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ETHICS

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Introduction

ON THE LAST PAGE OF *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, Derrida invokes us to radically reinterpret 'what is living . . . but not in terms of the "essence of the living," of the "essence of the animal"; and not by 'giving to the animal what the human deprives it of', that is, by 'simply giving speech back to the animal'.¹ This call to 're-interpret', to think differently, is not an easy task, especially given the West's metaphysical and philosophical dominant belief that animals lack language and therefore are unable to apprehend 'something as something', that is, unable to apprehend something 'as such'.² In other words, this relation between the logos and the 'as such' is what gives rise to, or is the condition of, the possibility that the human will apprehend something that appears to it, as something; as something that has an essence (the 'as such') and is what it is in and of itself regardless of its potential utility.³ The ability to apprehend, then, is the 'essence' of the Human. It is what constitutes the 'I Am': the self-reflecting (auto-affecting) autonomous human. This is why Derrida asks us not to simply reinterpret the 'essence' of, or give speech (language and logos) back to, the animal. To do this would contribute to fetishising the animal by perpetuating another form of the unethical anthropocentrism inherent in our Western metaphysical and philosophical system that keeps in place the sharp dividing line between the 'Animal' and the 'Human'.⁴

The importance of Derrida's work for this chapter on 'Ethics' is his revelation that ethics, too, is founded on the logos, and thus also continues to support the sharp human-animal divide. 'Ethics' may not be as ethical, moral or justice-orientated as we think, given that this divide institutes a discourse of speciesism that justifies not only sacrificing animals for human benefit, but, as Cary Wolfe argues, provides a discourse that relegates some humans (based on their 'gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference') to the category of 'animal' (in the derogatory sense).⁵ The first aim of this chapter, then, will be to provide an exposition on Derrida's deconstruction of two of the five philosophers in his book (Descartes and Kant). This will serve to introduce and frame, and provide a further exposition on, the ways in which Western ethics (including animal ethics and rights discourse) works to sustain a metaphysical-anthropocentric system. The second aim is to take up Derrida's invocation to think differently about our moral and ethical relations with animals. The remainder of this introductory section will disclose *how* exactly these two aims will operate throughout this chapter.

In his book Derrida demonstrates in and through his deconstruction of five key influential philosophers in our metaphysical history (Descartes, Kant, Levinas, Lacan and Heidegger) how hard it is to break free of this metaphysical-ethical humanistic legacy. In fact, in a deconstructive move Derrida reveals Levinas, Lacan and

Heidegger's unsuccessful attempts to move beyond the metaphysical humanistic tradition of Descartes and Kant when they too argue that the 'Animal' does not have the 'as such': it does not have this particular apprehending relation. Given this difficulty, Derrida's invocation to his readers is to use deconstructive strategies to undermine the construction of 'essence' or the 'as such' in order to challenge this Western metaphysical inheritance. While Derrida does not tell us how to apply these strategies (after all, deconstruction is not an application or method),⁶ he does say that they would consist in 'pluralizing and varying the "as such"', and suggests we question whether 'man, the human itself, has the "as such"' and might be 'similarly "deprived"'.⁷ In other words, Derrida asks us to think pluralistically and to continually multiply the differences between non-human and human animals.⁸

However, to understand the profound implications and consequences of Derrida's invocation means explaining the anthropocentric perpetuations and operations of the 'as such' and the 'I Am' that have taken place throughout the Western metaphysical-philosophical tradition, and in which the Western self is situated. In its first aim, this chapter reveals the constitution of 'ethics' in and through the 'I Am'. In other words, the 'I Am' or 'as such' can be defined as an anthropocentric construction characterised by what Derrida calls *ipseity*: self-reflection, self-determination, rationality and reason, autonomy, and a foundational and homogeneous 'essence' to the self that does not change and thus has one consistent meaning across time or place (autobiography). This description of the 'I Am' (or 'self') is very closely aligned to the common and foundational definition of ethics as those universal principles for regulating behaviour. As I have argued in *Derrida: Ethics Under Erasure*, what this definition makes absolutely clear is that ethics is prescriptive so that the ways in which we behave towards others is constructed and predetermined along binary and hierarchised oppositions, such as right/wrong and good/bad decisions and choices.⁹ And as we will see in Derrida's deconstruction of Kant, the crucial link between ethics and the 'I Am' is that only those selves or subjects that are already characterised by ipseity can act ethically. Therefore ethics is a metaphysical construct if by metaphysics we mean the attempt to determine absolute or foundational structures or principles through 'thought' and reason alone.¹⁰ Consequently, I argue that metaphysics, the 'I Am' and ethics are imbricated to the point where our ethical relations with other animals are (in)formed in and through our anthropocentrism.

As I also argue later in the chapter, while 'animal rights discourse' contributes to the awareness of animal suffering and cruelty at the hands of humans, and therefore enables the flourishing of animal protection agencies, it is nonetheless a form of metaphysical ethics that simply reinforces the 'as such', and the 'I Am', that constitutes anthropocentrism.¹¹ If ethics is metaphysical for all the reasons just outlined, then what happens to those prescriptive ethical rules and principles when they, and when 'I', are challenged by personal encounters with non-human animals? To answer this question, this chapter will attempt to provide more than an exposition: while important, a simple exposition is not an adequate response to Derrida's invocation to think differently or to reinterpret radically our relations with animals and what this means for our ethical relations with or to ourselves as humans. Taking seriously Derrida's invocation, then, in its second aim this chapter also attempts a deconstructive strategy in and through a double writing.¹² That is, this chapter provides an exposition of various animal ethics scholars as well as Derrida's reading of how the animal continues to be ethically, metaphysically and philosophically defined and interpreted, but it also simultaneously implements an

auto-ethnographic approach that reveals an experience of a singular animal encounter (with an Australian possum called Edna).¹³ The singularity of this encounter challenges the universalisation of our normative metaphysical ethics.

The purpose of this auto-ethnographic approach, interspersed throughout the exposition, is deliberately not straightforward, but is deconstructive and performative: the auto-ethnography is placed inside 'boxes' in an attempt to visually, graphically and conceptually demonstrate the philosophically constructed binary between humans and non-human animals, and between Reason and emotion or personal experience. Yet, at the same time, these boxes are meant to jar against, in order to indicate, the philosophical deductive-inductive teleological flow of ideas so as to interrupt the anthropocentric and metaphysical ethical positions on animals (and the notion of the 'essence of man' or the 'as such') that are often inadvertently repeated in and through philosophical writing. However, within these boxes along with auto-ethnography there are also philosophical reflections so that there is a bleeding between the two writings and genres. This is meant to indicate that animals cannot be completely contained, categorised and captured within a binary opposition. In the concluding section, the auto-ethnography and philosophical reflection bleeds out of the boxes entirely so that there are no boxes at all. The aim here is not to blur the boundaries so that the differences between animal and human are, once again, encompassed and homogenised. Rather the attempt is to visually and graphically demonstrate a mixing of human and animal, of reason/rationality and personal reflection that enables a reinterpretation of what it means to be 'ethical' in our relations *to* animals, and thereby what it means to ethically 'be *with*' animals.

Following Our Tales/Tails

I first met Edna in 2014. She is now the size of a cat, and has had a baby. Back then she was a baby on the back of her mother who used to come occasionally for some fruit, which I would leave by my open door. I encountered Edna's mother five years ago sitting on the low wall that separates my apartment's terraced veranda from the densely knotted trees that hang over the wall, and which are situated in a very small private park. My apartment is in Sydney's CBD. There is always the background hum of traffic.

One day, after a long absence, the possum turned up with Edna, who would lick her mum's mouth for the taste of the sweet fruit. Then mum disappeared, leaving Edna (still kitten size) in the area, and from that day on Edna would come to me for fruit. Perhaps because of her early introduction to me as a human, she is braver than her mum. Edna would regularly take food from my hand, till eventually, maybe a year later, she would sit on the door frame or come inside as I lay on

In his detailed readings of Descartes, Kant, Levinas, Lacan and Heidegger, Derrida reveals the various ways in which they all fall into an 'anthropocentric reinstatement of the superiority of the human order over the animal order'.¹⁴ In doing so, they all either deliberately or inadvertently perpetuate a hierarchical opposition, limit or border between 'Man' and 'Animal' (with a capital 'A'), precisely because 'Man' is valued and privileged as superiorly distinct and categorically 'different' from the non-human animal. This limit or border is not fixed and philosophers in general, Derrida reminds us, are not always in agreement on where the limit is and how it is to be defined and preserved. Yet despite these disagreements, what philosophers have in common is an assumption or judgement that the limit is

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the human.¹⁵

Consequently, for Derrida, many
philosophers throughout the history
of Western metaphysics, specifically
the ones discussed in his book, make
no allowance for the varying and
multiple differences in kinds and degrees within and between humans and non-human
animals.¹⁶ Rather, the border between Man and Animal has been retained precisely
because Western philosophers, generally speaking, refuse to attribute to non-human
animals certain characteristics and powers such as 'speech, reason, experience of
death, mourning, culture, institutions, technics, lying, pretence of pretence, covering
of tracks, gift, laughter, crying, respect', a sense of time and finitude, the ability to
'see' (not just look at) others, and the ability to respond to the other.¹⁷ This refusal,
represented in and through this particular metaphysical oppositional construction
between Human and Animal, is not just prevalent in philosophical circles. It is also
deeply embedded, I would argue, in zoology, biology, behavioural science and so on,
even despite the fact that Derrida refers to these fields, in some cases, as undermining
anthropocentric assumptions (undermining precisely because some of these fields –
such as ethology or primatology – provide evidence against our constructed boundar-
ies and assumptions).¹⁸

What I would argue Derrida also demonstrates is how all these philosophers in fact
sniff, chase or follow each other's tails by building on or reinstituting, albeit differently,
the tales of subjectivity or the 'I Am' that Descartes founded. Likewise *The Animal That
Therefore I Am* reveals to its readers that they too, perhaps at times, follow the 'tails' (or
tail bones) of these philosophers by inadvertently, or perhaps unconsciously, embody-
ing and thus perpetuating the tale that the 'Human' is both morally or ethically and
biologically distinct from, and thus superior to, the 'Animal'. As if our morals and ethics
have never been informed by our relations with other animals. As I argue elsewhere, in
our evolutionary history humans co-evolved with dogs, which was a result of the early
dog self-domesticating to humans when they first sought cohabitation.¹⁹ I go so far as
to propose that perhaps our cohabitation with dogs helped constitute and define our
moral values. Losing our tails so we are left only with tail-bones, then, is a result of our
evolutionary move to walking on two legs. The tail-bone is symbolic of the autobio-
graphical tale that we as a species tell ourselves, which is that we have completely moved

the floor hand-feeding her. Sometime after this
I could stroke her fur; she would sit on her
haunches and put one of her hands in mine
while she ate with the other.

Perhaps Edna learnt from her mother, and
perhaps all possums are opportunists? But
while Edna, just like Derrida's cat, is like any
other possum, our relationship is absolutely
singular. Edna, as Derrida puts it on page 9
of *The Animal*, 'comes to me as this irreplace-
able living being that one day enters my space,
into this place where it can encounter me, see
me' (although unlike Derrida's cat, Edna has
never seen me naked). My encounter with
Edna, a non-domestic animal, is an encounter
with the other that could end at any time. But
so far, since 2014, she has come nearly every
night. I mourn already the day she will not or
cannot come.

When Edna was a baby, in the first year of our relationship, she would sometimes accidentally bite my fingers, looking for grapes in my hand. It seems she was unable to distinguish between my hand, which smelled of fruit, and the fruit itself. When she did this, I would jump in pain and jerk my hand away. She would run to the wall. I would coax her, call her, and she responded by slowly making her way back to me and the fruit in my hand. After a few accidental bites and yelps of pain she eventually started to sniff around my hand to locate the fruit rather than bite randomly. Even now, sometimes she might inadvertently put her mouth around my finger, but she is now aware of my body and the texture and shape of my fingers, and quickly withdraws her mouth before biting down. Since those first few accidental bites she has never bitten me. She has responded (whatever that means) to my pain, and she is ever so gentle with me. What does this learning not to bite consist of: memory of my reaction? And does memory require some form of reflection, which in turn enables response?

The fruit is always in a small ramekin or bowl on the inside of the door. For a long time, for months, she would come to the open door and sit and wait till I moved off the couch to the door. She would reach out with her nose towards my face, touching my nose with hers. Then she would wait till I picked up the fruit in my hand to give her. Only then she would eat. What was she waiting for?

Once she smelled chocolate on my breath and sniffed my mouth. She put her paw on my face and very lightly and gently stroked my cheek. Animal behaviourists might say that she was trying to encourage me to give up what was in my mouth and was simply making a gesture or a request for some chocolate. I don't know if she was asking for chocolate. But it feels like it is me that cannot respond and answer her request or question, if it is a question. In any case, are these not signs or forms of communication, or ways of indicating her requests, moods and feelings?

this supposed 'evidence' to also argue that they are 'incapable of responding'.²² And so, in Descartes's tail-chasing argument, the Animal doesn't speak because it cannot

beyond our animality. As we will see, it is this tale that contributes to depriving the 'Animal' of those characteristics, listed above, with which only the 'Human' is supposedly endowed. As Derrida tells us, what is common to these five philosophers, and indeed throughout the history of Western metaphysics, are two prominent characteristics denied the 'Animal' (that is, *all* animals regardless of their differences): first, the ability to 'think' and second, the ability to *respond*. In a nutshell, while the limit or border between Man and Animal is reinterpreted and shifts among Lacan, Levinas and Heidegger, they nevertheless continue to perpetuate a particular notion of the Cartesian or Kantian 'I Am', thus reinforcing the humanist and anthropocentric notion of the human subject or self as superior to the 'Animal'.²⁰ For this reason, in what follows I concentrate on Descartes and Kant – first because their positions on the 'Animal' are founded on a notion of what it means to be ethical and moral for a humanist ('enlightened') self, and second because Kant's notion of what it means to be ethical is perpetuated by some prominent scholars of animal ethics and rights discourse.

Descartes denies the 'Animal' reason, precisely because the 'Animal' is not an 'I Am'; that is, it is not rational and it is deprived of language. Descartes puts it this way: 'maggies and parrots can utter words like ourselves, and yet they cannot talk like us, that is, with any sign of being aware of what they say'.²¹ Consequently, animals do not have reason. Critiquing Descartes, Derrida argues that he uses

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produce signs. Because it can't pro- duce signs it therefore doesn't have autonomy, autobiography or rea- son. And if it doesn't have reason the Animal therefore is unable to respond to questions, which in turn is part of a self-reflecting conscious- ness: an 'I Am'.²³ For Descartes humans can do all of this because they can 'think'; in other words, as Derrida sums up Descartes's argu- ment, '[w]hat I am experiencing ... is not that I am breathing but that I think that I am breathing'.²⁴ According to Descartes this ability to know or *think that I am thinking* (our self-consciousness and reason: 'I think, therefore I am') is what makes humans superior to, rigor- ously distinct from, and possessed of power over animals. Without reason, responses or passions, ani- mals are simply automatons (ani- mal-machines that react to stimuli).

Derrida's reading uniquely high- lights the ways in which Kant builds on Descartes's 'I think, therefore I am'. That is, Kant goes further, arguing that it is only 'man' that 'can possess the representation of an "I"', or to put it another way, only the human is an "I think" that accompanies every representation'. This means that the 'I Am' not only knows that it thinks, but it knows what it means to be an ethical 'I Am', precisely because humans have the 'power to respond, to answer for itself, before others and before the law'.²⁵ Moreover, as Derrida critically points out, like Descartes, Kant makes a distinc- tion between reaction and response, where the former is defined as the 'law of nature' (instinct) and the latter is defined as the 'law of free- dom' (reason).²⁶ The latter is what

What if Edna's stomping ground, her territory, is an autobiography of sorts? She is vigilant, at times chasing off other possum intruders. She has marked her territory. Other possums know that this is her 'place'; a place that in turn marks her. A baby male (perhaps Edna's brother?), who I named Nibs, used to come often. He would sit on the wall watching Edna eat fruit from my hand. She would chase him away, returning to eat her fill. When she left he would come over to me (perhaps imitating her), and he would very gently, almost in slow motion, take a piece of fruit from my fingers, but then he would run away. Compared to Edna he seemed shy: he was less used to my presence. But he was aware of Edna's presence, she made herself known; she seemed to have marked or told her possum tale quite clearly. And am I not part of her tale?

If Edna has learnt not to bite my fingers, I too have learnt her moods through touch. Through her touch I can sense and feel her responding to a world that is not mine. I have come to know or associate certain touches with certain responses. Every time she eats she either closes her hand around one of my fingers, or she places it on the open palm of my hand. When her hand with its long nails is wrapped around my finger, along with other indicators I can gauge her moods by how tightly she grips. There is a certain grip: a tightening and at the same time a pushing down on my finger. Whenever this happens I know she is going to burp, and it happens when she gulps her food fast. When there is something happening in 'possum world' she sometimes acts jittery, or seems hyper-aware, and if she hears something (I know not what that something is because I am literally deaf to her world) her hand grips so tightly that her nails dig into my skin, she looks outside into the darkness and her ears are like antennae moving in all directions. At these moments in an anthropomorphic gesture I often stroke her and whisper words to comfort her (as if she needs comforting!) and she will sometimes

look at me, loosen her grip and then continue eating. Is she responding to my touch, my whispers? At other times there is no comfort I can give, and she shrugs off my touches, wanting to be left alone to eat. Then there are the times when she is very relaxed. At these times her hand rests gently and loosely on my hand, she is not jittery, she allows me to stroke her and spends time with me. She has at times also sat on my lap eating grapes. She teaches me to interpret and understand her differently. It is through touch and not only through sight and sound (the privileging of phono-logocentrism that characterises the 'I Am') that I come to be 'with' Edna.

the division lays, and questioning whether humans don't also simply react.²⁸ The implication of breaching this fixed dividing line is that ethics ceases to be solely tied to the Cartesian and Kantian 'I Am'; that is, it ceases to be aligned solely with Reason and thus contained solely to the Human domain.

Now, as Kant argues in *The Metaphysics of Morals*, the 'law of freedom' comes about precisely because of man's ability to respond and to take responsibility (that is, to be ethical), both of which are results of the human capacity to reason (to 'think') as autonomous selves.²⁹ Consequently, humans submit themselves to the rule of law (the unconditional categorical imperatives) that they themselves impose and institute, because according to Kant to do otherwise would not be of benefit to oneself or human others. Reason is what enables humans to understand the logic of obeying the rules or following the law (such as 'telling the truth', 'keeping one's promise', etc.), and in

using reason humans enact free will, that is, humans have autonomy to choose between right and wrong.³⁰ This use of reason and autonomy gives the human the capacity for moral and ethical decision-making (that is, moral autobiography and moral auto-destination). Derrida argues that for Kant the human can 'think' and therefore can morally respond to the other (responsibility), but the Animal cannot; therefore they are not subject to law or ethics.³¹ What this implies is that animals do not know the difference between right and wrong; they cannot know or practice evil, and as a result they do not have the ability to deceive or pretend.³² As Leonard

One day while Edna was with me, Nibs came onto the terrace. Edna chased him away but he deceived her by circling back behind her so she wasn't aware of him, and then, while she was looking for him and patrolling her territory, he would come over to me for fruit. He would then run away before Edna returned. He did this on a few occasions.

Next to my door is a bonsai (about 40cm high and 50 wide). It made me laugh when one day, being wary, Nibs decided to hide behind the bonsai. He would look out from behind it and, if he saw me looking, he would quickly move his head back. For me it was a comical game of peek-a-boo because he didn't seem to know that he was about the size of the Bonsai and easily seen. An attempt at deception or pretence? Or a game?

constitutes the 'I Am', which Kant argues is characterised by *ipseity*, whereas the 'Animal' does not have the 'power to make reference to the self in deictic or autodeictic terms, the capability at least virtually to turn a finger towards oneself in order to say "this is I"'. This is why Kant argues that the animal cannot be ethical because 'the animal will lack any "I think", as well as understanding and reason, response and responsibility'.²⁷ However, as we will see, Derrida deconstructs this opposition between response and reaction; questioning where exactly

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Lawlor astutely observes, for many metaphysicians animals' lack of moral knowledge 'seems then to imply a kind of perfection or plentitude to the animal'.³³ Animals are, in other words, innocent because they are 'prior to good and evil'. What the Animal lacks (ethics, morals, reason, autonomy and so on), means they are perfect. Unlike humans, they have not suffered a 'fall' and are therefore without fault or defect, 'but the perfection that animals possess is that of a machine, the "animal machine" or automaton, as Descartes insists.³⁴ In a strange logic Lawlor observes that this perfection is what makes animals both superior to humans, and yet 'the superiority of animals makes them inferior to us'. Why? Because, as Lawlor explains, in the history of Western metaphysics, and as we see in Kant, it is the fault or defect of humans (the fact that we think we know the difference between good and evil, and are subject to the moral law, or categorical imperative) that 'allows us to be masters over the animals'.³⁵ It is because humans know and can enact good and evil that humans can master animals who don't know what it means to be good or evil, or to deceive. On this logic, it follows that the 'Animal' is not subject to the law, to ethics or to decision-making (in the Kantian sense).

If animals cannot think, deceive (pretend to pretend), feel, respond (hence be ethically responsible); in a word, if they are just automatons, and if as a result they are on the inferior side of a hierarchical binary opposition,³⁶ then as Andrew Benjamin argues, this means that '[h]uman being exists without relation to the animal'.³⁷ For Derrida, in retaining this opposition these metaphysical philosophers still perpetuate a hierarchy and thus an 'all too human' tale that reinforces a belief that humans are so different that we either have no animality or, if we do, it is inconsequential, thus in turn justifying the assumption that humans are superior. Our supposed superiority leads us to 'hunt, kill, exterminate, eat, and sacrifice animals, use them, make them work or submit them to experiments that are forbidden to be carried out on humans'.³⁸ On the one hand, the hierarchy and separation (the 'without relation') justifies humans treating animals unjustly or unethically without guilt or consequence. This is because if animals can't 'think' then our ethical obligations to animals can be minimal or non-existent. In other words, we do not have to be responsible towards animals. However, on the other hand, I would argue that the tale that animals are inferior and can therefore be treated badly is an opportunity to continue the anthropocentric tale in a different form: this time by extending ethics and rights to animals. As we will see in the following section, extending rights to animals – while absolutely necessary in order to help save, for example, the rapid extinction of species throughout the world – risks leaving intact what Derrida demonstrates is the one limit or division between 'Human' and 'Animal'. Moreover, this indivisible limit endorses a metaphysical and anthropocentric ethics based on reason and autonomy, allowing an ethical application that ignores the differences or singularities of animals. As we will see in what follows, animal rights and welfare positions tend to perpetuate a metaphysical ethics and this limit between human and animal.

Animal Ethics: Rights vs Welfare

Animal ethics can be defined as how humans *ought* to treat animals. Two of the most popular animal ethics positions include: 'animal welfare or liberation' and 'animal rights'. The most widely-known proponent of the former includes utilitarian philosopher Peter

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Singer, who argues that consideration should be given to ensuring that standards of the well-being of animals are met by not inflicting or allowing suffering, pain, disease, etc. That is, Singer argues that non-human animals have interests and preferences, and feel pleasure and pain, and consequently, they 'enter the sphere of moral concern. Moreover they enter it with a fundamentally equal moral status.'³⁹ While one of the most widely known proponents of animal rights, Tom Regan, believes that animals possess moral rights and thus have inherent value in the *same way as humans* and that therefore humans are morally obliged to protect animals.⁴⁰

However, Singer believes that the fundamental problem with the 'animal rights' position is that it fails to see that in arguing that animals have inherent value in the same way as humans, they inadvertently subsume animals into having to meet or comply with human values. Those values in turn are founded on those 'special human characteristics' such as 'rationality, autonomy, self-consciousness, the ability to enter into contracts, or to reciprocate, or anything of this sort'.⁴¹ To put it another way, in order for one to exert one's 'individual human rights' one has to be an 'I Am' (or self), and in order to be a self one has to be rational.

I felt angry when Edna left Pip with me. Pip was at this time still travelling on Edna's back, and was the size of a small kitten. On this night Edna was sitting on the mat inside the door eating grapes I was feeding her (through experimentation I have discovered that grapes, cherries and bananas are her favourite). Every time Edna had a grape Pip would jump on her and wrestle it from her hand. After the third or fourth wrestle and after Edna had swiped at Pip she just seemed to give in and, while one of her hands gripped my finger and while she looked me in the eyes, held out her other hand with the grape and let Pip have it. Her expression seemed fed up. I quickly fed Edna another grape, which she took and then ran outside and disappeared along the wall. What the . . . ? No!

Pip meanwhile was running around the mat trying to eat or, more aptly, suck the grapes. Noticing Edna was not around, Pip began to cry. I was panicking. Where was Edna, why had she left Pip with me? What was I to do? I had no possum milk, nothing to help me look after a baby possum. What was she playing at? Had she abandoned Pip entirely? After what seemed a long time, I picked Pip up and put him in the tree in my garden. He immediately climbed down and made his way along the wall. I hardly slept worrying about Pip and what had become of him, and whether or not I

For this reason, Singer disagrees with 'rights' for both animals and humans, pointing out that it is very hard to draw the line between what constitutes rational and irrational, let alone draw a line that 'separates those animals who are rational and autonomous and those who are not'.⁴² Furthermore, being rational and autonomous as the basis for rights, Singer argues, 'would leave out those humans who, through infancy or congenital disability, never have had – and in some cases never will have – these special characteristics'.⁴³

Now, while Regan acknowledges that animals don't have ipseity, he states that nonetheless animals have the same rights as humans because we share a 'basic similarity'.⁴⁴ In other words, Regan's solution to Singer's critique is ironically to bring his position closer to that of Singer's by basing animal rights not on cognitive, but rather 'noncognitive criteria: criteria such as sentience (the capacity to be able to experience pain and pleasure), emotion, memory, feelings and desires'.⁴⁵ In this way, not only will many more non-human animals qualify, but so too will many more

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humans who do not qualify under the cognitive criteria.⁴⁶ Yet, still, Regan believes that because animals have these similar attributes and needs, humans are morally obliged to protect animals, and we protect them by the conferral of rights.⁴⁷

Paradoxically then, on the one hand, animals do not have the *same* 'rights' as humans because in order to have them they have to have Reason and to be able to act rationally, something that most animal ethics proponents (perpetuating the metaphysical-philosophical legacy outlined in the previous section) would claim animals cannot do. On the other hand, animals do have the *same* rights as humans because they share a 'basic similarity'.⁴⁸ The result of this paradox is that in conferring rights or morals to animals, what is perpetuated is human superiority. In this way, animals are in our debt. However, as Derrida also points out when discussing the 'Universal Declaration of Animal Rights' (which was submitted to UNESCO in 1989 by the International League of Animal Rights and made public by UNESCO in 1990),⁴⁹ even if we can confer rights on animals, unlike human rights, these animal rights are not generally or universally enforced by law 'and therefore [do] not possess the authentic status of a right, which in principle must always imply a means of constraint'.⁵⁰ And they are not enforced by law precisely because in some respects they run counter to human rights. So while the Declaration has been made public, it has not been written into law. The implication of the unenforceable Declaration is that animals continue to suffer, and species continue to disappear.

had done the right thing. The next night Edna was back with Pip.

A few weeks later the same thing happened. Edna left Pip with me. Again Pip started to cry. I was sitting on the floor with my forearm on the ground by my leg. Pip snuggled and hid in between my waist and the crook of my elbow, which was dark and warm. I was more prepared this time with a hand-made possum pouch, but I didn't need it. Edna returned 30 minutes later. Pip was still hiding his face in my elbow, and Edna walked in and put her hand on Pip's back. He turned around and squeaked (with relief? Joy?). Edna started walking out the door with Pip close in tow. Was I the babysitter?

Some animal conservationists might argue that in feeding Edna I am interfering with nature. But am I not nature too? This conservationist discourse is a reinforcement of the nature-culture, animal-human division, where we associate non-human animals with nature and humans with culture: another anthropocentric position. What is the 'ethics' around this treatment of animals as those beings we need to leave alone because they are part of nature? Edna is a possum that lives in a city. That city has encroached onto her habitat. Possums adapt to cities by living in people's roofs, eating humans' leftover food, rummaging in bins. Is that 'nature/natural'? How do we define nature and culture in this instance (in any instance)? Isn't the adaptation to cities in fact cultural?

How do we live together? Edna and I have found a way. But it is a way that perhaps challenges conservation and welfare ethics. Rather, I am responsible for the radically other (but not by conferring rights to Edna). I cannot decide to stop feeding Edna simply because I might not feel like it, or because things have changed or because I am ethically obligated by my anthropocentric metaphysical ethics, or even because she relies on my food. I see her eating native frangipani blossoms and insects. She once brought me a half-eaten lizard which she dropped on the floor next to the fruit, and

then proceeded to eat the fruit. (Yeah . . . I would too!) No, Edna has a right to be fed by me not because she can't get it elsewhere, but because we are friends in a relationship of mutual trust. She can decide if she wants to continue our relationship or not. There seems to be something other. In allowing me to sometimes stroke her (she let me stroke her pouch when Pip was just a writhing lump inside) we have developed a two-way relationship. In allowing me to touch, which I do to convey my affection, she gives me back, or communicates, her affection . . .

these positions preclude paying attention to all the differences between humans and animals, and between individual animals as well as between species. In not doing so, what occurs is a reduction of animals to our standards, to our notions of personhood, ethics, morality, etc. It simply reaffirms the anthropocentrism and assumed human superiority that is constituted in and through both the notion of the 'I Am', and the single and simple division between 'Human' and 'Animal'. Both of which, Derrida tells us, command 'a form of mastery over the animal'.⁵² This mastery is a violent domination, not only because of the wrongs we do to animals in the belief that it is our 'right' to control and dominate, but also 'through the forms of protest [such as animal rights, vegetarianism, the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights charter] that at bottom share the axioms and founding concepts in whose name the violence is exercised'.⁵³ That is, humans continue to violate animals by refusing to respect their otherness.

I would argue that this superiority, continually confirmed in and through the human-animal opposition, serves to detach or separate humans from non-human animals, and in turn works to found an ethical relation between human and animal that is one-directional: only humans can be ethical, not animals. It is one-directional because again, as we have seen, if the animal cannot respond, then it cannot be ethical, and if it isn't ethical or 'responsible', then that means that the human does not have to respond to an animal (and therefore does not have to account for an animal reflecting back our own unethical/immoral behaviours). Instead humans simply have to confer ethics and rights on the animal so that what remains, contradictorily, is both a hierarchised relationship between man and animal, and at the same time, an anthropomorphic 'subsuming' of 'the differences between human and non-human animals'.⁵⁴ In other words, because of the widely held metaphysical belief that the Animal is deprived of speech and reason, then the only way in which the Animal can have 'rights' is if those with the ability to reason and speak (that is, humans) give to or confer those rights on the Animal. This conferral discursively and structurally supports the notion that the Animal does not have the ability to apprehend ('as such') because the Animal does not have language or logos, and therefore cannot be ethical. But what this animal rights conferral also re-establishes is human superiority by once again privileging reason and ipseity. In this sense, as Derrida argues, it is through this conferral that animal rights advocates, in attempting to save animals from cruelty and physical violence, paradoxically continue a philosophical and metaphysical violence against animals. As Derrida puts it:

It may seem that the 'animal welfare' position is a fairer way of protecting and respecting animals, but as Kelly Oliver summarises, what both welfare and rights positions have in common is that they are 'based on analogies with human rights and human welfare'; that is, they base their arguments on 'similarities between animals and humans'. It's just that what they consider to be the 'similarities' slightly differ from each other.⁵¹ Therefore, one of the main problems is that

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One cannot expect 'animals' to be able to enter into an expressly juridical contract in which they would have duties, in an exchange of recognised rights. It is within this philosophico-juridical space that the modern violence against animals is practised, a violence that is at once contemporary with and indissociable from the discourse of human rights.⁵⁵

Furthermore, as Cary Wolfe argues, the perpetuation of this violence is ironic because the philosophical frame used 'remains essentially humanistic in its most important philosophers (utilitarianism in Peter Singer, neo-Kantian in Tom Regan), thus effacing the very difference of the animal other that it sought to respect'.⁵⁶

Given all of this, Derrida asks: 'Must we pose the question of our relations with the *animot* in terms of "right"?'⁵⁷ In a similar vein I would ask: must we define our relations with animals in terms of ethics? Is this phrase, 'animal ethics', at all possible when ethics is part of a metaphysical system? And if we abandon the words 'ethics' and 'rights' altogether, then what do our relations with animals look like? Are ethics and animal rights discourse the only way humans can have relationships with non-human animals? Or, as Derrida asks:

What would being-with-the-animal mean? What is the company of the animal? Is it something that occurs, secondarily, to a human being . . . that would seek to think itself before and without the animal? Or is being-with-the-animal rather an essential structure [of being human]?⁵⁸

While Benjamin does not specifically refer to these questions, his discussion of what it means to 'be with' in the context of his wider discussion of Jews and animals is instructive, and offers an interesting perspective for thinking about Derrida's latter question in particular. For Benjamin, 'with' or the 'with relation' is another form of opposition, again one that homogenises the animal and reduces all its differences to the same. This is because the "with" is, of course, the marker of a generalised strategy of inclusion' (or a reduction to the same): the 'with is therefore the move in which absence [without] is taken to have been overcome by presence. In this context presence identifies a form of shared and enforced inclusion'.⁵⁹

However, Benjamin warns that this inclusion (the 'with') does not counteract the exclusion (without); rather, what is reinforced is yet

. . . then again, perhaps she is humouring me? I cannot stop feeding her because I would be abandoning some kind of friendship. I have become 'hostage' to her. Some nights she doesn't come. She chooses when to come and how long to stay, and she has taught me to respect her right to be free, to come and go as she pleases. I do not possess her, she is not mine, I do not cage her or force her to stay in any way. I am not conferring a right so much as respecting her freedom to be a possum, to be other than what I am. I have to let her be, possum. This she demands of me (in the Levinasian sense). Her trust in me holds me hostage, it holds me to account, and it teaches me to respect an otherness that I don't understand (hence my anthropomorphising). She teaches me responsibility and how to be ethical in the face of an absolute singularity; a singular context, when there are no rules, no prescriptions. I have to listen and watch her vigilantly so I don't miss her subtle communications with me. Perhaps this respect for her can't be defined as responsibility or ethics. Perhaps both her demand of me and my response to this demand is simply love.

another binary opposition. In other words, to be with animals means we are 'along-side', and apply ethical rules and animal behaviourist theory on how to be around animals, or we are 'with' in the sense that we treat animals with respect. This is where, I would argue, that rights discourse (while necessary) mistakes extending to animals this so-called 'inclusion' or 'with-ness' as an ethical relation. But 'to be in relation with' suggests a two-way relationship, while conferring rights on animals is rather a one-directional ethical gesture on the part of humans.

A number of questions pose themselves here: what does this ethical gesture do, and how does it reinforce the 'as such', the 'I Am' that in fact constitutes anthropocentrism? And what if the human world is narrowed⁶⁰ precisely by not only depriving the animal of certain characteristics, but also by privileging those that are given to the human (such as logos, reason, response, ethics, etc.), so that what results is an 'autoimmunity': or a self-destructive blindness to what non-human animals and their multiple differences can offer? And finally, if 'being-with' is an essential structure, as Derrida phrases it, then with what or how is this structure composed? Is 'being-with' in fact always already an inevitable and oppositional structure (with/without), as Benjamin suggests? Or can 'being-with' operate 'differently'? While Derrida doesn't give an overt answer to the question he poses – 'is being-with-the-animal . . . an essential structure [of being human]?'⁶¹ – he implicitly points to, if not an answer, a way of thinking about this question that may not fall into another dichotomy or opposition. For example, he claims that there are multiple animal differences and realms and suggests we take account of these differences in our relations to animals. But what would taking account of multiple differences entail? Donna Haraway suggests that we take account by being 'attuned' to those differences in animals more generally,⁶² but also in our relations with individual or specific animals (such as our cats or dogs). I also want to propose that in the process of taking account of these differences the 'I Am' and the 'as such' fragments, at least momentarily, and that any ethics is reformulated and renegotiated as a result.

While Edna looks at me a lot, particularly when she is eating and has her hand wrapped around my finger and her face only an inch from mine so that I can feel her whiskers on my face, what I am about to recall has happened three times only.

One day while eating from my hand she suddenly stands on her haunches so that she is slightly higher than my face (I was lying on the floor, my head resting on my hand). She looks down at my face. Our eyes lock. I don't see the colour of her eyes (as Levinas says); instead I see her recognising me, pondering me. I see that she sees me looking back at her.

I feel utterly exposed, in the same way Derrida felt exposed when his cat watched him naked in the bathroom. I feel uncertainty, a little fear that comes with absolute wonder,

In summary, and generally speaking, Western philosophy and society not only apply ethics to animals and confer on them rights (think of animal welfare shelters, for example), but in doing so apply metaphysical ethics to 'Animals'. As a result, the Kantian idea that we should be ethical in our dealings with animals is maintained, only because to not carry out ethical duties to animals reflects badly on humans; it damages humans' dignity. Animals, of course, for Kant, don't have dignity. But our ethical responses are thereby contained by the metaphysical prescriptive rules by which we bind each other, and which we unimaginatively apply to 'Animals'. Consequently,

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and ironically, I would argue that our ethical responses (or reactions?) are 'automated' (in the Cartesian sense). Now if we accept Derrida's argument that there are a multiplicity of animal realms, and not just one homogenised group that fall under the label 'Animal', it becomes difficult to 'apply' our supposed universal rules without doing violence (as discussed above) to all animals. Rather, accepting the plurality of differences across animal species, and within species, allows (as Donna Haraway argues) for humans to be attuned to the multiplicity of relational and moral contexts in which animals and humans are situated. Being attuned to this kind of contextual relationality brings to the fore the singularity of every animal and the singularity of that relation

with that animal (or indeed group of animals). From this point on the boxes dissolve, and autoethnography and philosophical exposition blur, so as to performatively highlight the contextual and singular relations that can be formed with animals and which undermine the constructed opposition between the 'Animal' and 'Human'. In other words, Edna the possum, like Derrida's cat, is like every other possum/cat, but also a singular and unique possum/cat. This contextual relationality challenges the supposed autonomy, the 'I Am', of the human by revealing that autonomy is conditional; and it is conditional because autonomy is structured by heteronomy. That is, the human is also structured by, and is therefore only possible because of, these singular but contextual relations with others, including animal others. Unlike the reductionist 'with' that Benjamin warns of, the multiple 'being-withs' in both Derrida's and Haraway's senses (there is no one way of being), puts pressure on a metaphysical ethics. 'Being-withs' reveal how ethics itself is structured by the contextual and contingent encounters with multiple others. As I argue elsewhere,⁶³ our contextual, thus singular, ethical responses to others are always in negotiation with social, cultural and moral norms, because we cannot simply step outside of our metaphysical ethical heritages. Or as Vinciane Despret expresses it, we can only start to think otherwise from our 'situated histories, situated stories'.⁶⁴

Conclusion: Possum Tales/Tails

Is 'being-with' Edna simply the reversal and thus reformulated opposition to the 'without' of which Benjamin speaks, where the 'with' is simply a reduction of the animal to the human world? Or is 'being-with' Edna more a 'becoming-with' as Haraway describes it? For Haraway becoming-with is to become attuned to and

because I have been confronted by the absolute other that 'sees' me (not as the 'I Am' or the 'as such'), but it is a 'seeing' or recognition of my presence that is different to hers. A recognition of my difference. And this seeing that comes in her looking at me directly in the eye invokes an existential feeling: one of nausea (as Sartre would describe it). I feel nauseated every time I think of this moment (three in total) because in that moment I don't know who I am, because she doesn't see me as 'I Am' in the humanistic sense. And in not seeing the 'I Am', I seem to become, or be, something different: heteronomous rather than autonomous. Who is this me she apprehends in this moment of looking? In this moment I am no longer autonomous, rather I become constituted by my relation with her, by her gaze, by the absolute other, and I recognise not the 'I Am' but the other [Edna] that defines me. I also recognise the animal other within me; the animal that I am.

become connected with animal others,⁶⁵ so that the relationship that comes into being involves mutual responses and 'response-ability'.⁶⁶ To use Haraway's language, I am 'attuned' to Edna as she teaches me how to read her looks and her body language. For example, one day Edna was sitting on the door-frame on her back legs with her hand gripped around my finger, eating a grape (she eats cherries with both hands because of the pip). A cockroach approached the door. She looked at it, and then looked at my eyes, then back at the cockroach. I returned her gaze and looked at the cockroach so that she knew I had seen it. The cockroach, perhaps sensing our presences, moved off and Edna then crouched down and finished her grape, lost in her world of tastes and feelings. I didn't know what she was thinking, or remembering, but her ears were twitching as she listened to a world I couldn't hear or know, even though I inhabit the same space.

In looking at me when the cockroach approached, what was Edna trying to convey? I felt that she was simply wanting me to know that a cockroach was there; I felt she was checking to see if I had seen it. Her hand around my finger was loose and relaxed, so I wonder if she was wondering what I was going to do, or how I was going to react. She certainly wasn't afraid. And how could she possibly know I don't like cockroaches? In my assumption that this was what she was trying to convey, am I anthropomorphising or am I simply attuned to her body language and looks? Is there a difference?

Aristotle anthropomorphised, so too Darwin; but as John Berger remarks, since Descartes's categorisation of the 'Animal' as an automaton, anthropomorphism has gone out of favour. This is because anthropomorphism can fall into anthropocentrism, where the 'being-with' as Benjamin posits is a reduction of animal differences to the same. But a number of philosophers and biologists are now starting to understand anthropomorphism differently, arguing that it is what makes accessible the emotive worlds of other animals.⁶⁷ In fact, Berger argues that '[u]ntil the nineteenth century . . . anthropomorphism was integral to the relation between man and animal and was an expression of their proximity'.⁶⁸ In other words, anthropomorphism creates a proximity (either physical or mental and emotional) that enables a 'becoming-with'.

Apart from Edna coming at night to eat, I don't know anything substantial about her: I do not follow her into her habitat, I do not analyse or observe how she behaves in general. I have once fallen back on biological animal behavioural theory to try and understand her ways, to try and understand if her behaviour towards me is 'typical' for possums, but my fear in doing this is that I generate an anthropocentrism by falling back into a rational discourse and thereby perpetuating a superiority over the animal that comes with the 'as such' and the humanistic 'I Am'. Resisting this, I have stopped searching for answers about Edna's behaviour from these sources, or more aptly, I have stopped applying them to her. Furthermore, is my auto-ethnographic account of Edna simply an autobiography that does a violence to her and to our relationship? As Derrida might warn, perhaps I am falling into an apophantic logos as I write these words: I enunciate, declare, and produce an 'exhibiting discourse' that only highlights the 'me' that 'I Am'.

An autoethnographic approach nonetheless reveals at the very same time what can't be declared and narrativised. In other words, this approach simultaneously reveals what Derrida, drawing on Aristotle, calls a 'nonapophantic moment in the logos, a moment that isn't declarative, enunciative'.⁶⁹ Rather, it is a moment that 'doesn't show

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anything, which in a certain way doesn't say anything', such as requesting or prayer. It is this 'nonapophantic moment' within the auto-ethnographic narrative that perhaps 'open[s] a breach in the whole [ethical and metaphysical] apparatus',⁷⁰ precisely because I hope that what is revealed is how Edna and I form a *singular*, unique relationship where our moral and perhaps ethical responses are co-entwined and formulated in and through our moment together each night. For instance, Edna does not appeal to my rationality or rational judgement; in nonapophantic style her presence, her face, is a request (for food, for babysitting). Her presence demands from me trust and a responsibility that cannot be defined by the metaphysical and anthropocentric term 'ethics'. But sometimes I need to anthropomorphise to help 'me' understand Edna, yet our trust in each other tells me all there is to know: and that knowledge is not the knowledge of categorisation or animal behavioural theory and scientific observation applied to a species of animal.

In his interview 'Eating well', Derrida suggests that being rational and autonomous does not necessarily mean this is the only way of being responsible. Instead, the self (subject) answers the call of the other before

even being able to formulate a question, that is responsible without autonomy, before and in view of all possible autonomy of the who-subject. . . . Not only is the obligation not lessened in this situation, but, on the contrary, it finds in it its only possibility, which is neither subjective nor human. Which doesn't mean that it is inhuman or without subject.⁷¹

While Derrida here is talking about responsibility between human subjects, it serves to highlight, as mentioned earlier, the way in which my autonomy is dissipated or disseminated in the presence of Edna. Without Edna acknowledging or recognising my autonomy, I am simply another animal in a mutual relation of trust and responsibility. In my responsibility to Edna I am not even aware (self-aware) of my humility (another form of the 'I Am', the 'as such' as superior to the non-human animal). Remember, the 'as such' is that which describes how 'something' appears to the human as it is. Edna does not appear to me *as* just a 'possum'. To see Edna this way is a form of anthropocentrism; that is, it is a position in which the human names, and consequently positions, the appearing of something in a relation of domination and power. To me she is not only 'possum', she is also Edna, and while naming her is an anthropomorphism, it is also my acknowledgement of her singularity and her uniqueness as a being – no matter what her species. That is, my anthropomorphising is a counterpoint to the Cartesian automaton and the scientific categorisation of animal species. After all, as Tom Tyler argues, anthropomorphism is only a problem when it aids and abets anthropocentrism.⁷² Naming her, then, is my way of conveying our 'proximity'. And this proximity (through naming and auto-ethnography) helps me understand, in ways I didn't prior to my relationship with Edna, that while possums as a species might act in certain ways, each one of them, like Edna, has a personality and has a unique way of being (Nibs, for instance, in his relations with me, acts very differently to Edna). Yet despite this singularity and uniqueness which my naming of Edna highlights, she can never be 'pinned down' or 'reified' by naming.⁷³

What my encounter with the absolute other that is Edna exposes, then, is my becoming other than what 'I Am' as I follow her into the unknown and as all the

prescriptive rules and regulations on how to behave (ethics) gets tested and challenged and reformulated. Because if ethics is metaphysical and constitutes the 'I Am', and if in my encounter with Edna 'I' disappear precisely because 'I Am' is not acknowledged by Edna 'as such', then any responsibility and ethics that occurs between Edna and I is not only contextual, but inhuman. To be 'with', to 'follow' Edna, therefore, teaches me to be something else: a becoming different in my moments with Edna. Following Derrida:

I move from 'the ends of man,' that is the confines of man, to 'the crossing of borders' between man and animal. Passing across borders or the ends of man I come to surrender to the animal, to the animal in itself, to the animal in me.⁷⁴

Notes

1. Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), p. 160.
2. Derrida clarifies the notion of the 'as such' through his reading of Martin Heidegger. Heidegger uses the example of the lizard to argue that animals in general don't have the 'as such': that is, the lizard 'has a relation to the stone that appears to it, to the sun that appears to it, but they don't appear to it as stone, as sun'. Derrida goes on to argue that for Heidegger this is because

[t]he animal doesn't know how to 'let be', let the thing be such as it is. It always has a relation of utility, of putting-in-perspective; it doesn't let the thing be what it is, appear as such without a project guided by a narrow 'sphere' of drives, of desires. (Derrida, *Animal*, p. 159)
3. He deconstructs Heidegger's philosophical treatment of the 'Animal', arguing that Heidegger continues to perpetuate a metaphysics that he is trying to move away from. For some excellent discussions of Derrida's reading of Heidegger in relation to animals, see Leonard Lawlor, *This is Not Sufficient: An Essay on Animality and Human Nature in Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); David Farrell-Krell, *Derrida and Our Animal Others: Derrida's Final Seminar, the Beast and the Sovereign* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013).
3. Ibid. pp. 142–3. This notion of the human as that which has the ability to apprehend and to have the 'as such' is part of the 'humanist' legacies, which privilege particular characteristics or traits afforded only to the human, and to name only a few: language, reason, autonomy.
4. This fetishisation can be seen in animal cartoons where animals are given speech and take on human personality traits along with physical traits of 'cuteness' or juvenilisation. Steven Jay Gould discusses this phenomenon in terms of evolutionary juvenilisation or what is known as neoteny. See his 'A Biological Homage to Mickey Mouse', in *The Panda's Thumb: More Reflections in Natural History* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1980), pp. 95–107.
5. Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 8.
6. See Jacques Derrida, 'Letter to a Japanese Friend', in David Wood and Roberto Bernasconi (eds), *Derrida and Différance* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988), pp. 3–6.
7. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 160.

8. Ibid. p.
9. Nicole Anderson, *Academ*
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15. Ibid. pp.
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22. Derrida,
23. Ibid. p. 85
24. Ibid. p. 86
25. Ibid. pp. 8
26. Ibid. p. 8
27. Ibid. p. 94
28. Ibid. p. 3
29. Immanuel
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30. Ibid.
31. Derrida,
32. Ibid. p. 12
33. Lawlor, T

8. Ibid. p. 31.
9. Nicole Anderson, *Derrida: Ethics under Erasure* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), p. 11.
10. For an excellent account of metaphysical ethics, see E. J. Lowe, *A Survey of Metaphysics* (Oxford University Press, 2002).
11. Some selected texts on animal rights, animal welfare and the moral status of animals more generally include: Jeremy Bentham, *The Principles of Morals and Legislation* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1988); Peter Singer, 'Animal Liberation or Animal Rights', *The Monist: An International Quarterly Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry* 70:2 (1987), pp. 3–14; Tom Regan, 'The Rights of Humans and other Animals', *Ethics and Behavior* 7:2 (1997), pp. 103–11, and *The Case for Animal Rights* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Martha Nussbaum, 'The Moral Status of Animals', *Chronicle of Higher Education* 52:22 (February 2006), and *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006).
12. Derrida argues that '[d]econstruction . . . must, by means of a double gesture, a double science, a double writing, practice an overturning of the classical opposition and a general displacement of the system'. See Jacques Derrida, 'Signature Event Context', in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 329.
13. Edna is a 'common brush tail possum' (so called because of its long bushy prehensile tail) and is a marsupial native to Australia. Possums are the most adaptive to urban environments, often making their homes in roofs of houses and sheds in suburban areas. Brush tail possums are the size of cats.
14. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 136.
15. Ibid. pp. 40–1.
16. Ibid. pp. 89–90. See also Nicole Anderson, '(Auto)Immunity: The Deconstruction and Politics of "Bio-Art" and Criticism', *Parallax* 16:4 (2010), pp. 101–16.
17. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 135 and p. 89.
18. Ibid. p. 89. Providing evidence that some animals do have languages and communities, and can mourn (elephants, for instance), does not mean that Derrida wants to privilege a biological continuism, in which all the differences between animals and humans are homogenised: another kind of violence.
19. Nicole Anderson, 'Pre- and Post-Human Animals: The Limits and Possibilities of Animal-Human Relations', in Jami Weinstein and Claire Colebrook (eds), *Posthumous Life: Theorizing Beyond the Posthuman* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).
20. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 90.
21. René Descartes, 'Discourse on Method', in Elizabeth Anscombe and Petre Thomas Geach (eds), *Descartes: Philosophical Writings* (Nelson's University Press, 1954), p.42. See Derrida, *Animal*, p. 77 and p. 32.
22. Derrida, *Animal*, pp. 79–80.
23. Ibid. p. 89.
24. Ibid. p. 86.
25. Ibid. pp. 92–3.
26. Ibid. p. 83.
27. Ibid. p. 94 and p. 111.
28. Ibid. p. 3.
29. Immanuel Kant, 'The Metaphysics of Morals', in J. B. Schneewind (ed.), *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 653–4.
30. Ibid.
31. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 94.
32. Ibid. p. 126.
33. Lawlor, *This is Not Sufficient*, p. 67.

34. Descartes, 'Discourse on Method', pp. 38-44.
35. Lawlor, *This is Not Sufficient*, p. 67.
36. Andrew Benjamin, *Of Jews and Animals* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), p. 12. For Benjamin, being on the inferior side of the opposition means that the animal is marked by a 'dominating but inadequate form of difference'.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
38. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 89.
39. Singer, 'Animal Liberation', p. 3.
40. Regan, 'The Rights of Humans and Other Animals', pp. 103-11.
41. Singer, 'Animal Liberation', p. 3.
42. Regan, 'The Rights of Humans and Other Animals', p. 109.
43. Singer, 'Animal Liberation', p. 3.
44. Regan, 'The Rights of Humans and Other Animals', p. 110.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*
47. Linda Kalof and Amy Fitzgerald (eds), *The Animals Reader: The Essential Classic and Contemporary Writings* (Oxford and New York: Berg Publishers, 2007), p. 15.
48. Regan argues that human rights generally include, among many other things, the right to food and clean water, shelter, and 'the right to bodily integrity', which means disallowing 'physically assaulting another person's body simply on the grounds that others might benefit as a result'. See Regan, 'The Rights of Humans and Other Animals', p. 105.
49. See Derrida, *Animal*, pp. 87-9. There are ten articles that make up the Declaration and therefore it is too long to quote in full here. However, Derrida has quoted the Declaration in full in n. 37 in *The Animal*.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
51. Kelly Oliver, *Animal Lessons: How They Teach Us to Be Human* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 28.
52. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 89.
53. *Ibid.*
54. Benjamin, *Of Jews and Animals*, p. 97.
55. Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, *For What Tomorrow... A Dialogue* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 74.
56. Wolte, *Animal Rites*, p. 8.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
58. Derrida, *Animal*, pp. 79-80.
59. Benjamin, *Of Jews and Animals*, p. 96.
60. I pose this question in contradistinction to Heidegger, who argues that the animal world is narrowed by its relations of utility, drives and desires. See Derrida, *Animal*, p. 159.
61. Derrida, *Animal*, pp. 79-80.
62. Donna Haraway uses the term 'artune' in *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).
63. See Anderson, *Derrida: Ethics Under Erasure*.
64. See Vinciane Despret, 'Why "I Had Not Read Derrida": Often Too Close, Always Too Far Away', in Louisa Mackenzie and Stephanie Posthumus (eds), *French Thinking about Animals* (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University Press, 2015). See also Donna J. Haraway, 'Preface: A Curious Practice', *Angelaki* 20:2 (2015), p. 8.
65. Haraway, 'Preface', p. 97.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
67. See James A. Serpell, 'People in Disguise: Anthropomorphism and the Human-Pet Relationship', in Lorraine Datson and Gregg Mitman (eds), *Thinking with Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Marc Berkoff, 'Speaking Biology and', p. 67.
68. John Berg, 'Speaking Biology and', p. 255.
69. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 89.
70. *Ibid.*
71. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 10.
72. Tom Tyler, *Trans. Peter*
73. Tom Tyler, *Trans. Peter*
74. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 87.

- Berkoff, 'Wild Justice and Fair Play: Cooperation, Forgiveness, and Morality in Animals', *Biology and Philosophy* 19 (2004), pp. 489–520; Clinton R. Saunders and Arnold Arluke, 'Speaking for Dogs', in Kalof and Fitzgerald, *The Animals Reader*, pp. 63–71.
68. John Berger, 'Why Look at Animals?', in Kalof and Fitzgerald, *The Animals Reader*, p. 255.
69. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 157.
70. Ibid.
71. Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy, "'Eating Well" or the Calculation of the Subject', in Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy (eds), *Who Comes After the Subject?*, trans. Peter Connor and Avital Ronell (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), p. 100.
72. Tom Tyler and Manuela Rossini (eds), 'Introduction', in *Animal Encounters* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009).
73. Tom Tyler, 'Quia ego nominor leo: Barthes, Stereotypes and Aesop's Animals', *Mosaic* 40 (2007), p. 59. Tyler elaborates on why Derrida in *The Animal* does not reveal the name of his cat, as opposed to Haraway who, while indebted to Derrida's work, is also critical, arguing that he did not go far enough to understand 'what the cat might actually be doing' staring at him naked in the shower. See *When Species Meet*, pp. 19–21.
74. Derrida, *Animal*, p. 3.