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J. Wendel Cox

Dartmouth College Library, j.wendel.cox@Dartmouth.edu

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J. Wendel Cox
Librarian for English and History
Dartmouth College Library

Bibliographic Essay: The History of Human-Animal Relations

Introduction

Animals are everywhere. Whether as pets, pests, sources of food, fuel, and materials for manufacture, means of traction or source of motive power, or objects of veneration and fear and wonder, animals have been our counterparts throughout human history. Only in recent years has a historical literature developed about animals and our relationships with them. This literature has been part of a larger so-called “animal turn” in the humanities, offering insights into our myriad and changing relationships with non-human animals and challenging convictions about humanity and the humanist endeavor. How we understand animals, what we understand them to be, what we understand ourselves to be, and how we have related to each other across the span of human history has become the focus of a large, growing, and engaging literature.

The history of human-animal relations offers an opportunity to bring a challenging, accessible, and provocative scholarship to today’s college libraries. It supports curriculum and research on issues in human history such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, the environment and our relationships with other life on Earth, and the very nature and bounds of the human experience. Students – and faculty – find animals enormously engaging, and they are often surprised, enchanted, and intrigued by historical perspectives on what heretofore struck them as natural and timeless circumstances. Moreover, the interdisciplinary nature of much of this

scholarship speaks to a wide range of disciplinary interests and contexts. Many titles discussed below are suitable for first-year seminars, interdisciplinary courses, honors classes, and foundational courses in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences.

This essay describes a small selection of works from this burgeoning literature. Choices were made to support collection development in college libraries. There is no claim this is a definitive list. Along with literary studies, history is today's most active humanities discipline concerned with human-animal relations. While some works associated with other disciplines -- such as philosophy, cognitive studies, and ethology, or the study of animal behavior -- appear below for context, most of what follows are the work of historians or those writing recognizably within a historical tradition. For the sake of length and focus, topical and chronological limits were selected, reflecting something of the origin and development of today's literature. Specifically, this essay addresses human-animal relations of the early modern and modern era in Western Europe and North America. There is a vast, rich, and growing historical literature on human-animal relations in the ancient and medieval periods, as well as a literature relevant to Indigenous peoples of North America. Each ought to occasion future bibliographic essays; indeed, the intersection of human-animal relations in the context of Western European states and their colonial societies and the project of settler colonialism is a theme in several works which follow. Ultimately, this essay aspires to be a brief orientation to a segment of scholarship which has appeared, mostly, in the last three decades, and likely will only continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

The Animal Turn

Without delving too deeply into its origins, a broad reading of the animal turn suggests a conjunction of developments in several areas of inquiry, including the historical study of the natural world; moral philosophy and its connection with animal advocacy; and the scientific exploration of animal behavior and cognition. Several works from these areas are common reference points for later scholars and representative of early thought on human-animal relations. At the same time, recent decades have seen a dramatically enlarged scope of historical studies, not only regarding subject matter but also methods and borrowings from other disciplines. The examination of the disenfranchised and marginalized is assuredly part predicate of the interest in animals. It is no surprise, then, that much of the history of human-animal relations explores the intersectional or the conjunction of distinct but interwoven ascriptions. Race and class and gender and sexuality have been joined with animals, precisely because evocations of animality are such powerful means to exclude, exalt, subordinate, dismiss, control or dispose of.

In history, the work of the British historian Keith Thomas is familiar to most scholars working on human-animal relations. Thomas's 1983 work, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800*, is not exclusively concerned with animals, but they feature prominently in his analysis. Specifically, Thomas argues a profoundly anthropocentric perspective gave way to both sentimental and spiritual kinship with animals and the natural world and the early modern scientific inquiry which challenged the centrality of humanity in the cosmos. Thomas's examination of historically and culturally contingent attitudes towards animals and the inextricability of perceptions of the natural world and the sense of humanity and the human itself have proved strong themes for subsequent inquiry.

One significant strand in the animal turn has been a transformation in the study of ethology, or animal behavior, commencing not only with a renewed interest in the area but also a self-awareness of the field's historical development. An excellent brief history of this change appears in the first chapter of Ádám Miklósi's *Dog Behavior, Evolution, and Cognition*. As Miklósi notes, dogs once were largely excluded from ethology. Deemed lacking in animal nature as a result of their domestication and intimate association with humans, today, interest in dogs is resurgent largely for this reason. The literature on the history, nature, and evolution of dogs grows so fast it is almost impossible to keep pace with it; two sophisticated and accessible treatments grounded in contemporary research appear in the journalist John Homans's *What's a Dog For? The Surprising History, Science, Philosophy, and Politics of Man's Best Friend*, and *What is a Dog?* by the husband-and-wife behavioral ecologists, Raymond Coppinger and Lorna Coppinger. The similarity – and difference – in the respective titles is revealing. The former is a rich synthesis of scholarship and personal experiences, intent on understanding how dogs became part of human lives and people part of dog lives. The latter is a stunning reassessment of domestication as self-domestication to better scavenge the castoffs of human societies through extensive field study of dogs living as the vast majority of all dogs on Earth do today: without owners, not as pets. Jakob von Uexküll's *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans: With a Theory of Meaning*, reprinted as part of the University of Minnesota Press's Posthumanities series, presents the views and ideas of a founder of ethology and the study of cognition afresh.

Literary studies of the animal have a long standing, not the least of all because of the ubiquity and prominence of animals in literary and folkloric traditions. Most everyone is familiar

with the anthropomorphizing of animals in comic strips, cartoons, and film and television. In literature, animals abound from the fables credited to Aesop to the animal romances of the nineteenth and twentieth century concerned with figures like Black Beauty (Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty* [1877]), or Buck (Jack London, *Call of the Wild* [1903]), or even Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (1969). Animals have long served as metaphors, subjects, and characters in literature, but a move to examine the foundations, power, and meaning of our recurrent creation of literary animals is relatively new. A widely influential theoretical work in literary and historical studies is Donna J. Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the 1980s" which first appeared in English as a journal article in 1985. The definitive version of this essay and others appears in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Invention of Nature*. Profoundly influential across literature, feminist studies, and history, Haraway's questioning of categorization and the power of metaphor in science and human consciousness challenged generations of scholars to examine these themes in human-animal relations. Haraway has also been an active participant in dog agility training, an experience which influenced her charming and valuable work, *When Species Meet*.

In parallel to these developments in historical, scientific, and literary scholarship has been interest in the amelioration of animal suffering and cruelty, and even a vision of animal liberation. The philosopher Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* has appeared in several editions since its publication in 1975. Singer's use of the phrase "animal liberation" first appeared in his 1973 review of the essay collection, *Animals, Men and Morals: An Inquiry into the Maltreatment of Non-Humans*, an underappreciated document of twentieth-century animal activism. Taking up the perspective first offered by the British philosopher Jeremy Bentham in

the eighteenth century, Singer ascribes moral standing to animals based on the capacity to suffer rather than to think, and he argues to discount animal suffering is an act of speciesism or discrimination based on species which privileges humanity. Future editions of *Animal Liberation* will continue to introduce a work known to most students of the study of human-animal relations and provide a context for the work's evolving significance. At this writing, the most recent edition is *Animal Liberation: The Definitive Classic of the Animal Movement* (2009). Less well known but also important is a 1976 essay collection edited by Singer and his fellow philosopher, Tom Regan, entitled *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*.

Contemporary Historical Studies

Continuing themes from Keith Thomas's work, early historical studies of animals were often concerned with the conception and representation of the animal and animality, and its role as a mirror and maker of how we have conceived of humanity, rationality, and nature throughout the early modern and modern eras. Then and after that, historians of human-animal relations have examined these relationships for what they reveal about us. Harriet Ritvo's *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (1987) explores animal taxonomy as a reflection of Victorian concerns with status and social dominance, and in return, how it influenced behavior and legislation. An invaluable collection of Ritvo's essays, *Noble Cows and Hybrid Zebras: Essays on Animals and History*, brings together decades of her work.

The early modern era, with its break with a medieval past, is often presented as a span of inquiry for changing human-animal relations. Lucinda Cole's *Imperfect Creatures: Vermin, Literature, and the Sciences of Life, 1600-1740*, speaks to the changing definition of "vermin"

across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and one of the most powerful and consequential instances of animality we ascribe to human or non-human animals alike. Erica Fudge's *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* explores the concern with the question of animal rationality amongst early modern thinkers and scientists, and the variety and complexity of their notions which belies easy depictions of pervasive anthropocentrism.

Similarly, the Victorian Era has been especially fertile for the exploration of the intersections between animals and race, class, and gender. Sarah Amato's *Beastly Possessions* is noteworthy for its examination of how different Victorian social classes made animals part of their respective daily lives. Jennifer Mason's *Civilized Creatures: Urban Animals, Sentimental Culture, and American Literature, 1850-1900* points to American cities as the context for new sentiments about animals, which waxed with encounters with animals in urban settings rather than waning with the ongoing remove of many Americans from rural life. Michael Lundblad's *The Birth of a Jungle: Animality in Progressive-Era U.S. Literature and Culture* explores the intersection of race, class, gender and animality, demonstrating the power of representation and the animal to shape lived experiences. A contemporary counterpart and complement to *The Birth of the Jungle* is Claire Jean Kim's *Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age*, an account of three recent cross-species controversies: San Francisco's live animal market; the Makah revival of whaling; and the trial and conviction of football player Michael Vick on charges arising from his involvement in dog fighting.

Numerous scholars have addressed organizations concerned with the conditions and suffering of animals and disposed to act against animal cruelty. Such organization began in

Britain in the nineteenth century, and spread shortly after that to the United States and other parts of the world. One of the best recent works studying the history of animal activism is Janet M. Davis's *The Gospel of Kindness: Animal Welfare and the Making of Modern America*. Davis's work is especially valuable for its connection of ostensibly local animal welfare concerns in mid-nineteenth-century American cities to subsequent imperial encounters elsewhere in the world. Her chapters on the Philippines and India are invaluable. Modern activism is well-represented by Peter Singer's biography of Henry Spira, found of Animal Rights International, entitled *Ethics Into Action: Henry Spira and the Modern Animal Rights Movement*.

As these histories emerged, another wave of publications began to place animals in a particular time and place and explore the consequences for nations and empire, and also to describe animals as actors in their histories and ours. Students of environmental history long had recognized these transformations, including Alfred Crosby's *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1493* (1972) and William Cronon's *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (1983). A subsequent generation of environmental histories cast the extension of agriculture and domesticates as part of a larger project of colonialism, a perspective pioneered in Frieda Knobloch's *The Culture of Wilderness: Agriculture and Colonization in the American West*. More recently, Diana L. Ahmad's *Success Depends on the Animals: Emigrants, Livestock, and Wild Animals on the Overland Trails, 1840-1869* explores the different or even contradictory relationships of empathy, animosity, and brutal pragmatism which animated relationships with animals in westering. One of the most detailed and sophisticated accounts of encounter and diverse species is Virginia DeJohn Anderson's *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (2006).

Anderson's work explores the English and their livestock, and how domestic animals in the Atlantic colonies were agents of an ideological challenge, environmental change, and causes of conflict and death in the clash between natives and newcomers.

No history of human-animal relations can neglect hunting, a human endeavor with a deep history. (And, yet, consider what comes naturally to many paleoanthropologists and primatologists: humans and other primates not as predator, but as prey; see, for example, Donna Hart and Robert W. Sussman's provocative *Man the Hunted: Primates, Prey, and Human Evolution*.) One of the most insightful studies of the history of human hunting is Matt Cartmill's *A View to Death in the Morning: Hunting and Nature Through Human History*, an anthropologist's examination of humanity's long, complex, and ambivalent relationship with hunting. There are numerous histories of hunting, hunting traditions, and the social, cultural, and political symbolism of hunting. *Killing Animals*, a collection of essays offered by the Animal Studies Group, a circle of scholars including Steve Baker, Jonathan Burt, Diana Donald, Erica Fudge, Garry Marvin, Robert McKay, Clare Palmer, and Chris Wilbert, emphasizes killing as our principal form of interaction with animals, including hunting, slaughter, and euthanasia in animal shelters. It concludes with a roundtable reflecting the volume's diverse perspectives. Few works have explored the relationship between predator and prey as evocatively as Thad Sitton's extraordinary *Gray Ghosts and Red Rangers: American Hilltop Fox Chasing*. Drawing on the letters and observations of devoted fox hunters in the pages of American periodicals serving this passionate pursuit, Sitton presents a remarkable account of the relationships between men, foxes, and hounds, one which rarely ended in death. Sitton's work is a tour-de-force by a master oral historian. Rick Bass, one of the most accomplished of today's American

essayists, draws wonderfully for us the close tie between hunting, place, and identity in *A Thousand Deer: Four Generations of Hunting and the Hill Country*. *A Thousand Deer* is an entrance into a world increasingly unknown, or even alien, for many of us.

Photography holds a curious place in the human documentation of the animal, as well as a conjunction with hunting. As Karen R. Jones notes in her exceptional *Epiphany in The Wilderness: Hunting, Nature, and Performance in the Nineteenth-Century American West*, photography became a means of possessing animals for many former hunters. Matthew Brower's *Developing Animals* invites us to consider how the lens changed forever how we view animals. Arnold Arluke and Robert Bogdan assemble an excellent selection of images and offer a valuable analysis of animals in postcards in their gorgeous volume, *Beauty and the Beast: Human-Animal Relations as Revealed in Real Photo Postcards, 1905-1935*. Finally, Linda Kalof's *Looking at Animals in Human History* considers animal depiction and representation across human history, in both image and word, while *Gorgeous Beasts: Animal Bodies in Historical Perspective* explores the representation of animals as physical beings and objects in art and everyday life over the last five centuries.

On animals and places, one of the more notable locations of inquiry has been the city. Historians have made much of the place of animals and their remove as a part of modernization, especially segregation of certain activities to distinct districts and industrial neighborhoods, notably transportation, feedlots and sales, and slaughter, rendering, and tanning or other processing of animals. Perhaps overstated in the literature -- ancient and medieval cities regulated the place, keeping, and disposition of animals within their bounds, too -- modern cities have had a rather more complicated relationship with animals than just

exclusion. An excellent example of the complex story of animals as integral to the nineteenth and the early twentieth-century American city is Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr's *Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*. Other excellent recent urban histories with a particular interest in animals include Michael Rawson's *Eden on the Charles: The Making of Boston*, which includes a fascinating account of the politics of animals and Boston Common, and Catherine McNeur's *Taming Manhattan: Environmental Battles in the Antebellum City*.

Some of the most provocative scholarship on urban animal experience has come, not surprisingly, from a discipline concerned with space: geography. A valuable exploration of the intersection of humans, animals, and the urban environment is Julie Urbanik's *Placing Animals: An Introduction to the Geography of Human-Animal Relations*. Outstanding essay collections include *Animal Spaces*, *Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations*, and *Animal Geographies: Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands*. Collectively, these works challenge the very meaning of urban and rural, city and nature, and present our shared lives in cities as one of endless definition and redefinition of boundaries through encounters between species. The urban ecologist Steven DeStefano's exquisite *Coyote at the Kitchen Door: Living with Wildlife in Suburbia*, introduces us to the recent history of one of the most successful urban species, the coyote. Dan Flores's *Coyote America* offers historical context for the stunning revenge of this, one of North America's most reviled species: not merely surviving, but flourishing in ever-so-unlikely urban spaces. (One of a host of works on the other *Canid* species with a continuing history of conflict with human wishes, desires, and enterprises is Michael D. Wise's able and insightful *Producing Predators: Wolves, Work, and Conquest in the Northern Rockies*.) Wider in scope is Terry O'Connor's *Animals as Neighbors: The Past and*

Present of Commensal Species, an environmental history of animal opportunism and human society, settlement, and behavior. The bricolage in *City Creatures: Animal Encounters in the Chicago Wilderness* makes this work not only of interest for its forms of expression but also for the diversity experience derived from animal encounters in the Second City. Future historians will turn to *City Creatures* as a resource for perspectives on urban animals, human and non-human alike, during the early twenty-first century.

Pets have been the subject of many studies, and interesting titles abound. One of the most accessible and edifying is Katherine C. Grier's *Pets in America: A History*. Susan D. Jones's *Valuing Animals: Veterinarians and Their Patients in Modern America* is a fascinating account of the professionalization of veterinary care and the profession's deliberate self-fashioning as guarantors of the health and welfare of companion animals beginning in the 1930s. (Jones's brief work, *Death in a Small Package: A Short History of Anthrax*, is another exceptional work by this veterinarian-cum-historian, addressing a small but formidable animal other: *Bacillus anthracis*.) Finally, deeply influential amongst historians is Yi-Fu Tuan's *Dominance and Affection: The Making of Pets*, the work of one of today's most productive cultural geographers.

Presses and Animals: Series

Several presses, including the University of Chicago Press, the Johns Hopkins University Press, the Pennsylvania State University Press and the Michigan State University Press have established series offering works concerned, in whole or part, with the history of human-animal relations. Each is slightly different in its mission and works often crisscross disciplinary bounds. Collectively, they also consider a chronological and geographic scope much greater than the

present essay, and their respective title lists suggest the growth, dynamism, and reach of this topic. New from the University of Chicago Press's Animal Lives Series is Hilda Kean's *The Great Dog and Cat Massacre: The Real Story of World War Two's Unknown Tragedy*, concerning the destruction of hundreds of thousands of British pets during wartime as an act of popular mercy in anticipation of aerial bombardment and invasion. Louise E. Robbins's seminal *Elephant Pets and Pampered Parrots: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris* inaugurated The Johns Hopkins University Press's Animals, History, and Culture series in 2002. Pennsylvania State University Press offers the dynamic series Animalibus: Of Animals and Culture, edited by Nigel Rothfels (author of the valuable *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo*), which includes Rachel Poliquin's provocative and beautifully illustrated volume, *The Breathless Zoo: Taxidermy and Cultures of Longing*. Michigan State University Press's The Animal Turn series ranges widely in time, place, and discipline, and it includes valuable contributions like *French Thinking About Animals*, which gathers in translation a critical thread of contemporary continental and Francophone thought on human-animal relationships from philosophical, literary, and historical perspectives.

Finally, one especially successful series, Reaktion's Animal, has grown to dozens of volumes and attracted an array of authors to various species. Each Animal volume is titled eponymously about its subject. They afford accessible and grounded accounts of an individual species, and one can now read from Graham Barwell's *Albatross* to Garry Marvin's *Wolf*. Highlights include Susan McHugh's *Dog* and Rebecca Stott's *Oyster*, and several titles – *Bison*, *Leopard*, *Monkey*, and *Owl* – by the renowned zoologist, Desmond Morris, best known for his popular 1967 account of the human animal, *The Naked Ape*.

Beyond Scholarship: Non-Fiction Writing on Animals

Reaktion's success with *Animal* has spawned other similar series at its press, including *Botanical*, *Earth*, *Edible*, and *Objekt*. Reminiscent of the Victorian "it" stories so marvelously described in *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects, and It-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England*, these histories have a notable precursor in Mark Kurlansky's extraordinary *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World* (1997), the first title in his Basque Trilogy which also includes *The Basque History of the World* (1999), and *Salt: A World History* (2002). Like Kurlansky's excellent works, many others have written outside of the scholarly sphere and given us significant accounts of animals and our relationships with them. Andrew D. Blechman's *Pigeons: The Fascinating Saga of the World's Most Revered and Reviled Bird* is one example of work which challenges, edifies, and entertains. Another on a similarly fraught creature is described in Robert Sullivan's acclaimed *Rats: Observations on the History & Habitat of the City's Most Unwanted Inhabitants*. Lyanda Lynn Haupt's *Crow Planet* reminds us we share contemporary cities with animal communities, including crows both individual and variously collective. Mark J. Hains's *Year of the Pig* is a fascinating account of the author's exploration as a scientist and hunter of the enormous contemporary challenge of feral pigs in the United States and elsewhere in the world, yet another instance of the legacies of invasive species. Abigail Tucker's *The Lion in the Living Room: How House Cats Tamed Us and Took Over the World* may represent a new acme in writing which brings together interdisciplinary scholarship, historical perspective, and by turns disturbing and charming anecdotes about our other best friend: cats. Hal Herzog's *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat: Why It's So Hard to*

Think Straight About Animals begins to help readers with the seemingly endless contradictions in our relations with individual species and animals as a whole.

Reference Works, Collections, and Readers

With the growth and development of the study of human-animal relations, it is not surprising reference works have appeared to guide users, novice and expert alike, to clarity and understanding of the subject's development, key insights, and enduring questions. *The Routledge Handbook of Human-Animal Studies*, edited by Garry Marvin and Susan McHugh, both accomplished scholars of human-animal relations, is an exceptional reference work; readers will value it for its introduction to a host of topics, as well as its state-of-the-field assessment in most every one of its entries. Other reference works reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the study of human-animal relations but may still serve those interested in the historical nature of human-animal relations. For example, *The Oxford Handbook of Animal Ethics*, in addition to being an excellent introduction to philosophical thought about human-animal relations, provides historical accounts of conceptions of animals and changing views of their standing and place in relationship to humanity. *The Encyclopedia of Animal Behavior* affords both a summary of the latest scholarship as well as historical perspectives on inquiry in ethology, including substantial essays on ethology's history, origins, and evolution. The consumption of animals as food makes for significant connections with a growing scholarship on the history of food; see, for example, chapters on meat and fish, as well as the intersections of race, ethnicity, and class in *The Routledge History of American Foodways*.

Similarly, essay collections and readers afford ready access to a wide range of writing

and thought on the history of human-animal relations, as well as the breadth of inquiry from other disciplines. Historical treatments include *A Cultural History of Animals*, edited by Linda Kalof and Brigitte Pohl-Resl, and *The Animals Reader: The Essential Classic and Contemporary Readings*, edited by Linda Kalof and Amy Fitzgerald. The latter includes accessible contributions by many authors identified elsewhere in this essay. Works assembled in *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans, and the Study of History* collectively foreground the historiographical and methodological challenges and opportunities of studying the history of human-animal relations. For a broad perspective on scholarship from disciplines other than history, see *Between the Species: Readings in Human-Animal Relations*, which provides classic works from literary theory to social work.

Finally, as scholarship on the history of human-animal relations shows no sign of waning, those interested in the latest research will want to employ such disciplinary bibliographies as America, History and Life and Historical Abstracts to remain current with new ideas, publications, and trends in scholarship. Literary scholarship with historical dimensions is accessible via the Modern Languages Association (MLA) Bibliography. Ecology Abstracts provides a fascinating window into a scientific literature at the juncture of various disciplines, including the social sciences, and, occasionally, the humanities. Anyone willing to brave a less-than-inviting interface will find IBZ Online (Internationale Bibliographie der geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Zeitschriftenliteratur, or International Bibliography of the Social Sciences and Humanities Journal Literature) valuable for its scope, non-English language sources, and interdisciplinary sweep.

Conclusion

This essay has examined a large and growing literature on the history of human-animal relations. At the same time, it has confined itself to a relatively discrete period of time and place. The sweep of the so-called animal turn and the scholarship suitable for college libraries might best be addressed through a series of such essays, perhaps likewise chronologically and geographically defined (e.g., animals and contemporary Indigenous societies or human-animal relations in Antiquity), or defined by a particular disciplinary interest (e.g., animals and moral philosophy). One larger theme salient for those interested in a holistic view is a widespread interest, especially within literary studies but also manifest in history, philosophy, and religious studies, to challenge the anthropocentric predicates, presumptions, and perspectives of the humanities themselves. Just as examinations of technology and its cultural consequences have led scholars to consider the nature and limits of the human, so, too, the literature of human-animal relations has repeatedly questioned the dichotomy and dualism implied in the study of the humanities and its tendentious treatments of the animal and animal others. For some scholars, we are witness to a rise of posthumanism, a novel perspective widely discussed but perhaps nowhere more ably addressed than in Cary Wolfe's *What is Posthumanism?* and the related Posthumanities series from the University of Minnesota Press. Perhaps we have arrived at a moment in a long history of humanity's self-reflection in which we finally situate ourselves alongside our fellow species?

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