my namesake, wrongly presumed dead, got himself to what we call freedom from underneath a pile of “refuse”—*corpses*.

I hope to articulate a form of normative sociology faithful to the “blank slate memories” of those unfortunate Sztybels who never got out. I have to believe they longed for *liberation* for themselves and others, although I would not romantically imagine that they were necessarily free of racist or other anti-liberation views. Yet surely they would have wished that societies would be protected from murderous and oppressive regimes such as the Nazis’.

What is normative sociology? It does not merely study norms, but *proposes* them, or else *negates* sociologists proposing them. It is not merely moral anthropology or the like. Sociologists often catalogue and analyze norms without making value judgments, as in Max Weber’s study of the Protestant work ethic. Weber believed positive normative sociology was illegitimate—which is itself a value judgment. Was he right?

Is Normative Sociology “Real” Sociology?

Let us first address this question directly and rationally seeking as far as possible a scientific typology. It is plausible to consider that there are criteria for “real sociology” that are already implicit in widely accepted forms:

(1) *How was the idea of sociology first intended by its originator?* Auguste Comte, we will see, posed a *sociology* (a term he coined) in which he defends ethical commitments.

(2) *Has sociology traditionally been concerned with normative sociology?* This paper shows that Comte, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Theodor Adorno, Max Weber (the latter in the sense of negative normative sociology—see (6)’s discussion), Adam Smith and Jane Addams all practiced normative sociology as do more modern-day figures such as Max Horkheimer, G. H. Mead, Herbert Blumer, Talcott Parsons (in a conflicted way), Herbert Marcuse, Jurgen Habermas, Steven Buechler, Robert Bellah, Raymond Boudon, Maeve Cooke, Bryan S. Turner, Steven Lukes, David Nibert, and John Sorenson, to use just some examples. This covers all of the major schools.

(3) *Is the etymology and internal logic of the term “sociology” consistent with normative sociology?* I will show that the scientific study of society is indeed consistent with even asserting ethical norms. I neither need nor desire any philosophy that is distinct from science. I am strictly interested in *hypotheses supported by evidence*. Favoring any other kind of belief would merely be arbitrary or prejudicial *favoritism*. I will show in Part 2 how, surprisingly or not, ethics can strictly be conducted in terms of hypotheses supported by evidence. In a revolutionary way, this would make ethics a subdiscipline of social science, such that ethics would be an *intradisciplinary* study for sociologists, and not merely an *interdisciplinary* concern. “Ethics” derives from *ethos* (social norms), while “morality” stems from *mores* (customs). That is partly why a science of ethics, if that were possible, would be *social* science. My concern with scientific justification is not a case of scientism or scientific imperialism, but merely insists on the need to try to *justify* all beliefs. However, scientism could rear its head in the form of dismissing ethics

out of hand because it does not fit into traditional (social) scientific study. It is not automatically irrational to discuss ethics in scientific terms, but it would be irrational to deny that ethics is scientific if it can be conducted solely in terms of evaluating evidence for hypotheses. It would be *ad hoc* to merely *stipulate* that ethics is outside of science.

(4) *Can normative sociology use a generally acceptable definition of “sociological theory”?* Ira Cohen defines sociological theory in the *Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*: “Any form of sustained reasoning or logic that endeavours to make sense of observable realities of social life via the use of concepts, metaphors, models, or other forms of abstract ideas may be legitimately classified as sociological theory.” (Cohen in Turner, 2006a, p. 595) I and other normative sociologists are engaged precisely in making sense of observable social reality using concepts and other forms of abstract ideas.

(5) *Is normative sociology of sufficient importance?* What could be more significant than liberation? Durkheim, for one, posits that the “ethical” fundamentally explains social phenomena more than any other factor (Durkheim, 1958, p. 247).

(6) *Is normative sociology logically inescapable?* I distinguish between positive normative sociology - whose sociologists defend norms rationally - and negative normative sociology - which asserts that it is not right for sociologists to call for ethical agreement in general (exception: professional ethical standards in sociology - but even these are viewed as relative). I am not using “positive” and “negative” evaluatively, but merely to refer to present or absent rational defense of moral norms in sociology. Normative sociology is logically inescapable because we need to rationally defend either advocating moral norms or else refusing to do so. A contradictory view would be illogical.

I do not consider *fashionability* as a criterion, although that factor is indeed socially influential. Normative sociology may be more trendy in Europe, which is more theoretical than in North America as the latter tends to be more pragmatic. (Turner, 2006a, xiii) Fashions change and reflect prejudices, but we need to evaluate whether normative

sociology is *rational*. Similarly, just taking any sociologist's say-so, without justification, would be a case of inappropriate appeal to authority.

It would be wrong to "correct" sociologist Bryan Turner that he is not doing "real" sociology when he openly practices normative sociology. For some sociologists not to tolerate or even welcome normative sociology would be an arbitrary and indefensible case of failing to honor academic rights and freedoms. It is ironic that sociologists teach wariness of "common sense" and often rue uncritical consumerism in society, but they may swallow whole social influences in their own discipline that *irrationally* lead to the exclusion of normative sociology. Normative sociology is eminently sociological given all of the factors considered above.

The Positive Need for Normative Sociology

Some say that we do not need to rationally defend norms because democracy will save us. However, the lost Szttybels were partly doomed by that factor. On March 5, 1933, 17 million Germans gave the Nazis—and in effect the Holocaust—fully 43.9% of the popular vote (Goldhagen, 1987, p. 87). Ethical relativism is a mainstay of much sociology, but it cannot truly support liberation, for on such a framework, Nazi norms are on a par with those of Nelson Mandela. My murdered relatives likely would have regarded such an evaluation as obscene. To secure liberation, we need to defend it such that rational individuals would have a hard time disputing its aptness—especially since so many people are tempted to repudiate liberation, either in theory and/or in practice.

We have an obligation to ensure that the Holocaust never happens again—although it already has in Rwanda among other places—and it is now encompassing animals (Szttybel, 2006b; Patterson, 2002). Modern sociology cannot optimally do its part to meet this obligation while using ethical relativism. We cannot simply *assert* ethical absolutes—the Nazis can vouch for their own. However, the need to block future

Holocausts frankly does figure into my motivation for this study, which is dedicated to those long-lost Sztybels. These people, whoever they were, were also animals.

I understand those who greet with skepticism the idea of morality as scientific. However, I do not accept moral skepticism as justifiable in the final analysis. Still, one might well doubt moral theory as it is currently based on *intuitions* or fundamental beliefs that, intuitionists say, cannot and need not be justified (Williams, 1985, pp. 93-94; Mackie, 1977, p. 38). If all we have are competing intuitions then perhaps the skeptics are right. Yet intuitions are unscientific, and trying to reheat Kant or utilitarianism as food for thought will not do, as I will show in Part 2. In that segment I will also demonstrate that there are *reasoned* absolute values which are anomalous for both intuitionists and skeptics alike. Liberation is not a central term in social science, and is not even listed in the *Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology* (Turner, 2006a) However, I will go about the urgent task of defending *liberation sociology*.

Sociologist Ira Cohen tells us that ethical philosophy was evident in most classical sociology (Cohen in Turner, 2006a, p. 596), but after about 1930 the search for ethical meaning was generally abandoned (*Ibid.*). The present study shows that many never quit this quest. Nevertheless, Cohen, reflecting the Weberian hegemony, proclaims that: “Social scientific theories are not in the business of making or defending value judgments” (Cohen, in Turner, 2006a, p. 648). Ironically though, I suggest above (and will in effect argue in Part 2) that positive normative sociology is perfectly consistent with Cohen’s own definition of “sociological theory.”

Most sociology has judged in favor of ethical relativism but I seek to appeal that judgment on the basis of freshly interpreted evidence found through not only *effective cognition* (which I term awareness of cause-and-effect, a classical preoccupation of the sciences), but also two forms of *affective cognition* not previously granted to exist: *emotional cognition* and *desiring cognition*. Without a positive vision for society, sociology is in danger of reducing to piles of allegedly “neutral” facts without any passion for social change. There are plenty of sightings of society, but there is precious

little vision. The alleged neutrality would really give oppression the leg up by putting aggression on a level playing field of legitimacy and choiceworthiness right alongside securing liberty. That is not “neutral” but both valorizes oppression and devalues liberation—even if unintentionally.

I propose that normative sociology be done in *sociological terms*, including:

- (1) Focusing largely on sociologists rather than, say, philosophers;
- (2) Upholding sociological values: science as a privileged way of knowing; being skeptical by default; not getting lost in abstractions; doing pragmatic studies to determine which practices are most effective; anti-oppression; recognizing that there is no single best way to live; finding ethics to be fully intelligible only in cultural contexts; honoring diverse voices; being suspicious of the “transcendental”; anti-ethnocentrism; and anti-authoritarianism (see Part 2).
- (3) Showing how sociological questions lead to normative sociology, e.g., what is the nature and scope of social norms?
- (4) Using the scientific method to engage in normative sociology.

Aside from positive and negative normative sociology, we can also say a normative sociologist can be indeterminate (if they have not decided) or conflicted (e.g., we will see Talcott Parsons calls value-judgments relative to social contexts, but then he himself also makes cross-cultural value judgments). Contradiction is not a fine resting place for theory though. The truth is unitary. Sanity is coherent. A great generality either is the case or not—the world does not have room for both. Do we need “metanormative sociology” in the way that philosophy distinguishes between normative ethics and meta-ethics? That distinction would be redundant since we use a critical “meta” perspective anyway in evaluating claims for positive and negative normative sociology.

The anomalies of affective cognition relate indelibly to animals who share in such cognition. Just as we have a digestive system like other animals, so we can ask:

is it universal for all sentient beings that pain feels bad? Sentience is shared across so many species. Still, most do not reason much about animals. As Marjorie Spiegel laments: “For those so predisposed, a hazily understood version of evolutionary theory is all they need to avoid giving the lives of their victims another thought” (Spiegel, 1996, p. 85).

Ethical relativism is far more devastating for animals than humans. Such a world view costs humanity since relativists would be far less likely for example to intervene in genocides committed in other nations (Turner, 2006b, p. 12). However, most ethical relativists believe in strong human rights (except, say, Benito Mussolini, as documented in Lukes, 2008, pp. 39-40). So whereas a relativistic democracy might likely favor substantial human rights, the same would not be true of animal rights, which is socially “deviant” in terms of contemporary demographics.

Animals are little discussed by sociologists except for cursory or dismissive remarks. Carol J. Adams’ innovation of “the absent referent” (Adams, 1990, p. 14) applies here. Most positive normative sociologists never breathe the names of animals yet they invoke locutions such as compassion, justice and rights which logically refer to nonhuman quite as well as to human animals. We can “read” animals as relevant in many texts and contexts even if others do not. I would add to Adams’ valuable account that animals can be absent referents in various ways and degrees. If animals are swept aside as “stupid” for example, then their conscious cores are absent in large degrees.

I do not propose to settle any disputes about interpretations of sociologists but only to offer defensible and well-documented readings. I was expecting most books in my sociology monograph survey to reflect Weber’s value-neutral stance. Although I am equally motivated to read “positive” and “negative” accounts, I was surprised to find that the overwhelming number of thinkers surveyed happen to be positive normative sociologists. This hints at a nascent field which urgently needs to be developed.

Signs that normative sociology is presently in its infancy include:

- (1) Positive normative sociology has not yet been developed scientifically, which is not surprising because ethics has not been effectively articulated in such a manner by philosophers or anyone else;
- (2) Many sociologists *altogether* reject normative sociology even though positive or negative normative sociology needs to be defended at minimum;
- (3) Skeptics of positive normative sociology rely on the same old arguments as Hume's separation of is and ought and the "nonempirical" nature of ethics, although such arguments may be readily refutable as I illuminate in Part 2;
- (4) Animal ethics is hardly discussed in sociology;
- (5) There are no articles or books that comprehensively review normative sociology, that I am aware of, although several books defend positive forms;
- (6) There are no journals or conferences known to me that are specifically devoted to normative sociology; and
- (7) Many sociologists are positive normative sociologists, but inconsistently embrace beliefs that seem to entail negative normative sociology (e.g., the views of Horkheimer and Adorno—see below).

Perhaps normative sociology is still embryonic because most sociologists do not have a background in normative ethics, as I do. It would be like trying to repair a car without the relevant expertise. However, even professional philosophers typically rely on intuitionism which is problematic because:

- (1) Intuitions lack evidence or reasons given for hypotheses and are therefore unscientific, prejudicial and lacking in accountability;
- (2) Diverse intuitions lead to indeterminacy so intuitionism logically entails any number of theories;
- (3) Intuitionists cannot resolve conflicts of intuitions without recourse to more intuitions, which is logically circular or question-begging.¹

¹ A fuller critique of intuitionism will be articulated in Part 2.

If ethics just boils down to conflicting intuitions, then I suppose the skeptics are right and ethics is merely relative to (inter)subjective frames of reference. Note that for the following analysis I will interpret any judgment to be an intuition that is either given without justification or fails to express a need for rational defence.

Early Positive Normative Sociologists

Auguste Comte first invented the term *sociology*. He appointed himself “the Priest of Humanity” (Comte, 1875a, p. xxv) in his secular religion that worships society (Comte, 1957, p. 372). I will not explore Comte’s bizarre eccentricities here. Indeed, a monograph on animals and normative sociology is called for and is largely in draft. Comte integrated ethics with sociology, declaring that: “...Morals will take their place at the head of the encyclopaedic hierarchy” since ethics regulates all nations and individuals (Comte, 1877, p. 4). “Morals” is supreme even over “Sociology” (*Ibid.*, p. 2). The key to Comte’s ethics is making “sympathetic instincts” dominant over “selfish instincts” or to cultivate social values and feelings over personal values and feelings (Comte, 1957, pp. 101, 108). He also spoke of an ethic of “social sympathies” (Comte, 1877, p. 111), a “principle of universal love” (*Ibid.*, p. 104) and a system of rights (Comte, 1875b, p. 91). Here we can interpret an *intuitionist* affirmation of sympathy and other ethical concerns, for it is never rationally defended “from the ground up” as I shall attempt with best caring sociology in Part 2.

Emile Durkheim proclaimed that ethics is the primary unit for understanding and explaining society: “the social question...is not a question of money or force; it is a question of moral agents. What dominates is not the state of our economy, but, much more, the state of our morality” (Durkheim, 1958, p. 247). Durkheim held that if we were to discover a general moral law, we would have to investigate it using the conventional scientific method (Durkheim, 1972, p. 90). He believed that moral education can become rational (Durkheim, 1973, p. 11), that we can arrive at reasoned evaluations using science (Durkheim, 1974, p. 62) and that “science can help us determine the ways in which we

ought to orient our conduct” (Durkheim, 1973, p. x). He holds that duties, e.g., promise-keeping, are self-evident truths known specifically by intuition (Durkheim, 1974, p. 65); that is, we can know ethics by learning rules of society as social fact (Durkheim, 1973, pp. 23, 55; 1974, p. 61). He naively professed that: “There is only one particular morality that a society can have, given the way that it is constituted” (Durkheim, 1979, p. 32).

This is falsifiable by the many different ethical theories in our own society. He is an ethical relativist who declares that there are no objective values and that valuation is rather the product of opinion (Durkheim, 1974, p. 57). However, he holds that respect for life and property are “...independent of any local or ethnic conditions [and]...are considered by all civilized peoples as the primary and most compelling of all.” (Durkheim, 1957, p. 110) It is noteworthy that he is at first declaring these principles cross-culturally in general, but in the next breath qualifies these as being most important among “*civilized* peoples” (my italics). He also dogmatically declares that ethics is quite generally opposed to egoism (Durkheim, 1973, p. 65), although in fact Hobbesian ethical egoism is a prominent ethical theory. Reminiscent of Comte’s worship of society, Durkheim suggests that ultimately we should act for society (*Ibid.*, p. 59). Durkheim denounces “the arrogance of systems of thought” (*Ibid.*, p. 51) given that ethics is constantly evolving (although we will see that my own ethic of best caring is open to continuing evolution for its part). He claims that philosophers’ ideas are mere approximations of society’s ethics (*Ibid.*, pp. 25-26), although that hardly accounts for animal rights ethics. Durkheim’s intuitionism and lack of (animal) liberation sociology are evident across his works.

Adam Smith is an economist and so a kind of social scientist. He bases his positive normative outlook, like Comte, on sympathy (Smith, 1969, pp. 5, 161) also speaking of “universal benevolence” (*Ibid.*, p. 345) which is reminiscent of Comte’s “universal love.” Smith wrote: “Pleasure and pain are the greatest objects of desire and aversion; but these are distinguished not by reason but by immediate sense and feeling” (*Ibid.*, p. 471). This sounds close to my own idea of emotional cognition (Szybel, 2006b, p. 18) although it does alienate “feeling-sense” from the process of reasoning.

Jane Addams is sometimes considered an early sociologist (often cited in the context of critical theory) who documented social conditions, especially those related to poverty, prostitution and the devastation of wars. She ran Hull House in Chicago to help poor people including by lending dignity to their lives. Similar to Comte and Smith, she writes: “Sympathetic knowledge is the only way of approach to any human problem...” (Addams, 1912, p. 11; see also 1902, p. 26). She holds that “...the teachings of moral theorems...” is not what promotes virtue so much as “...the direct expression of social sentiments and by the cultivation of practical habits...” (Addams, 2007, p. 8). She also writes of the importance of justice (Addams, 1960, p. 4) and calls for “a moral rational social order” (Addams, 1932, p. 42). Such thoughts indicate, not surprisingly, that her approach is not purely emotional. She also vaguely refers to “conscience” and “sensibilities” (*Ibid.*, p. 76). There is a religious dimension to Addams’ thought and she identifies with Christian humanitarianism (Addams, 1970, p. 20). That said, religion is not essential to her form of idealism which is intuitionist and of course not animal liberationist. Another early normative sociologist, Max Weber, will be considered under negative normative sociology. Also, Karl Marx and his followers will soon be considered separately.

Positive Normative Sociology in Recent History

George Herbert Mead, although avidly studied by sociologists, was a pragmatist philosopher who was nevertheless one of the great inspirations for sociologist Herbert Blumer, innovator of symbolic interactionism. Mead concedes that if we had a fixed set of values, assessing good and bad “...would be fairly scientific...” (Mead, 1938, p. 460), however he denies that such a situation exists, given the changing nature of values (*Ibid.*). Like the symbolic interactionists who are his intellectual descendents, Mead was a subjectivist who held that “...significant objects can exist only as objects for a subject” (Mead, 1964, p. 17). Also, there can be no subject without an object and vice versa (*Ibid.*). He plausibly speaks of social institutions as *habits* (*Ibid.*, p. 25). He refers to “the

generalized other” as a mental construct encompassing what others in society share by way of belief or practice (Mead, 1964, p. 219). Mead, a true pragmatist, envisions thinking primarily in terms of problem-solving (*Ibid.*, p. 25). Mead’s views on ethics include the idea that we should seek behavior that is conducive to the well-being of society (*Ibid.*, p. 275), an idea reminiscent of Comte and Durkheim. In a way that presages Jurgen Habermas’ discourse ethics (discussed below), Mead sees the human social goal as attaining a “universal human society” in which the meaning of all gestures is understood by everybody, a kind of communicative ideal (*Ibid.*, pp. 270-271), although I emphasize that communities can have shared understandings but still experience severe social problems.

Mead tentatively endorses Immanuel Kant’s principle—roughly, do in relation to others as you would have them do to in relation to you—thus seeking universal laws of conduct (Mead, 1934, p. 380). Elsewhere though Mead states that all one can say of ethics is that one needs to take account of all interests (*Ibid.*, p. 387) or all values (*Ibid.*, p. 388 Mead, 1938, p. 462). Yet I would hasten to point out that sadistic interests and values also exist, and why and how should moral agents take *these* into account? Although Mead introduces ethical theory into his social thought, he remains an intuitionist, and it is unclear how much he would qualify as a liberation sociologist (liberation sociology is discussed further in Part 2). Certainly his subjectivism—which was inherited by Blumer’s symbolic interactionism—is no bulwark against anti-liberation forces such as, say, Nazism or poverty-promoting *laissez-faire* social policies.

Herbert Marcuse, in his *One-Dimensional Man*, seems to waffle between being skeptical about universals (Marcuse, 1964, p. 148) and affirming their existence (*Ibid.*, pp. 129, 210-211). He goes so far as to say that “...formerly metaphysical ideas of liberation may become the proper object of science” (*Ibid.*, p. 233). Like Mead, though, Marcuse’s value theory is impoverished, stating in a rather Marxian fashion that justice and freedom, as well as truth and goodness, have their meaning in terms of “...the satisfaction of man’s material needs, the rational organization of the realm of necessity” (*Ibid.*, pp. 234-235). Best caring finds that mental experiences are part of what people find to be of value, and

one can experience happiness with many kinds and degrees of material belongings (Szybel, 2006b, p. 19). Elsewhere Marcuse writes, quite differently, that liberation "...involves the reduction of misery, violence, and cruelty" (*Ibid.*, p. 236). He ends his zigzagging book on a note of despair: "The critical theory of society...holding no promise and no success,...remains negative" (*Ibid.*, p. 257). He is stating here that critical theory has not achieved anything in the past and holds no promise for the future. It is hard to be more negative than that. It is almost as though he is writing about positive normative sociology through a period of wild mood swings from negative to positive and then back to utter negativity again.

Talcott Parsons' Structural-Functionalism

Structural-functionalism analyzes units of society and the purposes that they serve. An account of Parsons here serves as a kind of interlude, as it is hard to classify in terms of normative sociology, although Parsons' theory seems "Americanocentric" in a normative fashion in the end, as I will document. I discuss Parsons nonchronologically before Marx(ists) and then critical theory, since the latter group leads to a progression up to the themes of liberation in contemporary normative sociology. But now back to Parsons. Social systems ultimately serve needs, according to Parsons, be they genetically given (Parsons, 1991, p. 9) or other. He is an ethical relativist, stating that values have content relative to social systems of reference (Parsons, 1960, p. 174; see also relativist thoughts emerging in Parsons, 1991, pp. 12, 42; 1971, p. 15; 1969, p. 448; 1967, p. 147). Parsons warns against philosophical justifications of values as "nonempirical" (Parsons, 1991, p. 331), a Weberian move as we will see. Parsons also cautions against philosophers' occasional "intrusions" into science (*Ibid.*, p. 365). If ethics were nothing more than unscientific intuitionism, I would see the need for such gatekeeping, but we will query if one can present positive normative sociology in scientific terms in Part 2. Parsons calls advocates of absolutist norms as "intellectuals" only in quotation marks, thus indicating both skepticism and derision (*Ibid.*, p. 356). He explains that "radical" intellectuals being

antithetical to science "...is too patent to need elaboration" (*Ibid.*). Repeatedly we find that it is prejudicially *assumed* by Parsons that science excludes ethics.

Although Parsons is skeptical about ethics, he does make values key to his analysis and explanation of society, even defining sociological theory as studying institutionalized patterns of value-orientation (*Ibid.*, p. 552; see also *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 14, 36, 38, 326). As well, he portrays peace activism and socialism as movements "...which *exploit* the generalities and ambiguities of dominant value-systems" (*Ibid.*, p. 293; my italics). This implies that socialist visions are not fully legitimate in North American societies. From the point of view of elites at least, that is often the case, but socialists themselves merely *use* a sense of, say, "liberation," rather than *exploiting* ambiguities of meaning. Otherwise, the same could be said, in fairness, of conservative approaches to "liberty," that the term is "exploited" to make *laissez-faire* policies seem "enlightened." Yet Parsons is only dismissive of "utopian deviants" such as socialists (*Ibid.*, p. 297).

Referring at times to "primitive societies" (Parsons, 1960, p. 304), Parsons calls the United States the most advanced or modern society since it shows "greater generalized adaptive capacity" (Parsons, 1977, p. 231). This might only mean that a society *survives*, not that it is "advanced" in any other terms. He praises the U.S. as "...the leader of the modern system..." (Parsons, 1971, p. 122) and as having institutionalized freedoms more than other societies (Parsons, 1977, pp. 207-208). That may be so, but is all "freedom" worthwhile, such as being free of universal health care? His notion of the evolution of human societies seems to be normatively driven by ideals such as freedom, although his ethical relativism in a sense disqualifies him from ranking societies in this manner. For all his social scientific verbal attire, he is seemingly *intuiting* that liberty matters most, for all that he rigorously argues to be the case.

Marxists: Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, and Theodor Adorno

Marx, even in his early philosophical manuscripts, believes that morality is part of an economic mode of production, or an extension of the material basis of society (Marx, 1961, p. 103). He speaks of workers reduced to their bodily needs (*Ibid.*, p. 30), referring to the unhappiness of capitalist society (*Ibid.*, p. 26) due to the fact of "...the complete domination of dead matter over men" (*Ibid.*, p. 63). By the last quote he means that maximizing capital becomes the dominant force, whatever the social cost. Under communism, by contrast, "...*man himself* becomes the object," rather than just accumulating property" (*Ibid.*, p. 108). However, it is vague for Marx (*Ibid.*, p. 104) to reject individualism (which I read as egoism) in favor of the social (which I read as altruism). Also, it is no refutation of egoism to call it "not human," as if humans could never be self-centered. Yet Marx speaks of "the human essence" and "human need" (*Ibid.*, p. 101) involving "the social" which is unhelpful because totally ambiguous. To be candid, Marx is merely masking and decorating his intuitionism with humanistic language. He speaks favorably of being oriented towards the world using the senses (*Ibid.*, p. 106), but again, that is totally inconclusive. He also makes indeterminate references to human natural powers, tendencies, and impulses (*Ibid.*, p. 156). Yet humans are capable of *anything* they can do. He refers to communism as fully-developed "naturalism" and "humanism" (*Ibid.*, p. 102), never really clarifying his meaning. Ironically, his early philosophy amounts to empty abstraction, since for example *human "needs" can be interpreted using rights views, utilitarianism, ethical egoism, the ethics of care, virtue theory, etc.* The irony lies in the fact that, as we shall see, Marx railed against "abstract" or idealistic theories. Marx considers himself "scientific" for basing his ideas on sense-perception (Marx, 1961, p. 111), but why not also emotional cognition (Szybel, 2006b, p. 18) and logic? And how is altruism as an ideal something that is even *known* to standard sense perception? Marx does not say—but then, how could he?

Marx is on firmer ground when he discusses the alienation of workers from their needs, wants, and the fruits of their labors, being driven ever on by the need to make a "living."

I cannot elaborate on this valuable part of his work, but will add that best caring also justifies anti-exploitation with greater rigor (as we shall see in Part 2) than Marx's anti-idealist intuitionism. He is particularly poignant in his portrayal of child workers (Marx, 1976, pp. 355, 371, 591, 593). Marx endorses violent revolution since he believes that the ruling class, the capitalists, cannot be overthrown by the worker-class (the proletariat) in any other way (Marx, 1964, p. 65). However, the need for violent revolution is not so obvious as Marx thinks. There is a growing body of research, which I will not broach here, that human life-satisfaction does not vary with income apart from poverty that causes suffering, and if that is true, *material* equality may lose its overriding Marxian import, and certainly may not be worth killing for. Perhaps wealthy investors have a positive role to play in society. Also, peaceful levers of power against the bourgeoisie (wealthy capitalists) are conceivable: legislation, unionizing, consumer boycotts and internet education about enlightened purchasing choices. However, I do not have space here to develop and defend a best caring theory of political economy.

Marx analyzes all of history as involving class conflict (Marx and Engels, 1992, p. 3). He claims that capitalism will inevitably lead to its own demise because it impoverishes the working class (*Ibid.*, p. 15) creates commercial crises, e.g., overproduction (*Ibid.*, p. 8) that leads to flooded markets, bankrupt companies unemployment, etc. Yet industrial capital also draws people into "civilization" with advanced communication such as, quaintly enough, the telegraph (*Ibid.*), and promotes worker discipline and unity (Marx, 1964, p. 141). In fairness however, worker unity is undermined by (a) un(der)employed people competing for jobs and (b) employed workers functioning as parts of competing companies. Capitalism *undermines* unity and promotes competition more than most modes of production. As for capitalism's "discipline" for workers, it is mostly one of conditioned subservience. Yet on such unsteady grounds, Marx projects both the downfall of capitalism and the sway of communism as historically inevitable (Marx, 1961, p. 114).

Although Marx asks the workers of the world to unite and has provided a very sketchy normative framework rejecting capitalist alienation, he opposes idealistic forms of

socialism, dismissing “utopians” who do not see the revolutionary and subversive side of poverty (Marx, 1956, p. 140). Poverty does not always have revolutionary potential though under conditions of severe repression and working class powerlessness. While *utopians*—or those who are unrealistic or perfectionist—may well be greeted skeptically by any rational critic, Marx has not provided any solid reason for failing to try to inspire people to realize what is *best*. He has not provided a sufficient “anti-inspiration” as it were. He and Engels dismiss Proudhon for positing justice as an absolute (Marx and Engels, 1956, p. 48), but why is justice *not* always worth aiming for in relevant contexts? Marx never really tells us why not. Marx opposes abstraction and praises its opposite, nature (Marx, 2002, p. 90), but abstractions can be *drawn* from nature, including emotional lives, and Marx himself favors abstractions such as *communism*. Moreover, (post)industrial communism is hardly “natural” in any distinctive sense. He speaks of abstractions as detached from reality (Marx, 1956, p. 118) but everything I say about pain feeling bad (Sztybel, 2006b, p. 18), for example, is based on reality.

Marx rejects abstractions as “speculative” (Marx and Engels, 1947, p. 15) but I do not *speculate* as to whether pleasure feels good or whether the best is the ultimate ideal. I provide convincing logical evidence in favor of such relevant hypotheses (Sztybel, 2006b, p. 18). He rejects “[e]mpty talk about consciousness” (Marx and Engels, 1947, p. 15), but emotional cognition is hardly that, but substantive and important for all that Marx’s and Engels’ dismissals show. He derides “eternal” ideas, but best caring, as we will see, uses ideas relevant to sentient life, and that is not necessarily assumed to be “eternal.” Marx refers to consciousness as a “social product” (*Ibid.*, p. 19) without elaborating, but although, of course, society helps to form minds, it does not make pain feel bad—such forms of sensation precede society and extend to all sentient beings, no matter how asocial (e.g., animals of asocial species and severely autistic humans). Rhetoric—such as referring to ideas as “phantoms of the brain,” “chimeras” (*Ibid.*, p. 1) and the like—does not substantively assist his case either. We do not merely *imagine* the results of emotional cognition. He also refers to ideas as “mystical” (Marx, 2002, p. 90) but although intuitionism may be mysterious as to how it could be justified, an anti-intuitionist liberation sociology need not be thus. Marx dismisses philosophy as “religion brought

into thought” (*Ibid.*, p. 76) but none of the presuppositions of best caring are necessarily spiritual in the least bit. Marx’s slanted characterizations of ideals simply do not apply to best caring. Then of course there are Marx and Engels’ outright insults, such as dismissing philosophers as “blockheads” (Marx and Engels, 1947, p. 182). Really, it is on the basis of these flimsy, quasi-anti-intellectual opinions that Marx and Engels contemptuously pronounce in *The Communist Manifesto* that objections from philosophical standpoints are not deserving of serious examination (Marx and Engels, 1992, p. 24). Yet sober evaluation evidently eludes them in the first place.

Marx is not only an anti-idealist, but a materialist (not the same thing: moral skeptics might be anti-idealist but not materialist for example). He allegedly bases his views in the five senses, as noted earlier, although communism as an idea is *not* something that we can sense thus. He claims without thorough analysis that idea systems are the “superstructure” or an outgrowth of the economic “structure” of society. Yet in the capitalist mode of production, *any number* of normative frameworks (listed above in italics) compete, many of which are similar to ancient doctrines, so it is refutable to state that specific economies “dictate” philosophy. One single ethic is not *caused*, let alone *logically entailed*, by any particular form of economy. He also insists that the ruling ideas are those of the ruling class (Marx, 1964, p. 78) but equal rights for *all* is the dominant theme in the West, and that ideal may not square with the *laissez-faire* principles of many wealthy capitalists. Egalitarianism competes with capitalism and indeed the former is often invoked in doing ideological battle with classism. Marx and Engels claim that “ideas of dominance” prevail (Marx and Engels, 1947, p. 39), but is, say Nietzschean inequality dominant—or rather egalitarian thought? Obviously the latter. Reality refutes this last claim. They also state that philosophy can contradict existing relations only if “...existing social relations have come into contradiction with the existing forces of production...” (Marx and Engels, 1947, p. 20). In other words, philosophy only goes against social reality if that state of affairs is caused economically. Yet animal liberation contradicts existing “relations” of capitalism but is decidedly not a result of being caused by “forces of production.” Rich and poor alike may support animal rights, and animal

liberation was not “caused” by economic factors—animal exploitation is big business while animal activism is largely unpaid—but rather by reason and/or compassion.

Marx’s anti-idealism and historical materialism (that everything, including ideas, emerge from material and economic factors as they evolve through history) leaves his readers with a lack of vision for the future. He famously states: “The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in different ways; the point is to *change* it” (Marx, 1964, p. 69). Yet this is a false dilemma. Violently overthrowing capitalists alone, a great change indeed, does not provide a plan beyond the injuring and killing. Marx, speaking of the coming communist revolution, is vague beyond: the abolition of bourgeois property (Marx and Engels, 1992, p. 18) by public ownership of the means of production (e.g., factories, natural resources); a heavy tax; abolishing the right of inheritance; forming a national bank; providing free education; and abolishing child labor (*Ibid.*, pp. 25-26). He hints at new freedoms for workers, such as “...higher, even cultural satisfactions...newspaper subscriptions, attending lectures, educating his children, developing his taste, etc.” (Marx, 1973, p. 287). These concrete purposes suggest (male) workers’ freedom to become educated and to enjoy art, but does not tell us much about how to organize society. Perhaps he would say he cannot give us a formula because forms of society will spontaneously emerge from material conditions, but again, we can possibly do better in seeking the best of plans by aiming for what is best altogether. “*Materialism,*” *straightforwardly understood, permits any way of life whatsoever.*

If one is not moved by the theories of Marx, then neo-Marxist Antonio Gramsci will not have much to offer that is new. Like Marx, Gramsci upholds violent revolution (Gramsci, 1994b, pp. 124, 133), that capitalism is self-defeating (*Ibid.*, p. 164) and opposes utopian or wishful thinking (Gramsci, 1994b, vol. 1, pp. 316-317; 1971, pp. 175, 263). Gramsci praises the role of political intuition (Gramsci, 1971, p. 252). He emphasizes the practical and the concrete (Gramsci, 1994a, vol. 1, p. 317), rejecting any ideology in the form of “...a dogmatic system of eternal and absolute truths” (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 406-407). Like Marx, Gramsci views ideology as a tool of the ruling class (*Ibid.*, p. 258). Gramsci wrote

more perhaps about historical materialism than anything else and praised the Soviet Union as “immortal” (Gramsci, 1994b, p. 94).

One thing that Gramsci adds to Marx is that the proletarian takeover must be a “moral revolution” (*Ibid.*, p. 31) and the need for socialism is due to “class slavery” of the proletariat (*Ibid.*, p. 26) and the “...immorality of fortune...” (*Ibid.*, p. 16) that rules workers’ lives. Like G. H. Mead, Gramsci backs Kant’s maxim that we should act only by principles that can become the norm for others under similar conditions (Gramsci, 1971, p. 373). Ultimately, Gramsci wrote that society should be “governed by love and compassion” (Gramsci, 1994b, p. 89). That is different from morality being *economically* determined, although Gramsci’s echoing of Marx’s historical materialism occasionally puts him seemingly at odds with this more idealistic thinking. Perhaps not so much, on reflection though, since Gramsci might say that his ideals are historically and materially emergent as we supposedly approach an end to capitalist tyranny. Love and compassion though are hardly new ideals, and capitalism rumbles onward.

Theodor Adorno is another well-known Marxist who is also the co-founder of critical theory along with Max Horkheimer. I will first discuss Adorno as a Marxian before considering his collaboration with Horkheimer. Adorno’s books do not contain many detailed Marxist arguments or ideas as do Gramsci’s. Rather, Adorno offers many off-hand gestures towards the “bourgeois,” or the ruling capitalist class. Indeed, he attributes both absolutism to the bourgeois (Adorno, 1973a, p. 20; 1973b, pp. 21, 54) but also, relativism is said to stem from “bourgeois individualism” (Adorno, 1973b, p. 36). It is not clear however what other options there are: relativism is really the denial of absolutes, so if one denies absolutes it seems odd, on the surface, to deny relativism too.

Adorno refers to disenchantment with concepts (*Ibid.*, p. 13) in a way that is very reminiscent of Marx’s anti-idealism. Adorno denounces logic of consistency as being an “organ of unfreedom” (pp. 285-286) and instead prefers physical fear and a sense of solidarity with what Brecht called “tormentable bodies” (*Ibid.*). Here Adorno seems to be pointing to a kind of sympathy, but it is a false dilemma to have to choose between

conceptual guidance and sympathy. He denounces the “impossibility” of philosophical systems (*Ibid.*, p. 21) as “closed” (*Ibid.*, p. 27), although that need not be the case. Best caring is open, e.g., to context and also technological/conceptual changes. Furthermore, why is it a bad thing to be “closed” as to whether harming is generally part of the best? Like Marx, Adorno tries to stigmatize systems with colorful language as predatory (*Ibid.*, p. 23), involving “rationalized rage” (*Ibid.*) and presupposing “...supremacist, oppressive thinking” (*Ibid.*, p. 24). Instead, he advocates abiding with the concrete (*Ibid.*, p. 33). Adorno advocates *dialectics* as critical reflection on concrete contexts (*Ibid.*, p. 56). He is wary of content “predetermined by skeleton” (*Ibid.*), i.e., concepts, referring to the concrete as “the undisfigured” (*Ibid.*). He refers to wanting “substance in cognition” as utopian, and mythological (*Ibid.*), although a substantive affirmation of the best, for example, would be merely sneered at by such comments rather than refuted.

Adorno rejects skepticism (*Ibid.*, p. 14), similar to his rejection of relativism. He claims that he rejects absolutism, while also charging the relativists with “bottomless thinking” (*Ibid.*, p. 35). Yet without moral absolutes, we have no firm foundations on which to base our ethical thoughts. Adorno writes in another place, reminiscent of his earlier implicit valuing of sympathy with tormentable bodies: “The need to lend a voice to suffering is a condition of all truth. For suffering is objectivity that weighs upon the subject; its most subjective experience its expression...” (*Ibid.*, pp. 17-18). Yet perhaps he is not setting up the negation of suffering as an absolute, but simply being sympathetic. For he rejects torture and concentration camps (*Ibid.*, p. 285) but he claims he cannot be caught out as other than a critic of morality since he describes his opposition to these atrocities as “an impulse” reacting to torture occurring that must not be rationalized or made into an abstract principle (*Ibid.*). However, merely affirming impulses and being unprincipled is compatible with *anything*, and not everybody has such sympathetic impulses. Perhaps his anti-skepticism is compatible with his anti-absolutism after all in a way that he never clearly spells out. Absolutism is often associated with moral principles, and he may reject *ethical* absolutism while perhaps not doubting that material or concrete things exist. Going by “impulses” is indeed immediate and concrete, but logically speaking is devastatingly insufficient for liberation.

Critical Theory

Horkheimer claims to have originated “a comprehensive philosophical theory” that he shares with Adorno to the extent that “our philosophy is one” (Horkheimer, 1947, p. vi). Here Horkheimer refers to the critical theory. Horkheimer offers much praise for Marx’s theory as “...among the greatest achievements of civilization” (Horkheimer, 1974, p. 45). Horkheimer also expresses much debt, as a thinker, to Marx (*Ibid.*, p. ix). Many sociologists rallied behind critical theory possibly just because it takes a stand against injustice: “...the critical theory has no specific influence on its side, except concern for the abolition of social injustice” (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 242). Horkheimer also writes that the “...issue...is not simply the theory of emancipation; it is the practice of it as well” (*Ibid.*, p. 233). He declares:

In the critical view of man...an essential role belongs to the idea of a moral order and the conception of a world in which human merit and happiness are not simply juxtaposed but necessarily connected and in which injustice has disappeared (Horkheimer, 1974, p. 3).

Are merit and happiness “necessarily connected” in the case of the severely disabled? In any event, the above quotations seem to suggest that there is something real called “social injustice” that needs to be abolished and replaced with “emancipation,” and that there is a “moral order” in which there are “necessary connections” between ethical ideas. He writes that “...the thinker’s activity...turns...towards a changing of history and the establishment of justice among men...” since thinking totally determines for itself what it will accomplish and serve (Horkheimer, 1972, pp. 242-243). Although high-sounding, his last thought is logically questionable. From the fact that people think for themselves it by no means follows that they will become committed to justice.

Horkheimer refers to a crisis of the negation of *objective reason*—which is about determining, through reason, what ends we should choose (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 7). This implies that we might rationally decide which *means* to ends are most effective, but not

reason about which *ends* are appropriate. He writes pessimistically: “The statement that justice and freedom are better in themselves than injustice and oppression is scientifically unverifiable and useless...[or] meaningless” (*Ibid.*, p. 24). He seems to mourn that Bertrand Russell “...puts ethics in a different category than science...” (*Ibid.*, p. 8) and that ends are decided by “...conflicting interests...” (*Ibid.*, p. 9) and democracy (*Ibid.*, p. 26) which can lead to a dictatorship by “...powerful economic groups” (*Ibid.*, p. 28). He claims that “...at this very moment everything depends on the right use of man’s autonomy...” (*Ibid.*, p. 163) perhaps as though there is an absolute right or wrong, and that we must “defend culture against...debasement...or annihilation” (*Ibid.*). Here we have what is really being defended: “culture” in some sense. This exposes the relativist strain in Horkheimer’s thought, although he proclaims that “...[t]he future of humanity depends on the existence today of the critical attitude...” (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 242).

Horkheimer is indeed an ethical relativist, declaring that “...man’s...inmost meaning...is relative to the social forms of life and culture to which it belongs” (Horkheimer, 1974, pp. 14-15). All values emanate from historical context (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 182) and we cannot reverse the loss of objective reason (*Ibid.*, p. 62) which has triggered the crisis. Finding a good society using theoretical criticism of existing society is an illusion (*Ibid.*, p. 90; see also pp. 180, 182). Indeed, Horkheimer identifies systems of thought as “authoritarian” (*Ibid.*, p. 61; see also *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 69, 127) and an exercise in domination, which he denounces (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 176; Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972, p. xvi). Horkheimer and Adorno call the Enlightenment’s universal order of reasoning “totalitarian” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972, p. 6), overlooking the compensations of say, rights to liberty. They also denounce “conformism” (Horkheimer, 1947, pp. 87, 115; Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972, p. 12) as betraying the essence of thinking (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 243), and as leading to “automatism” (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 91). Best caring, for its part, rejects conforming for its own sake and models thoughtful reflection and justification. Moreover, best caring’s respect for preferences (defended in Part 2) and reasoning is also systematically protective against domination and authoritarianism. Ethical relativism, by contrast, must praise various domineering ways as *appropriate* to certain cultures or epochs.

Both authors in question claim that abstraction somehow “liquidates” its objects (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972, p. 13) and that finding peace “...in any kind of truth whatsoever, has...nothing to do with the critical theory” (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 252). So we cannot “rest content” that milk exists? Their relativism is self-defeating. They “...attempt to salvage relative truths from the wreckage of false ultimates” (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 183). However, relativism does not allow the privileging of any old absolutes. Ironically, simply *imposing* any old absolute would be an exercise in domination, although that would not be the case if ethical absolutism can be impartially reasoned, as these thinkers fail to accomplish. Horkheimer asserts that the “the task of philosophy” is to “foster a mutual critique” of objective reasoning (which reasons about what we should aim for) and subjective reasoning (which merely reasons about means to ends—*any* ends) (*Ibid.*, p. 174). However, he has *rejected* objective reasoning, above, so he is only left with the subjective reasoning that he states has caused a “crisis.” Horkheimer and Adorno wish to discover “...why mankind...is sinking into a new kind of barbarism” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972, p. xi), but they are not entitled to make such cross-cultural judgments as ethical relativists, or those who deny moral absolutes (as Adorno does in his own writings—see above). Horkheimer declares that denouncing “...what is currently called reason is the greatest service reason can render” (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 187), but such a negative function leaves us with very little indeed. He denounces nihilism and subjectivism (*Ibid.*, p. 93) but that is all that we are left with in effect.

Although earlier remarks sounded unreservedly committed to social justice and anti-domination, Horkheimer explicitly “...is not trying to suggest a program of action” (*Ibid.*, p. vi). He holds that “[t]his age needs no additional stimulus to action,” and that any call to action would be “propaganda” (*Ibid.*, p. 184). Best caring calls people to liberatory action, but whether that is irrational “propaganda” must be *justified* to be the case. He warns there “is no fixed method” of drawing conclusions for political action from critical theory (Horkheimer, 1972, p. v) citing Adorno’s agreement on this point. So critical theory inconsistently advocates ideals at some points, but denounces practical reasoning from “the critical theory” at other points. Critical theory is positive normative sociology

at some junctures while negative normative sociology at others. The conclusion that is most justified by the critical theory itself seems negative though, since all *basis* for ethical norms are undermined. Ironically, such moves strip us of the capacity to effectively *criticize* our own or others' ethical beliefs in that none would be of any more or less real value than any other. We need to be critical of critical theory.

I argue that cultural relativism reduces to individual subjectivism, in which case everyone can *uncritically* go by their own lights. After all, the essence of cultural relativism is conformity to cultural leaders' opinions. But why should the opinion of cultural luminaries count for more than anyone else's if there is no absolute basis for any moral views whatsoever? The answer is that, as a logical implication at least, there should be no such privileging. Many value conformity (i.e., with leaders), but not *everyone* does, and there is no absolute bearing upon individuals to engage in conformist practices. Indeed, the original critical theorists pummel conformity as we have seen. Thus critical theory unwittingly ends up in an essentially *uncritical*, indiscriminate and nihilistic morass.

Jurgen Habermas

For many reasons, sociologists are often attracted to philosopher Jurgen Habermas' *discourse ethics* as a basis for critical theory. He wrote *On the logic of the social sciences* (1988) and many sociologists agree with him that no "transcendental justification" for philosophy is possible (Habermas, 1990, p. 116). Also, Habermas tells us that we acquire our moral intuitions from socialization (Habermas, 1993, p. 132). Discourse ethics can involve cross-cultural dialogues about what we ought to do, but Habermas astutely warns that wants and needs are interpreted in light of cultural values (Habermas, 1990, p. 67).

Discourse ethics holds that ethics emerges from ideal conditions of conversation, in which: "*All human beings become brothers and sisters*" (Habermas, 2003, p. 104). Habermas treats "...fundamental norms of rational speech...[as] an ultimate 'fact of reason'" (Habermas, 1973, p. 120). He holds that discourse involves affirming consensus,

generalizable interests (*Ibid.*, p. 110), public discussion, inclusivity, nonviolence and affirming others as equals in argument (Habermas, 2003, p. 42). As well there must be freedom of access and truthfulness on the part of participants (Habermas, 1993, p. 31; see also Habermas 1990, 163). He also affirms impartiality as part of argumentation itself (Habermas, 1990, p. 175). Each participant must adopt the perspective of others in argumentation (Habermas, 1993, p. 48), and be willing “...to consider one’s own tradition with the eyes of a stranger” (Habermas, 2002, p. 212). All proposed norms need to be approved through dialogue (Habermas, 1990, p. 67). He tells us: “Discourse ethics is supposed to remain neutral over and against the plurality of belief systems...” (Habermas, 1993, p. 50). Yet his norms of nonviolence, egalitarianism, etc. are *not* neutral in relation to, say, Nietzscheanism. Habermas refers explicitly to *intuitive* moral knowledge that emerges through conditions of ideal discourse (*Ibid.*, pp. 1, 20). He dogmatically declares that moral intuitions of everyday life do not need to be clarified by philosophers (Habermas, 1990, p. 98). His intuitionism is not scientific, but then he worries that “...we would destroy our ethical knowledge by submitting it to scientific examination, because theoretical objectification would dislodge it [ethical reflection—DS] from its proper place in our life” (*Ibid.*, p. 22). However, my arguments in Part 2 may well show otherwise, that science might ground ethics more *firmly* in the world.

Habermas, as do I, envisions a reconciliation between the social sciences and the humanities (Habermas, 1998, p. vii). Like Durkheim, Marx, Adorno and Horkheimer, there is a skeptical streak in Habermas, who asserts at one point that justice is excluded from the sphere of the rational (Habermas, 1992, p. 50), although he provides a framework for reasoning about justice in the form of discourse ethics. He is highly dismissive of other philosophies, merely dogmatically declaring at one point that they cannot serve as a basis for ethics (Habermas, 1973, p. 100). One senses that he wants to straddle both sides of the river: skepticism and normativity. This is a common and self-undermining theme we have witnessed with several sociologists including Durkheim, Marx and the Marxists, and the critical theory founders.

Habermas is also dismissive of skeptics, calling them self-contradictory (Habermas, 2001, pp. 33; 134; 1990, p. 99), although moral skeptics can absolutely deny positive normative sociology while absolutely affirming negative normative sociology without any real inconsistency. Habermas also—rather melodramatically—thinks that anyone who refuses to engage in discourse on his terms is opting for suicide or madness (Habermas, 1990, pp. 100, 102). Surely one need be neither dead nor mad to disagree with Habermas, as I myself exemplify.

Other problems with Habermas' view include his intuitionism, documented above. Also, *one can engage in discourse that successfully communicates (a true **discourse**) without being nonviolent, inclusive, egalitarian and consensus-building.* If one refers to “ideal discourse” as what is most agreeable to every *person* involved, then the ideal is no longer based in *discourse* itself but rather in *what people happen to be interested in*. Best caring aims for the satisfaction of certain interests (see Part 2), and indeed it is odd that Habermas would mainly have us act out norms in favor of health, etc., *just so that we can argue or communicate.* We cannot do anything to benefit anything such as “discourse,” but only sentient beings in the end. Discourse ethics, though, is oddly impersonal and indirect in its concern even for humans. At other very isolated junctures he points out that moral intuitions counteract vulnerability in life (Habermas, 1990, pp. 199, 200) which is an idea more directly concerned with people. However, discourse will result in a deadlock between intuitions, not “consensus,” since Habermas provides no means of going beyond intuitionism—including his stipulated conditions of “discourse.” People can talk *endlessly* without agreeing on any intuited norms whatsoever. But even if they did simply agree, it would not mean that they were right—just as most everyone once believed that the sun revolves around our small planet.

Positive Normative Sociology: Contemporaries

There have been other, much lesser known critical theorists than Horkheimer, Adorno and Habermas (who is often counted as a critical theorist). Steven Buechler in *Critical*

Sociology (2008) claims that critical sociology is value-based in such ideals as freedom, equality and justice, (Buechler, 2008, p. ix) seemingly unaware of how the founders, Horkheimer and Adorno, inconsistently denied that critical theory involves any practical program (see above). Buechler though offers no justification for his ideals, thus rendering them purely intuitive. He merely evades Hume's is-ought problem (*Ibid.*, p. 14). Buechler indicates that mainstream sociology is concerned with Enlightenment values relating to *science*, and critical sociology is concerned with the Enlightenment values of *freedom and equality* (*Ibid.*). He explains that in social science, critical theorists emphasize the "social" and others the "science." This bifurcation makes it seem as if one cannot be concerned with both, as I will show best caring sociology permits in Part 2. He affirms social constructionism, but that would seem to have highly relativistic implications; indeed he outright endorses relativism (*Ibid.*, p. 92). However, as we have seen, neither intuitionism nor relativism equals effective opposition to oppression. Robert Bellah and his colleagues are also sociologists who adopt a form of positive normative sociology in their books, *Habits of the Heart* and *The Good Society*. They ask how we ought to live (Bellah et al., 1991, p. 4) focusing on developing a "moral ecology" of "healthy institutions" (*Ibid.*). They construe institutions as embedded normative patterns, but they are intuitionists as well, basing their norms vaguely on self-knowledge (*Ibid.*, p. 42) and "practical reason" viewed as something apart from science that is equally important as science (*Ibid.*, p. 177). Much "practical reason" can be gleaned from tradition (*Ibid.*), as well as expectations of response within a continuing community of agents (*Ibid.*, p. 283). Such vagaries though are enough to dignify Nazism.

Raymond Boudon opposes ethical relativism with various arguments. He writes that a good society, respecting the dignity of all, is a principle that cannot be demonstrated (Boudon, 2004, p. 38), but he is untroubled by this fact since ideas of *science* too cannot be demonstrated (*Ibid.*, pp. 37, 51; 2001, p. 112). However, science depends on hypotheses for which evidence can be provided; if ethics cannot do the same, then ethicists face the intrinsic intuitionist problem of *lack of rational support*. He declares that moral sentiments have an objective basis (*Ibid.*, p. 49), although how that may be is never clearly spelled out. He uses a fallacious argument that rationality is a feature of

humans, therefore an idea "...which is positive from a rational viewpoint, has an intrinsic force" (Boudon, 2001, p. 54). This is a poor argument, since no scientific hypothesis is given credence just because a "rational" being favors it. True, feelings related to justice are experienced as "strong reasons" by social actors (Boudon, 2004, p. 127), but that could just be an accident; he has not shown that moral principles have an "objective basis" as he states. He refers to the "functional" role of ethical beliefs (Boudon, 2001, pp. 104-106) too, but such a view is compatible with ethical relativism such as we saw characterizes the theory of the most well-known structural-functionalist: Talcott Parsons.

Boudon refers to his program as "neo-rationalist," but without supplying a clear account of reasons and "cognitive," vaguely basing his ideas in "good sense" (Boudon, 2004, p. 188). He sidesteps the problem of drawing an *ought* from an *is* by pointing out that social actors reject relativism (*Ibid.*, p. 70), but that is not true of everybody, and is just a subjective stance and therefore inconclusive. He pleads that ethical reasons "without ground" would not be understandable (*Ibid.*, p. 105), but we can readily understand such principles in terms of intuitions. He calls some things such as rejecting *Apartheid* "irreversibilities" in our society, however, there is no reason why racism cannot resurge in parts of the world as it occasionally does. He calls democracy an "irreversibility" too (*Ibid.*, p. 58) but that is empirically false (dictators depose democrats, and American democracy is steadily being eroded by corporate elites). Also, there is no justification for a practice just because it has become "permanent" in *some* quarters. Lasting conformity by some is no *argument* at all in the eyes of nonconformists. Overall, although Boudon is well-respected, his arguments are unreliable.

Maeve Cooke also tells us that critical sociology needs to stand for certain norms as guiding:

...without some, more or less determinate, guiding idea of the good society, critical social thinking would be inconceivable: it would lack an ethical basis for its critical diagnoses and its endeavor to stimulate social and cognitive transformation would have no ethical point (Cooke, 2006, p. 3).

In the end, though, she explicitly relies on intuitions both of the equal worth of human beings (*Ibid.*, p. 132) and the key value of “ethical autonomy” (*Ibid.*, p. 134). Reminiscent of Habermas, she notes that to debate about the good life, people need food, clothing, accommodation, etc. (*Ibid.*, p. 135) although it is very odd to subordinate these concerns to having “debate.” She claims her intuitions are “context-transcending” (*Ibid.*, p. 189), but all intuitions—which we know are wildly varying—are formed in quite divergent social contexts.

Kyung-Man Kim recommends that we avoid seeking ideals, and like the Marxists, emphasizes concrete practice (Kim, 2005, p. 3). He claims, like Adorno and Horkheimer, that we need to liberate people from power and domination without claiming power and authority (*Ibid.*, p. 13). Philip Walsh claims that there is no way to resolve disputes over the good for critical theory (Walsh, 2005, p. 114). Critical sociologists such as W. E. B. DuBois might differ. Sometimes DuBois refers to such things as: “...[the] struggle to live and love which is, after all, the end of being” (DuBois, 1924, p. 340). However, he offers nothing beyond the usual intuitionism at the apex of his normative thinking.

Bryan S. Turner, editor of *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*, defies ethical relativism and value-neutrality in sociology and his aim is “...to construct a normative sociology” (Turner, 2006b, p. 6). He notes that most sociologists do not take a stand concerning justice directly, but rather indirectly by studying inequality (*Ibid.*, p. 5). He warns that relativism entails a lack of humanitarian intervention in crimes against humanity such as genocide, war rapes, and other atrocities (*Ibid.*, p. 12). Turner bases rights for humans in their vulnerability (*Ibid.*, pp. 1, 13, 113), noting that “...human happiness is diverse, but misery is common and uniform” (*Ibid.*, p. 9). He bases his approach to vulnerability—which is indeed a universal in my view—in sympathy (*Ibid.*, p. 26) a common value as we have seen for older positive normative sociologists (Comte, Smith, Addams, Gramsci, Adorno in effect, etc.), and also virtue (*Ibid.*, p. 1). He dismisses epistemic concerns that inspire skepticism and relativism since we still have to deal with practical issues such as hungry infants, disorderly teenagers or disoriented elders (*Ibid.*, p. 102). However, those who adhere to relativistic moral intuitions are also

prepared to take action, so we do not need moral absolutism just to be active. Turner should not thus simply dismiss epistemic factors, which are entirely relevant to the prospect of either *justifying* positive normative sociology—or else failing to do so.

Another sociologist, Steven Lukes, like Turner and others, also supports universal human rights, but his skepticism about ethics seems to undermine his professed resistance to ethical relativism. Lukes notes that ethical relativism is based on the diversity of morals (Lukes, 2008, p. 28). He declares that rationalism must be skeptical, and he holds suspect all forms of foundationalism and absolutes (Lukes, 2003, p. 7). He writes that our moral views are “without foundations” in a post-metaphysical age (Lukes, 2008, p. 132). At another point he favorably cites Isaiah Berlin’s dismissal of absolute values as craving the certainties of childhood or the absolutes of our primitive past (*Ibid.*, p. 99). Lukes also holds that rationalistic reactions to moral diversity such as Kantian or utilitarian systems are “hard to accept today” (Lukes, 2003, p. 6).

Lukes rejects ethical nihilism, the idea that “anything goes” in ethics, noting that moral relativity is hard to defend in the face of Nazism (Lukes, 2008, p. 41). He points out that moral diversity does not logically entail moral relativism (*Ibid.*, pp. 130, 157). However, negating moral absolutes—which we have seen Lukes is committed to—*does* logically entail moral relativism, since that is primarily what moral relativity *means*: denying ethical absolutes. He claims that moral criticism is part of our *tradition* (Lukes, 2003, p. 7), but how can we fairly or usefully criticize other cultures’ moral beliefs if all moral intuitions are effectively on a par? No normative beliefs would be above or below any others. Why not favor the “tradition” of many who are *not* morally critical? He claims we can take a normative view of morality, which is practically engaged in seeking to be ethical (Lukes, 2008, p. 20), but would it not, again, be *biased* to favor one moral vision over another? He holds that we cannot return to ancient or modern philosophical systems, but only take moral conflict seriously and make sense of it (Lukes, 1991, p. 20). Nihilists take moral conflict seriously, though, by equally valuing - or refusing to value - **all** moral intuitions. Intuitions can “make sense” of moral conflict as well.

Yet, in spite of all this, Lukes defends universal human rights (Lukes, 2008, p. 156). He does so by citing Isaiah Berlin (in a decidedly different mood than what I cited from Lukes concerning Berlin above) as maintaining that we need to hold certain values or we “cease to be human” (Lukes, 2008, p. 151). However, similarly to a point I made above regarding Marx’s humanism, the human species includes *all* modes of human being and action—including those of Hitler. Lukes also favorably cites Thomas Scanlon’s view that for a moral norm to be valid, it must be justifiable such that “...no one could reasonably reject it” (Lukes, 2008, p. 136). Scanlon’s theory is remarkably hollow since he does not tell us *grounds* for justifying norms or their rejection, and conflicting intuitions will absolutely interfere with any *reasoned* acceptance or rejection. Lukes also cites Martha Nussbaum’s *capabilities approach* which intuits the importance of functions such as life, health, thought, etc. (*Ibid.*, p. 147). You cannot transcend ethical relativism by using moral intuitionism though, and Nussbaum openly declares her allegiance with the latter methodology (Nussbaum, 2006, pp. 70, 74, 82, 155). Evidently in a dark mood, near the end of his reflections in *Moral Relativism* (2008), Lukes openly doubts that many relativists would be persuaded by his arguments (*Ibid.*, p. 157).

Negative Normative Sociology

A Weberian hegemony quietly prevails in sociology, presuming that, to use Weber’s own words: “The problems posed in the empirical disciplines are, of course, to be answered in a ‘value-free’ way” (Weber, 1978, p. 87). C. Wright Mills echoed, in *The Sociological Imagination*, that sociology should use as many value-neutral terms as possible (Mills, 1959, p. 78). Rather than do an extensive excursus on Weber, I will instead note various formidable *arguments* allegedly in favor of negative normative sociology. They are really objections to positive normative sociology which I will have to meet in Part 2 of this project, or else my own positive normative sociology fails.

The Weberian objections include the lack of empirical basis for ethics (Weber, 1962, p. 48); there is a fact-value gap, or an is-ought gap as philosopher David Hume maintained

(Weber, 1978, p. 74; Mills, 1959, p. 77); emotions are simply an “irrational factor” (Weber, 1962, p. 32); there is no “scientific procedure” to decide ethical cases (Weber, 1978, p. 85); and ethics is alleged to be based on religion (Weber, 1958, pp. 27) or faith (Weber, 1978, p. 72), among other concerns. Again, I was surprised that by far, most of the literature that touches on normative sociology is by positive normative sociologists. Other sociology writers seem to—usually silently—look to Weber and his disciples. However, quantity does not matter if Weber’s and others’ skeptical objections cannot be refuted. Thus, positive normative sociology is in a state of crisis, which I will attempt to resolve using the framework of best caring in Part 2.

Animals: Absent Referents in Traditional Normative Sociology

Auguste Comte derided Cartesianism (Comte, 1875a, p. 487) and affirms that positivism will respect animal life (*Ibid.*, p. 488). Marx, by contrast, had a Cartesian view of animals as being identical with their life-activity, lacking consciousness (Marx, 1961, p. 75) and having no will (Marx, 1973, p. 500). Marx refers to *the social* being humans’ mode of existence (Marx, 1961, p. 103) as if—contrary to widely evidenced fact—other animals such as dogs are not also social. He speaks of worker alienation in terms of being reduced to animal needs (Marx, 1961, pp. 30, 73) as if other animals cannot enjoy higher fulfillments, e.g., love, friendship, knowledge-seeking or the enjoyment of beauty. Part of our alienation, I would suggest, is our estrangement from our affective cognition, often due to speciesism as I have argued (Sztybel, 2006b, pp. 18-19).

Horkheimer critiques the domination of nature as “...the rule of the stronger or of the smarter” (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 112), and although he has passages cited in a book of excerpts entitled *Animal Rights*, (Linzey and Clarke, 2004, pp. 92-95), he is no animal liberationist. Horkheimer is concerned that elephants in Africa are “...considered simply as obstructors of traffic” (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 104) but he also dismisses animal life as devoid of reason (*Ibid.*, p. 127), and together with Adorno perceives animals’ lives as “dreary and harsh” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972, p. 246). Contrast such negativity

with Jonathan Balcombe's *Pleasurable Kingdom* (2006). Horkheimer and Adorno marvel that any appeal for radical vegetarianism "still falls on friendly ears" (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972, p. 237) and superficially dismiss anti-vivisection with the thought that "another breath...is likely to cost the life of one bacillus" (*Ibid.*, pp. 239-240). One of Horkheimer's most insightful points about animals and nature is the following:

Domination of nature involves domination of man. Each subject not only has to take part in the subjugation of external nature, human and nonhuman, but in order to do so must subjugate nature in himself. Domination becomes 'internalized' for domination's sake (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 93).

Self-domination is perhaps not such a great problem for oppressors as the above passage suggests. Horkheimer also does not see that it is our domination of animals which interferes with our perceiving "animal absolutes," such as that pain feels bad, and that objects of desire are of *real value* to desiring beings. Emotional and desiring forms of cognition are not acknowledged not because they do not exist, but presumably because their realization would be highly obstructive for a deeply speciesist society.

George Herbert Mead does not discuss animals much, positing that they have no self (although they feel pleasure and pain) since a self, he supposes, is predicated on communication and participation in a social life (Mead, 1964, p. 42). Elsewhere he writes that chicks respond to the meaning of clucks from the mother (*Ibid.*, p. 164), implying that even immature chickens *can* both communicate and socialize.

Habermas holds that intuitively we have the unmistakable sense that we should avoid cruelty to animals capable of suffering (Habermas, 1993, p. 106). However, he proclaims that we have no obligations to abstain from killing animals in experiments or for food (Habermas, 1993, p. 108). Animals, he explains, do not belong to the contractual reciprocity that underlies human morality (*Ibid.*), although he does not seem to notice that the same exclusion applies to mentally disabled humans. He views animals as lacking linguistic autonomy and as dependent on instinct (Habermas, 1988, p. 101) and as not "historically variable" (*Ibid.*), as if animals do not need to adapt to the atrocious history of human habitat incursions for example.

Turner states repeatedly that rights are based in the fact that we are human (Turner, 2006b, pp. 3, 49, 67) which is obviously a species-based conception of rights. At other times he bases rights in vulnerability, as we have seen, although other animals are often *more* vulnerable. He considers animal rights as a kind of objection to his account. He claims that working animals may have rights since they are valuable to humans (*Ibid.*, p. 38) and is prepared to concede the possibility of “ecological rights” (*Ibid.*). That again, would dignify animals only as workers *for humans* and as part of a vibrant environment *for humans*. He notes that animals cannot represent themselves without help (*Ibid.*), although again, the same is true of many mentally disabled humans.

Assessing the above, traditional sociology presents denigrations of animals’ abilities and dismissals of claims in favor of animal liberation. As for other sociologists, whose remarks pertaining to normative sociology were examined in the works cited above, there is a deafening silence on the topic of animals: Emile Durkheim, Adam Smith, Jane Addams, Herbert Marcuse, Talcott Parsons, Antonio Gramsci, Theodor Adorno (in his writing apart from Horkheimer), Steven Buechler, Robert Bellah, Raymond Boudon, Maeve Cooke, Kyung-Man Kim, W. E. B. DuBois, and Steven Lukes—let alone the negative normative sociologists Max Weber and C. Wright Mills (along with Karl Mannheim and Herbert Blumer—considered in Part 2). We will see in Part 2 that the authors of *Liberation Sociology*, Joe Feagin and Hernan Vera (2001), ironically also do not even mention animals—let alone *animal liberation*.

Whether they had anything to say about animals or not, the traditional positive normative sociologists were willing to assert positive norms favoring humans, but not other animals beyond anti-cruelty in the few cases noted above. Animals are wholly absent referents in most “traditionalist” cases then. In the minds of most thinkers, animals only appear as ghosts of who they really are—absent referents by *degrees*. Animals are far more psychologically rich than appears in the world views of most people (Dunayer, 2004; Griffin, 1992, 1984, 1981; Masson and McCarthy, 1995; Pluhar, 1995; Rollin, 1989; Balcombe, 2006). My ancestors died hoping for a general liberation whose real

possibility would not be blown away by the bitter winds of moral relativity. In Part 2, I will argue that such a hope depends on *animal absolutes* that we share in common with other sentient beings. Animals are only too absent from our typical sociological frames of reference. I will argue that this is dangerous not only to animals but no less to the prospects for staking out absolute rights for humans.

Normative Sociology and Animal Liberation

Sociologist John Sorenson is one of the few to attempt positive normative sociology that is animal liberationist (see below). Jasper and Nelkin (1992) abstain from overt normative judgments, although their social study of the animal rights movement carries a snide tone at times. Birke, Arluke and Michael (2007) study vivisection sociologically but announce that they are "...not concerned...with issues of ethics..." (Birke et al., 2007, p. 4) although they may each take such stands privately.

David Nibert is one of the few animal sociologists besides Sorenson to take a systematic positive stand. Nibert uses a materialistic angle, like Marx, and claims it is naïve to attack speciesism using ideas. Nibert asserts that oppression is motivated by economic interests, not innate prejudices (Nibert, 2002, p. 3). Nibert's materialism is heir to all of the critiques applied to Marx's vision. Vested interests do interfere with animal thriving and need to be confronted, but speciesism is a *bad idea*, much like racism. Challenging poor thinking is key and *changes minds*. Those who consider animals as *equals* in most senses do not traffic in them. It is odd that Nibert refers to prejudices as "innate," whereas they are taught and so can be "unlearned" too. True, people often seek material possessions but that is for *psychological* gratifications such as pleasure, power or the enjoyment of freedom. He argues that Indians were degraded by racists because that facilitated economic exploitation (*Ibid.*, pp. 16-17) but Indians could *still* be enslaved by the more powerful: a change of heart and mind was crucial in that case.

More sweepingly illustrative for present purposes is the “animal sociology” textbook, *Between the Species* (2009) edited by Arluke and Sanders. Chiefly drawn from the journal literature, this collection contains normative statements. Technically this text is a departure from my monograph survey, but there is a paucity of such monographs, so this collection promises to be indicative of future directions for research. Interestingly, Arluke and Sanders note that they both have “strong feelings and commitments” regarding animals, but their choice of terminology “...do[es] not intend to make any particular political or ethical point” (Arluke and Sanders, 2009, p. xiii).

Consider examples from the textbook:

- (1) Glen Elder speaks of stopping “...violence directed at animals on the basis of their nonhuman status...” (*Ibid.*, p. 31);
- (2) Sanders critiques anthropocentric views of human-animal relationships (p. 51);
- (3) Robert Agnew cites rationalizations of animal abuse using dominionistic orientations (p. 80), animals considered as objects rather than subjects (p. 123), and he encourages “an ethic of respect and mutuality, caring and friendship” (p. 124);
- (4) Harold Herzog expresses moral qualms about vivisection (pp. 160-161), a critique of speciesism (p. 162), and claims without elaboration that animal liberation is “rooted in cold, rigorous logic” (p. 168);
- (5) David Nibert refers to “animal oppression” in agriculture (p. 183);
- (6) Adams answers the question, “Should feminists be vegetarians?” in the affirmative (p. 190—see my critical analysis of the feminist ethics of care, which she subscribes to, in Szybel 2006b, pp. 10-12);
- (7) Joanna Swabe discusses veterinary dilemmas (Arluke and Sanders, 2009, p. 248);
and
- (8) Bonnie Berry links human and animal oppression (pp. 370, 374) and denounces speciesism as a form of bigotry (p. 371).

Based on arguments that he supplies, Sorenson urges that the basic immorality of anthropocentrism should be apparent (Sorenson, 2003a, p. 268). First, meat-eating

subordinates animals' vital interests to humans' trivial desires (Sorenson 2003b, p. 276). True, but we need to refute superiorism, according to which view such an outcome is *just*. According to superiorism—a devil's advocate view—animals embody less good for themselves and others, and so are *worth* less (Szybel, 2000). Moral skepticism also threatens Sorenson's first argument. Second, Sorenson points out that humans have rights even if they lack language, reason, social organization or tools (Sorenson, 2003b, pp. 273, 274). Unfortunately, R. G. Frey is prepared to medically vivisect both animals *and* mentally disabled humans (Frey, 1987, p. 89). Superiorism also remains a threat here. Sorenson's arguments so far also rely on assumptions that people deserve rights, but skeptics make no such assumptions, and if morality is essentially arbitrary, then why cannot our treatment of animals be so? Third, Sorenson compares speciesism to racism and sexism (Sorenson, 2003b, p. 274). Yet superiorism does not discriminate in a racist or sexist way, and moral skepticism denies any absolute reality to animal oppression.

Sorenson additionally critiques anthropocentrism as a prejudice (2003a, p. 267) based on a presumption of human superiority (*Ibid.*). Yet superiorism claims not to be prejudicial, to be promotive of the greatest good, and also that humans evidently have superior language, autonomy, etc. (Szybel, 2000). Moral skeptics also claim to be the *least* prejudicial of all theorists. Finally, Sorenson states that anthropocentrism ignores the interdependence of all life forms (Sorenson 2003a, p. 267). I am dependent on trees, but do they deserve rights? Oppressors do not “depend” on the thriving of the oppressed. We need more rigorously to justify a positive normative sociology that is animal-inclusive, as I strive to do in Part 2.

Conclusion

Democracy and ethical relativism provide no bulwark against oppression. Animals are more damaged by the implications of ethical relativism than humans who are commonly granted rights. There is a widespread presumption in favor of negative normative sociology, but I will try to show in Part 2 how powerful Weberian objections might be

vanquished. I will also show that best caring sociology is more consistent with sociological values (listed above) than the dominant paradigm of ethical relativism.

Animals have been absent referents by degrees in previous sociology but neither the norms of sympathy nor Kantianism will be enough to rescue animals from the vagaries of intuitionism. Marx's anti-idealism looms large in the world but is ultimately self-defeating since he offers little vision for the future and mischaracterizes ideals as necessarily speculative, faith-based, etc. Also, "materialism" does not really tell us how to proceed. The view that violent revolution is somehow necessary is not self-evident, nor is the inevitability of a proletarian revolution carefully reasoned.

Adorno, Horkheimer, Habermas and Buechler have a background of acid skepticism that undermines any practical, pro-liberationist program. Buechler, Bellah, Boudon, Cooke, Turner, Lukes and Sorenson lack a rational basis for their positive normative sociologies. Many books on sociology were consulted for this study that had nothing to say about normative sociology and so were not cited, but the extensive list of actual citations shows that normative sociology (sometimes as it pertains to animals) is an important theme in the sociological literature. Indeed, some books studied had many relevant statements or implications that I did not have room to cite. Will best caring sociology be able to go beyond the rampant ethical relativism and intuitionism cited above? Can it withstand the Weberians' objections? Can we use the scientific method to vindicate ethics? Answers to these questions await the reader in Part 2.

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BOOK REVIEW

Patrice Jones (2007) *Aftershock: Confronting Trauma in a Violent World: A Guide for Activists and their Allies*, New York: Lantern

Reviewed by Lisa Kemmerer

...we are animals, and aren't able to decide not to have feelings. Just like the earth, we are going to quake if sufficiently shaken. We don't get to choose whether or not traumatic events will damage our psychic infrastructure. Like twisted bridges, injured psyches may not be stable or safe and certainly can't be trusted to get us where we need to go. Aftershocked activists who are loath to look after their own feelings for fear of selfishness may need to be helped to see self-maintenance as a necessary chore rather than an act of self-indulgence. (2007: 94)

Merriam-Webster and Cambridge Dictionaries define "aftershock" in the following ways, respectively:

- 1 : a minor shock following the main shock of an earthquake
- 2 : an aftereffect of a distressing or traumatic event (Merriam-Webster)

1: sudden movement of the Earth's surface which often follows an earthquake and which is less violent than the first main movement (Cambridge)

In *Aftershock*, Patrice Jones applies this geological term to describe "the reverberations of traumatic events endured by activists" (2007: 65). She quotes Wikipedia to explain her use of this term: "Aftershocks are dangerous because they are usually unpredictable, can be of a large magnitude, and can collapse buildings that are damaged from the mainshock" (2007: 65). Similarly, activist aftershock "can leave people feeling like they are in ruins" (2007: 65).

Patrice Jones is a gay vegan social activist and psychotherapist, with all the right background to explore the psychological affects of animal and eco activism. She notes

how those who see violence entrenched in our way of life, and in our paradigms, are affected by this understanding. Focusing on animal and earth liberationists, Jones suggests ways that activists might protect themselves against some of these psychological traumas.

Aftershock begins with the basics: we are animals (2007: 14). Yet our language, religions, and culture in general tend to deny this basic truth. And this, Jones notes, is the root of “the most catastrophic problems facing our planet, as well as the most oppressive processes among people, are all related in some way to the denial of human animality” (2007: 20). While many animal and eco activists understand human animality, and (unlike other readers) will not be surprised by this truth, it will surprise such activists to see how they have not tended to implement this understanding. For example, activists-as-animals see the traumatic affects of gestation crates on sows and debeaking on birds, yet fail to identify similar affects of trauma in their own lives. While our traumas are not those of the “dairy” cow, the affects of trauma can be recognized across species. Dr. Hope Ferdowsian, for example, recorded symptoms of psychological disorders in chimps exploited for laboratory studies that matched those of traumatized humans (“Chimps”). We are animals, and animal activists are often traumatized while fighting for the health and lives of nonhumans.

Aftershock sometimes turns to the lives of feathered citizens to explore the affects of trauma. Jones has run and worked on a chicken sanctuary for many years. She has seen the affects of deprivation and prolonged misery on factory farmed hens stuffed in crowded in cages, unable to run after a bug, dabble in a mud puddle, or even lift their wings. These unfortunate hens stand crowded in squalor throughout their short lives. Consequently, those few hens who, one way or another, arrive at Jones’ chicken sanctuary, look to be on death’s door—sickly, pale, unable to walk, huddled in terror of the world around them. Over time, she watches these traumatized birds “learn to be birds” (2007: 112). Somehow, in spite of all that has been done to them, they retain enough hope for considerable recovery, and are soon flying from the coop with each new

day, eager for the chance to chase a bug or play in a fresh mud puddle, lifting their once dormant wings.

Yet in spite of the enthusiasm these now healthy hens show, Jones can see that these birds “are still compromised by the things that have been done to them” (2007: 112). Among her many feathered rescues, Jones has a flock of chickens who have gone feral, who roost in trees and roam the woods around her home. “They are truly, the happiest and healthiest birds at the sanctuary” (2007: 112), she notes. Not one “former egg factory inmate has ever chosen to join them. . . . [S]omething in their life history keeps them coming back to the coops rather than making the jump to the trees” (2007: 112). While the recovery of most battery hens is remarkable, it is seldom, if ever, complete.

We are animals (2007: 193), and so Jones’ chicken observation carries across species, to humans. She notes that many people are like these “former egg factory inmates,” carrying pain from a world that is angry and cruel, dishonest and shortsighted. In our violent and fragmented society, many suffer similarly—especially if we are sensitive to the plight of pigs in farrowing crates, or the outlook for walruses in a land of global warming. The magnitude of these problems, their intractable links with capitalism and consumerism, coupled with the immediate desperation of an individual hen in a battery cage, or the looming peril of global warming, can be overwhelming and seriously damaging. For animal and earth liberationists, even when our lives are going relatively well, we see suffering on every side (2007: 113). Humans and hens are both traumatized by the cruelty of our world, the greed and indifference of capitalism. What traumas are most likely for those dedicated to the earth and animal liberation?

Jones’ focuses on post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) and depression, which she describes as two common symptoms of aftershock. PTSD and depression can be debilitating if left untreated, Jones notes, and neither ought to be treated solely with medications. (Traumatized individuals often make things significantly worse by self-medicating with alcohol or other drugs (2007: 124).) PTSD, caused by trauma, and first diagnosed after the Vietnam War (2007: 69), is a “*normal* physical and emotional

reaction to extraordinarily frightening or disorienting experiences” (2007: 70). Jones’ list of symptoms for PTSD will likely be familiar to animal and eco activists: Reliving traumatic experiences, avoiding reminders of traumatic experiences, hypersensitivity manifest in various forms (such as heightened startled responses or insomnia), emotional numbness often manifest as detachment or estrangement (2007: 75-76).

“Trauma,” Jones writes, “always involves some sort of rupture or break,” and often leaves people feeling helpless and disconnected (2007: 72). Trauma also tends to isolate people (2007: 129). Healing requires empowerment—doing something—and reconnection (2007: 2). A “stable recovery” requires coming “to terms with what has happened, integrating the trauma into one’s life history and worldview, and restoring or forging connections with other people and the natural world” (2007: 83). In particular, Jones isolates the “healing power of nature There is no synthetic substitute” (2007: 126). Jones suggests time in the outdoors, such as walks. She encourages painting and dancing for those who are not ready to talk, or who are perhaps unable to discuss the traumas experienced. She also encourages those with PTSD and depression to continue working for change. We all need to “make sure to do some things that surely will have some impact, no matter how seemingly small” to aid against feeling helpless (2007: 133): Go vegan, rescue a hamster, or pause to move a spider from the sidewalk. Each of these acts has a direct and sure positive affect in the world, and concurrently, a direct and sure positive affect on the activist. Jones also highlights the importance of forging meaningful connections, and reminds readers that activism can be a particularly natural and meaningful way to forge such connections.

Jones work covers many details, but also backs up to talk about the bigger picture, the underlying cause, the hidden fault that causes the earthquakes and the aftershock. Jones does not sideswipe issues—she gets her teeth into the whole vegan enchelada. All forms of oppression are linked, she reminds. Therefore, activists need to network with others from a variety of causes, and we must always remember that we are not separate from nature—we are animals.

Our culture teaches us that we are separate and above other creatures and nature, but this falsity is the ultimate rupture behind the trauma that Jones indicates has led to PTSD in earth and animal liberationists, and to global warming itself. All oppressions are linked by this “fault line” running underneath all of the social and environmental disruptions that plague us and the planet” (2007: 172). Jones encourages us to root out the core falsity that is central to the thoughts and actions of the Western world: “Men have the right and the duty to transcend and subdue the earth, animals, women, children, and men of other faiths” (2007: 172). If we do not see the core problem, the dishonesty and fracture inherent in some of our most basic paradigms, we will continue to make choices rooted in falsity. If we are to heal, we must root out these ancient and deep falsities, and connect with other movements in search of a more holistic justice (2007: 199).

Jones cautions that our mental states are unlikely to ever be entirely whole and healthy in our broken world, in communities built on lies of hierarchy and violent actions of oppression and injustice—lies that are as old as hierarchy itself (2007: 190). Jones states clearly with regard to *Aftershock*: “The purpose of this book is to give you the tools and information you need” to work toward recovery from aftershock (2007: 66).

Perhaps foremost in her recovery suggestions, Jones encourages communication, and repeatedly notes that telling one’s story is an important part of integrating painful experiences and healing. She refers to us as “talking animals” (2007: 129), and explains that one of our most important roles as fellow activists is to “Listen, listen, listen” (2007: 135). She even offers guidelines as to how an activist might protect her or himself from prosecution if talking to a therapist, in light of today’s politically repressive society.

On reflection, always alert for the blinkers of my gender, age group, race, and economic status, I found myself wondering: Are women and men equally “talking animals”? Studies repeatedly show that women and girls are the most verbal human beings, excelling in the use of words, even turning to communication and friendship in times of stress, unlike men, who “holed up somewhere on their own (Berkowitz). Truth is, I am a bit of an anomaly as a woman, not much inclined to emotive words or sharing feelings.

Meanwhile, my sister is the quintessential communicator, and will attest to the importance of communication whenever asked—and sometimes when not asked. Consequently, I wonder about the role of communication in healing. When my sister returns home to tell me all about a wounded frog which she found on the roadway and was not able to save—purging herself of at least a portion of the incumbent pain—I am further burdened in my silence. Whereas I was previously free of the imagery and knowledge of a frog’s suffering, I am afterwards weighed down by the horror of the frog’s tragic end, as well as my sister’s traumatic experience.

Is it ever appropriate to tell someone that, no matter how distressing their experience, we do not wish to hear of it? Do communicators have some responsibility to avoid burdening other sensitive activists? Off hand, it is difficult to envision how this concern might be integrated into Jones’ focus on the importance of communication, which will resonate with most people.

Jones’ thought-provoking book also led me to ponder increasing violence among liberation movements. She describes trauma as rupture, and notes that rupture tends to lead to “uncharacteristic behavior” (2007: 107). She also notes that “Everyday life can be similarly nightmarish for those who have undone the socialization that leads us to see cadavers as ‘meat’” (2007: 90). Once we realize that the white, dimpled flesh under the cellophane wrap was, not long ago, a youthful chicken deprived of just about every basic instinct and desire, we flinch every time we see someone toss “bloody body parts onto the check-out conveyer belt” (2007: 90). It is not easy seeing violence for what it is when surrounded by people who do not see. “[V]egans, unlike flesh-eaters, never stop noticing the violence inherent in meat” (2007: 149). Animal and earth liberationists are likely to be in a constant state of trauma, and Jones notes that this trauma is caused “not by what has been done to them but by what they have seen” (2007: 93). As somewhat helpless witnesses to daily violence against animals in supermarkets and restaurants, we are also traumatized by veal crates, gestation crates, and battery cages, not by being *in* them, but by seeing the flesh, the eggs, the milk that surrounds us in daily life.

Furthermore, those perpetually traumatized by violence are “normal” in our incredibly violent world. Those who are oblivious to the blood on their plates, those who are in denial about global warming are in the majority—but they do not exemplify sanity (151). Connecting these various ideas from *Aftershock* looks like this:

- Animal and earth liberationists are constantly traumatized
- Trauma can lead to uncharacteristic behaviors
- Traumatized activists and their uncharacteristic behaviors are likely more healthy than those not traumatized by persistent, pervasive violence and destruction.

Even though traumatized activists are more sane than those who fail to notice the ongoing animal abuse and environmental devastation, our society does not view animal or eco activists in this light. Consequently, it might be possible to discover in Jones’ book, *Aftershock*, a worthy legal defense to help activists in courts of law. If the escalating violence of liberation movements can be demonstrated to be an “uncharacteristic response” that stems from the trauma, this might help activists avoid unjust and increasingly harsh prison sentences.

While thought provoking on many levels, *Aftershock* is an imminently practical book, in which Jones provides animal and eco activists with sound and much-needed advise: take care of yourselves and each other, eat well, rest well, breathe, and get plenty of exercise and outdoor time. Of equal importance, Jones offers tips for counselors and psychotherapists who might be interested in entering this much needed treatment area. She recommends that such professionals “make themselves more available,” since few activists can afford expensive healthcare. She writes: “I’d like to see relevant professional associations take responsibility for organizing and publicizing networks of therapists and counselors prepared to provide free or low-cost services to activists” (2007: 150). Jones encourages group therapy because it is cheaper, because of the importance of communication, and because this format allows one trained therapist to help a number of activists (2007: 156), keeping costs at a minimum.

Critically, Jones recommends that therapists interested in this field of work learn something of activism, and of the issues involved, noting how touched she was when one of her therapists, instead of perceiving her as most non-activists do—as a tough and strong activist—commented on the difficult exposure that Jones faced each day, and the vulnerability that goes with such exposure. Her therapist the criticisms and abuses that animal and eco activists accept as part of their advocacy (2007: 160-161).

Jones also warns that activists are likely to make therapists uncomfortable who are not leading a socially progressive and well-informed lifestyle. “It is possible,” she notes, “that activist clients will directly challenge you or, without even meaning to, lead you to feel uncomfortable with your own choices. Every vegetarian who has ever attended a family dinner at which meat is served knows that all you have to do is sit there quietly not eating meat for people to feel attacked about their own food choices” (2007: 158).

Perhaps the most remarkable advice Jones offers therapists, is that they “encourage all of their clients to explore their lapses of empathy with the earth, other people, and—yes—other animals” (2007: 162). While acknowledging “sacrosanct personal beliefs,” which therapists are trained not to breach, she notes that “eating an animal is something you do to somebody else’s body without her consent” and that “therapists routinely intervene, speak up, or at least ask questions when they hear that their clients are violating the bodies of people” (2007: 162).

Aftershock is well-written and well-researched, offering a fresh vision into the lives and minds of activists, into the importance of the activist community, and into the importance of dealing with the inevitable emotional strain that goes along with a life of animal and earth advocacy—or any heightened sensitivity to injustice and violence. Jones has written a practical book in plain English, with plenty of worthy examples and bulleted lists to help readers key in on the most important symptoms or solutions.

Jones observes, “The world is hurt, and so are you” (113), but *Aftershock* is a book filled with possibilities. Social activism, she notes, “requires some measure of hope” (106).

We must be like the chickens at Jones sanctuary, who somehow fly from the coop to explore each bright new day filled with bugs and puddles as if they could not remember the battery cages. We must find what brings us peace, what affords us a measure of happiness, and how to hold onto joyous moments even in the face of ongoing activism:

Blue skies and bright colors, birdsong and sea breezes, all of these are parts of the real world, too. Indeed, they are more longstanding than concentration camps and highways. Remember that, and you'll have an easier time making peace with the less pleasant aspects of present reality. (113)

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FILM REVIEWS

***Behind the Mask* (2006) Uncaged Films and ARME**

Sarat Colling and Anthony J. Nocella, II

For over thirty years the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) has been freeing nonhuman animals around the world and destroying the property that causes them harm. Using economic sabotage in the form of property destruction they have caused animal industries a loss in the hundreds of millions of dollars of “damage.” Shannon Keith’s 2006 documentary *Behind the Mask*, produced by Uncaged Films and ARME, is the first contemporary and entertaining movie geared towards the general public to understand this infamous and controversial group. Winner of numerous awards including Best Documentary Feature at the *Venice Film Festival*, this seventy two minute film weaves together interviews of those who take underground animal actions and prominent supporters of the ALF with undercover footage of animals in laboratories, as well as animals being liberated and in loving sanctuaries. Keith, a civil and animal rights attorney, also synchronizes quotes and clips from other social justice movements such as The Civil Rights Movement, Woman Suffragettes, Nelson Mandela and John F. Kennedy. Accompanied with excellent musical choices, this makes for a powerful impact.

With species after species being wiped off the Earth, and animals facing tremendous suffering and death in animal industries, something needed to occur with equal gravity. The ALF grew from its roots in the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HAS) which was first active in England in the 1960’s (and is still active today). The Band of Mercy soon emerged as an offshoot of HAS. While the HAS disrupted hunts by confusing hounds with horns and false scents, the Band of Mercy used property destruction such as sabotaging hunting vehicles to end the hunt before it began. One person involved with both of these groups was ALF founder Ronnie Lee. After being freed from imprisonment for a laboratory raid, he and others realized that they should establish universal guidelines and change the Band of Mercy’s name to reflect a more ground-breaking

liberatory movement. Hence, the notorious Animal Liberation Front was established for the purpose of taking extreme action in extreme times for animals. It was not long until the ALF became international. In 1977 ALF cells entered the U.S. radar by releasing two dolphins from a research facility in Hawaii.

While the film does not go into extensive detail on the origins of the ALF, some history is discussed. Keith traveled around the world to interview long time activists including Ronnie Lee. Describing how they came up with the guidelines, Lee says that they wanted tactics that everyone would be happy with so many would join in, and to be certain that no one got hurt, including the animals.¹ John Curtin describes how the ALF used to have an office but it wasn't long until the police shut it down.² Ever since then the ALF has consisted of small groups of clandestine, autonomous, and decentralized underground activists.

Keith, who made this film because “change has only come when laws have been broken,” profiles those who have been imprisoned for their illegal actions to help animals.³ These animal liberationists and economic saboteurs, including Keith Mann, Melanie Arnold, and Rod Coronado, explain why they have risked peril to help nonhuman animals. As Mann puts it, “If I didn't do anything to help these animals out, that's what would keep me awake at night.”⁴ As a radical faction the ALF is not alone. Referring to struggles such as civil rights, women's suffrage and Nelson Mandela's guerilla campaign, Keith states that:

Throughout history there have always been those who petitioned the government and wrote letters to politicians. There have even been those who have written bills and had discussions with leaders of the nations. These tactics alone have never worked. The only time we have seen a social justice movement prevail is because there was pressure from more radical factions.⁵

Having asked nicely for those in power to stop animal abuse, the ALF saw that these actions alone were not working. But because the ALF's direct action has succeeded in putting pressure

¹ Lee, Ronnie, Interview.

² Curtin, John, Interview.

³ Keith, Shannon, Commentary.

⁴ Mann, Keith, Interview.

on animal enterprises, there has been increased government repression and the labeling of these activists as “terrorists.”

Although the ALF has been identified by the FBI as the number one domestic threat in the U.S., they have not harmed a single human since becoming established. The extent of their extreme actions is causing property destruction such as arsons to facilities that torture animals, and freeing animals such as puppies, kittens, mice, and rabbits from being tested on by companies such as Proctor and Gamble. The ALF do not see a species barrier; they recognize that all sentient beings, those who feel pleasure, pain, and have inherent value, have a right to freedom. As philosophy professor Steven Best comments:

Whatever your species is, whether you have a tail or not, those criteria are just as irrelevant as what your race or gender are...now it's true that they can't design spaceships, it's true they don't compose sonatas. We don't run like the wind, we don't have the grace of the gazelle, we don't hear with our feet like elephants do.⁶

Behind the Mask challenges the public perception that those who take direct action to help animals are terrorists. Keith found during the making of this film that even he had been investigated by the FBI as a “terrorist organization member” since 2001.⁷ The only conclusion to make from this terrorist status is that if an organization, group, or individual threatens the profits of a corporation or company they are also causing a threat to the values and foundation of capitalism, the gas that fuels many governments around the world including the US. Moving from assumption to fact, this was proven with the passing of the undemocratic Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) of 2006 which provides severe restriction to the protesting of animal enterprises because it could jeopardize corporate profits.

One such industry is vivisection which is practiced primarily to serve corporate interests.⁸ When the ALF was founded they pinpointed vivisection as an area that was not really being addressed

⁶ Dr. Best, Steven, Interview. *Behind the Mask*. Dir. Shannon Keith. DVD. Uncaged Films and ARME 2006.

⁷ Keith, Shannon, Commentary. *Behind the Mask*. Dir. Shannon Keith. DVD. Uncaged Films and ARME 2006.

⁸ patrice jones, “Corporate Crimes Against Animals” *Eastern Shore Sanctuary & Education Center* 19, Sept. 2009
<<http://www.actionforanimalsnetwork.org/corporatecrimes.htm>>

extensively and where they could make a difference. The film features medical specialists such as Jerry Vlasak and Dr. Rich McLellan, along with Ingrid Newkirk who has interviewed many scientists, doctors and researchers, who discuss the illusions of vivisection and how it is “just a big business.”⁹ An undercover investigator for PETA shares her experience of working in the laboratory, and notes that all the staff knew people taking drugs that they had been testing on the primates for years. This brings up the obvious question: why were they still being tested years later?¹⁰ Animal testing, explains Vlasak, is not necessary and can actually slow medical progress.

In the 21st century we have much more modern and efficacious techniques for testing drugs and doing medical research...this day and age we are looking at things on molecular level and sub atomic levels and to think we can do that on a mouse or rat and apply that to humans is ridiculous, it doesn't work.¹¹

Further, Dr. McLellan says that he and his associates used to joke about “what were we doing with these animals,” and that it was widely known those doing animal research may have been making a living but were not making a meaningful contribution.¹²

It is tremendously important to have such a comprehensive documentary on the ALF because they, as profound and extreme as the Civil Rights Movement, Underground Railroad, Suffragettes, and Quakers, have not seen much positive attention within the social justice movement and that which they have received has been massive repression by law enforcement around the world. Although not as sensational, and produced with less funding than documentaries such as Oscar nominated *The Weather Underground* which social justice activists have shown repeatedly at schools, community centers, activist meetings and conferences, *Behind the Mask* should be valued and utilized the same way. Unfortunately it has not been for two reasons: first, because the film stresses the value and respect for nonhuman animals and not simply humans, and second, it is not a historical film but rather it is speaking about extremists

⁹ Newkirk, Ingrid, Interview. *Behind the Mask*, Dir. Shannon Keith. DVD. Uncaged Films and ARME 2006.

¹⁰ Rokke, Michelle, Interview. *Behind the Mask*. Dir. Shannon Keith. DVD. Uncaged Films and ARME 2006.

¹¹ Vlasak, Jerry, Interview. *Behind the Mask*, Dir. Shannon Keith. DVD. Uncaged Films and ARME 2006.

¹² McClellan, Rich, Interview. *Behind the Mask*, Dir. Shannon Keith. DVD. Uncaged Films and ARME 2006.

today. The ALF are extremists in the tradition of Martin L. King Jr., who said it best in his Letter from Birmingham Jail (April 1963):

Was not Jesus an extremist for love -- "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." Was not Amos an extremist for justice -- "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." Was not Paul an extremist for the gospel of Jesus Christ -- "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Was not Martin Luther an extremist -- "Here I stand; I can do none other so help me God." Was not John Bunyan an extremist -- "I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience." Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist -- "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free." Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist -- "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." So the question is not whether we will be extremist but what kind of extremist will we be. Will we be extremists for hate or will we be extremists for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice--or will we be extremists for the cause of justice?

People often say that if they were back in the sixties they would be marching with Martin Luther King Jr. and supporting Malcolm X, or they would join the Weather Underground, as today members of the Weather Underground and Black Panther Party are respected professors at top universities. While the Weather Underground's theoretical analysis was based on critique of imperialism, and the Black Panther Party and Civil Rights Movement on race, the ALF's theoretical analysis is grounded in the anarchist critique of property that, whether a person or a tree, no living being should and can be property. This film challenges the viewer to recognize that the animal liberation movement and ALF are imperative liberatory groups for today's society, and to take action to support them.

The commencement of covert ALF direct action in the 1970's stepped activism for animals up a notch. While there are a number of clips and documentaries on the ALF available online, no film until *Behind the Mask* has included the comprehensive historical and philosophical understanding of the group geared towards a mainstream audience. Not only is this an important documentary to show at activist conferences and meetings, and college courses in the field of sociology, criminology, philosophy, education, critical animal studies, peace and conflict studies, and environmental studies, it should be viewed by anyone who eats meat, uses animal tested products, is considering a career in animal testing, wears fur, or just wants to understand what

the ALF is about. It is well worth remembering that: “When you drive by UCLA or Cedars-Sinai, those pretty walls and the lawns, behind that the horrors take place.”¹³ The same applies behind the walls of slaughterhouses, fur farms, factory farms and other industries that profit off the use of nonhuman animals. Until the government takes action to remove these animals, there will be those willing to risk their freedom by taking matters into their own hands. This film gives a glimpse into the hearts and minds of these people. Further, it describes animal liberation within the context of other movements for justice and points out that you don’t have to take ALF actions to make a difference, you can simply start by boycotting cruelty. *Behind the Mask* is sure to engage and educate those who love animals and have even the most rigid ALF critic rethinking their assumptions and justifications for proclaiming protectors of life and freedom are violent terrorists.

13 DeRose, Chris, Interview. *Behind the Mask*. Dir. Shannon Keith. DVD. Uncaged Films and ARME 2006.

Portions of this review are reprinted from Anthony J. Nocella, II’s review of *Behind the Mask* on Political Media Review (www.politicalmediareview.org).

Winged Migration (2001) Sony Picture Classics

Nicole R. Pallotta

A Bird's Life

Winged Migration (2001) is a visually stunning “documentary-adventure” that follows several communities of birds on their seasonal migratory journeys. Although the migrations are set to music and the flapping of the birds’ wings can be heard in many scenes, the film is primarily a visual experience. There is very little narration in *Winged Migration*, which for the most part is shot from the perspective of the migrating birds. Several species of birds were filmed, including geese, pelicans, ducks, storks, cranes, kingfishers, and penguins. Filmed over the course of four years on all seven continents, the cameras of the filmmakers fly with the birds, a technique which affords the viewer a rare intimate glimpse of migratory birds in flight. In contrast to the customary view from our vantage point on the ground – the familiar distant “V” shape – this film delivers an incredibly detailed look at the birds as they fly. The viewer is brought so close to the birds that we can see not only their faces but also their eyes as they soar hundreds and thousands of feet above the earth, and the filmmaking technique allows us to feel as if we are flying right along with them. The cameras dive and swoop with the birds, at times behind them, at times right next to them, but always closer than most non-ethologists (or zookeepers) could ever imagine being to these birds. And even ethologists and zookeepers would not be able to accompany the birds on their flights, as this film allows the viewer to do.

There are poignant moments. A duck is shown being shot out of the sky by a hunter; one moment she is soaring, and the next her lifeless body is plummeting toward the earth. A baby puffin without parents is killed and eaten by a gull. The devastating effects of pollution are shown as a bird lands in an oil slick and becomes trapped. Another duck is shown flying with a piece of garbage wrapped around her leg. And an exhausted tern with a broken wing is pursued by hungry crabs along a beach in Senegal. Apart from these sad moments, some of which are part of the birds’ natural order and others the result of human activity, and the music, which is emotive and at times majestic, the tone of the film is matter-of-fact and gives the viewer a unique

opportunity to see birds going about the business of being birds. According to one of the filmmakers, “Our point of view, from the start, was to show that not only dogs have a dog’s life. Birds do too.” In this – providing several snapshots of a “day in the life” of migratory birds – *Winged Migration* is a resounding success. Further, the fact that this documentary is filmed primarily from the birds’ perspective makes it an important film for the emerging field of Critical Animal Studies (CAS).

When we get to know them well, we come to respect them

We watch birds in the sky on their migration in that fall and spring. We say, “How beautiful!” If the observer gives it closer look, he realizes there’s a whole story there. Where do they come from? Where are they going? ...When we get to know them well, we come to respect them. – *Winged Migration* co-director Jacques Perrin

Let’s examine this last point more closely: a film shot primarily from the perspective of the animals themselves? The critical potential inherent in this endeavor is perhaps obvious. Through the use of innovative filmmaking techniques, the birds become subjects of their own documentary. On the hierarchy of empathy, research shows people tend to empathize with birds less than with mammals and more than with fish. This tendency to feel greater empathy for those who seem more like us has been referred to as “the similarity principle,” and although this concept has traditionally been applied to human-human relations, research suggests it can also be applied to human-animal relations (Plous 1993; Rajcecki, et. al. 1993). Especially when considering the case of migratory birds, who are often glimpsed as faraway “dots in the sky,” this film does a commendable job helping the audience to see as much as possible through the eyes of the birds as they make their journeys. Because taking the perspective of another is crucial to developing empathy (Mead 1932 [1964]), this “bird’s eye view” in and of itself renders this film an important addition to the CAS cinematic canon.

There are other films about animals that accomplish the task of encouraging empathy with an animal protagonist; *Bambi* (1942) and *Babe* (1995) are well-known examples. *Bambi* turned many adults of a certain generation against hunting (Cartmill 1993) and critics worried that *Babe* would do the same thing for children and meat-eating (Pearson 1998). Why? Because when

animals (whether imaginary or real) are the sympathetic protagonists in books and film, the audience identifies with the character and this identification engenders empathy (Johnson 1996). Many recent examples of movies with sympathetic animal protagonists are fictional. Prominent examples include the *Babe* movies (1995; 1998), *Chicken Run* (2000), and *Finding Nemo* (2003) – all notable as well because they portray animals who are ranked lower on the sociozoologic scale (Arluke and Sanders 1996), i.e. farmed animals and fish.

Because the above examples are fictional, the animals in these movies have voices (Babe says outright he does not want to be eaten and Bambi expresses grief over the death of his mother at the hands of a hunter), which makes empathy, especially by children, perhaps easier to achieve. Can a documentary about wild birds encourage empathy as well? Is the filmmaker's assertion – that intimate knowledge brings respect – true?

This is certainly one of the arguments used by zoos around the world to justify keeping wild animals in captivity: if people do not have the opportunity to see wild animals, they will not empathize with them and therefore will not care about protecting them and their natural habitat. Since most people cannot see animals in the wild, zoos serve an important “conservation” function – or so the argument goes. This logic is dubious on many levels, but perhaps the most compelling counterpoint to this facile argument is the question: what are visitors to zoos actually learning? Are they learning that it's okay to keep wild animals behind bars, and that they are ours to imprison for life so we can gawk at them? Is the lesson taught by zoos empathy or objectification? Even as the public grows more critical of zoos and despite recent changes in the design of holding pens for captive animals at these facilities, most of these changes have been of an aesthetic rather than substantive nature and were made for the benefit of the zoo visitor, not the animals (Mullan and Marvin 1998). Examples include less visible bars, more greenery, and a backdrop that strives to be more representative of the captive animal's true home, but these changes did not translate into the animals having more space or companionship. I would argue, however, that seeing animals in their natural habitat and living out their normal lives (in stark contrast to the sad facsimile that a zoo provides), has significant critical potential to trigger an empathic response. It is not always possible to capture the lives of animals on film, of course, but as interest in the field of ethology continues to grow we can expect more filmmakers to employ

the methods of naturalistic, unobtrusive observation in their projects and deliver more cinematic depictions of animals living their lives. Once we have enough of these, zoos will no longer be able to argue there is no other way for people to see wild animals, and thus empathize with them, than in captivity.

How did they get that shot?

An important question remains, however: exactly how “unobtrusive” were these filmmakers? According to one of the directors, their goal was to “go with the birds” on their journeys. He states, “We wanted people to see the birds. Not just see dots in the sky, but see real characters...we had to see them up close.” An admirable and difficult goal (in the special features, the filmmakers talk candidly about the dangers and difficulties of shooting in the difficult terrain where the birds were entirely at home, but the filmmakers most definitely were not), but while I watched this innovative film, one question rose repeatedly in my mind: “how did they get that shot?” While I am always fascinated with the process of moviemaking, *Winged Migration* is in a category by itself. One of the first messages the audience sees during the opening credits is: “No special effects were used in the making of this film.” One can understand why they stated this up front; the scenes are so stunning it would be entirely reasonable to assume they did use special effects. So how *did* they get those shots?

The answer is with a mixture of techniques. The footage seen in the final version of the movie was obtained through the collaboration of more than 400 people (including film crews, ornithologists, pilots, aircraft experts, and technicians) over four years of filming. While some of the sequences comprise pure wildlife footage shot by camerapersons hidden in tents using an unobtrusive approach, other shots – the ones that follow the birds as they fly high above the earth – were obtained by traveling alongside the migrating birds in two-seater “ultra light” gliders, with a pilot and cameraperson on board. The reason the birds allowed these machines to fly alongside them was that they had become accustomed to both them and the film crew. While the birds in the film were neither trained nor captive, some of them – the birds alongside whom the filmmakers flew – became acclimated to people through the process of “imprinting,” a concept

developed by naturalist and animal behaviorist Konrad Lorenz in the 1930s. Imprinting is basically the process of transferring parenthood, and Lorenz made himself the foster father to dozens of baby geese during his experiments in imprinting. He discovered that the first being that an animal sees when he is born will be given the role of the parent. The filmmakers used this technique with some of the birds in the film in order to eventually be able to fly with them.

The imprinting process was carried out on a training ground in Normandy with the assistance of scientific advisors from the Paris Museum of Natural History. They began with eggs incubated in machines, and some time before birth the caretakers played tapes with the voice of the person who would raise birds, and the sounds with which they wanted the birds to be familiar. When the birds hatched they were taken care of 24 hours a day by the “imprinter.” Young veterinary students and biologists were hired to spend all day and night with the birds. They lived, swam, slept, ran, and eventually flew with the birds. In order for the crew to ultimately be able to fly alongside the birds in the light glider, they had to become accustomed to the engine noises, crew, and aircraft that would be flying with them. The birds would find shade under the aircraft’s wing while it was on the ground and hence it became a protective element to them. The caretakers used a bugle to call the birds, who would come running (or flying, depending upon their location) at the sound.

The filmmakers point out that the birds were free and could have left the training ground at any time. Yet, when they went on missions, the birds always came back to the glider. According to one of the directors, “It was fun for them – never work – like kids at recess.” He said when they fired up the glider the birds could not wait and would hop up and down, leaping ahead. “We had nothing but moments of shared happiness.” He continues, “There’s a difference between our birds, which we knew from birth, and trained birds. We didn’t train them...they were totally free. Free, yet attached to us.” He goes on to state that it was an interesting experiment from a scientific perspective as well. Because the full impact of imprinting is unknown, they were unsure whether the birds would stay with them when they flew into the sky. They wondered, “Would the birds fly into the wild blue yonder?” As it turned out, they did not.

In fact, many birds continued to return to the training ground in Normandy (and many of the original human caretakers stayed on as well), which has been transformed into a nature reserve that the filmmakers now have plans to expand. Co-director Perrin explains their vision:

We think it will be a reserve for all observers of nature, but open to an educational agenda. High school or middle school students will be welcome to visit with an educator. Either one of us or one of the seven caretakers will explain things; it will be an educational experience...I don't think it will be a reserve open to the public where people just look at the birds (and say), "What a pretty color!" We want it to be about knowledge, to guide people toward an intelligent discovery.

There was at least one other instance in which the filmmakers manipulated the situation, although this incident was unplanned. The following scenario was discussed by one of the filmmakers in the director interviews in the special features. At one point during filming in Senegal, the cameras captured a little tern with a broken wing who was being chased by a crab along the beach. As one of the directors told this story, I steeled myself for the gory conclusion (I know that "nature is red in tooth and claw," but being a sensitive and squeamish sort I prefer to not watch the drama unfold in movies). I expected to hear they did not intervene, or that they intervened and put the injured bird out of her misery. Instead, they saved her life. They were not unaware of the problem presented by this "rescue" from the perspective of the crab, yet they felt compelled to help the injured bird. In another co-director's words:

As soon as the tern reached the water, it drank a few drops, exhausted. And there no one spoke. Our grip picked it up and saved its life. We looked after it (and) did what we could for its wing. In the following shot, when the crabs are eating, the little bird is not there. There's a piece of rotten fish we picked up on the beach. The bird was wounded. Its wing was broken. But what did we do? We couldn't stand to watch this bird we had filmed, perhaps shamelessly, during this difficult time, and we saved its life. What did we do? Didn't we simply steal the crab's food? That's the question.

And the answer to that question is, of course, yes. But would filming the death of the bird have been appropriate? This crew did not think so. In parsing out the significance of this anecdote, which is a minor point in the film (as opposed to the imprinting issue, which looms much larger), the question arises: can one ever study animals (in their natural environment) without intervening? This is an occupational hazard for ethologists, who must remain unobtrusive yet are

at times torn by an overwhelming desire to help the animals whom they are studying. For anyone interested in this general subject, I highly recommend Cynthia Moss' engaging chronicle of her long-term study of an elephant family in Kenya, *Elephant Memories: Thirteen Years in the Life of an Elephant Family* (1988). Similar issues are faced by qualitative sociologists who conduct participant-observation in human groups and must study and accurately observe a scene without changing it, while also being mindful of the effect their presence is having on the scene. At least from a sociological perspective, no matter how unobtrusive or objective one tries to be, there is no true Archimedean point from which one's own perspective does not come into play. Of course, sociologists are required to obtain signed consent forms from their human subjects, and there is obviously no counterpart for informed consent when attempting to study the social worlds of animals.

Conclusion

The filmmakers' goal – to engender respect for the birds by allowing the audience entrée into their lives – is admirable. One of the directors of *Winged Migration* states:

The first thing we wanted to do for the film was to go with the birds. Not just see dots in the sky, but see real characters...we had to see them up close. We had to see their efforts, their struggles, when they wade, when they're happy. We filmed them in that spirit, and we had to be very close to them.

In many ways, the film is an exercise in de-objectification; the birds are transformed from “dots” into “characters.” They are rendered on screen as subjects only because the filmmakers were able to get close enough to capture both the mundane and resplendent aspects of their lives, their struggles and their happiness. Is the cost too high from a CAS perspective? Of course, in an ideal world – at least in *my* ideal world – humans would not interfere with nonhuman animals and would leave them alone. However, our world is far from ideal and in *this* world, this film has critical potential and could serve an important purpose. While I would like to see more films in this vein that exclusively use naturalistic observation to capture the lives and perspectives of nonhuman animals, filming birds as they fly presents unique challenges and tests the limits of unobtrusive methods. A critic could certainly argue this movie should not have been made at all – or at least not those parts that used imprinted birds. But if films like this could somehow

replace zoos as an acceptable “educational” way for the uncritical masses to experience wild animals, I would consider that progress.

Winged Migration (2001): Rated G. 1 hr. 29 min. This film was created by French filmmakers Jacques Cluzaud, Michel Debat, and Jacques Perrin, along with a team of scientific advisors and extensive crew.

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