



## ***Animail: March 2020***

### **Chair's Report**

Dear Members,

Welcome to the latest edition of *Animail*. We've included information on latest publications by members, new books and calls for papers as well as a profile of AASA member Ana Paula Motta who writes about her doctoral work in the Kimberley.

The AASA committee has had some changes since I last wrote to you. Our Treasurer Gonzalo Villanueva has resigned after several years of excellent work for AASA – thank you for all your hard work Gonzalo! You might be interested in reading Gonzalo's recent article in the *Animal Studies Journal*, "'Animals Are Their Best Advocates': Interspecies Relations, Embodied Actions, and Entangled Activism" (<https://ro.uow.edu.au/asj/vol8/iss1/11/>).

I also want to warmly thank Erin Jones who has resigned from the AASA committee after making much appreciated contributions, including providing valuable post-graduate perspectives.

I am pleased to announce that our new Treasurer is Peter Chen. Peter is a senior lecturer at the University of Sydney where he teaches media and policy. His research focus in animal studies is on animal welfare policy, animals in media, and vegan ethnography. He published *Animal Welfare in Australia: Politics and Policy* in the *Animal Publics* book series Sydney University Press ([https://sydneyuniversitypress.com.au/products/83132?\\_pos=2&\\_sid=8772d1cca&\\_ss=r](https://sydneyuniversitypress.com.au/products/83132?_pos=2&_sid=8772d1cca&_ss=r)). We're all looking forward to working with Peter.

Don't forget to fill out the latest survey on the field of animal studies before April 16 (details and link are in this *Animail*). This survey follows on from a 2015 survey undertaken by the same research team. Findings from that one were published in the *Animal Studies Journal*, "Should We Eat Our Research Subjects? Advocacy and Animal Studies" (<https://ro.uow.edu.au/asj/vol7/iss1/9/#https://ro.uow.edu.au/asj/vol7/iss1/9/>).

Lots to read, and perhaps a bit more time than usual to read it in the current situation. Take care everyone.

All best wishes  
Melissa  
AASA Chair

## **Member profile: Ana Paula Motta**

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Australia, and pay my respects to past, present, and emerging Balangarra people from the Kimberley and their elders, where my research is situated. As an only child, I have been always fascinated by animals and their ways and begged my parents to let me care for a dog for many years. As I could not convince them of this before the age of eight, I grew up with hamsters, pigmy pigs, turtles, quails, and fish, only later adopting a cat and then a dog. I did not however engage with the study of animals until fairly recently, when I started a PhD.

I was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where animal rights and welfare is not extensively discussed and where meat consumption is deeply embedded into our culture. This lack of interest is grounded on the belief that caring for other species cannot be a top priority when many people live under the poverty line and depend on animals for finding food (e.g. horse sulki) – or at least that is the most common justification for animal cruelty. As such, I was not extensively exposed to animal studies.



*Figure 1: Three little mice that liked to visit the excavation, Antofagasta de la Sierra, 2012*

I decided to study archaeology and have always been interested in Indigenous studies. One of my favourite units during my undergrad was on South American Indigenous populations and Land Title Claims. I decided to pursue zooarchaeology as my Bachelor's specialisation and worked in a little town in North-western Argentina for over four years studying how past hunter-gatherers related to camelids. I also collected modern samples of camelids and plants to better understand how they moved in the landscape. My focus was placed on diet – I studied stable isotopes – and past hunting practices. However, I was unhappy about my approach to animals and decided to

move to a different sub-specialization within archaeology.

In late 2014, I moved to the UK to undertake a Master of Science in Palaeoanthropology and Palaeolithic Archaeology at University College London. I was intrigued by Australia's Kimberley rock art and decided to write my thesis about it. Here, I mainly focused on the analysis of human depictions and explored how different artists and groups engaged with one another through art. In March 2017, I was awarded a Forrest Research Foundation PhD Scholarship at University of Western Australia, where I intended to expand the scope of my master thesis, focusing on social identity and human-animal relations. Little I knew when I started my PhD that my initial research questions were going to change after visiting the Kimberley.

I spent three months working in the Kimberley doing surveys and recording its rock art alongside Balangarra Traditional Owners. Before leaving on fieldwork, I was familiarised with the many ethnographic articles and volumes dedicated to the significance of rock art in the Kimberley and how animals and other species were key elements for totemism. While in the Kimberley, I would often listen to the Traditional Owners discuss about their totems and how they restrict their diets and establish certain protocols with Country. My research moved from studying human identity to placing more emphasis on relational ontologies and the identification of animals in rock art representations. In the Kimberley, animals are part of a symbolic system that thinks of them as part of human lifeways. Remains of these special bonds can be found in songs, myths and art. These stories are important for understanding how Indigenous groups of the area saw other species and represented them. In this area, our understanding of other species has been done from a Western point of view – ignoring Indigenous knowledge – in which modern definitions are applied to the past. Through my research, I am hoping to re-assess the (Western) scientific categories we apply to the study of the past and highlight the relationality of beings inhabiting the world.



Figure 2: Planigale Creek, Kimberly 2018 (I was pregnant!)

Being an archaeologist with no formal background in critical animal studies and environmental humanities, I decided to attend my first AASA Conference in 2019; *Decolonizing Animals* in Christchurch. I was impressed by the intersection of the many disciplines involved with animal studies and how well these worked together. I was finally able to merge my personal and professional interests, combining arts with literature, philosophy, and ethology. I went back home excited about my research and feeling happy about my place in academia.

I later attended the Ethopower and Ethography symposium organised by Matthew Chrulw, where I also met fascinating scholars from around the world. These two positive experiences led me to being more actively engaged with this exciting field of study and to think of ways of bringing together animal studies with rock art. I am currently co-ordinating a symposium on human/non-human animals in art at the World Archaeology Congress (July 2021) and putting together a symposium on Multispecies Methodologies with Anna-Katharina Laboissière.

I do not live with animals (small apartment), but I do have a beautiful 16 month old daughter that I am raising to respect all life. I am looking forward to having new experiences and what the future might hold!

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Twitter : @anapmottaArch

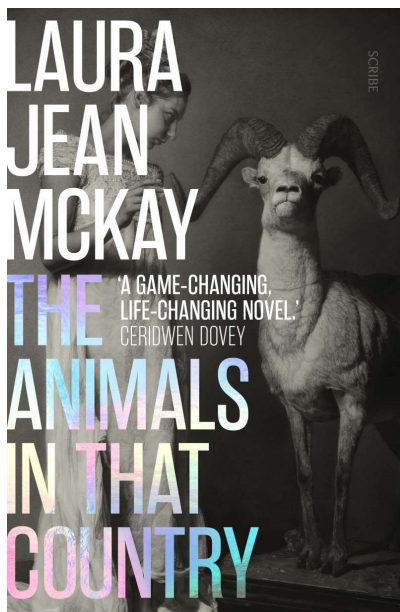
## **AASA Member News**

### ***Animal Studies Journal***

We encourage you again to check out the latest issue of *Animal Studies Journal*, guest edited by Dinesh Wadiwel and Peter Chen, on the theme 'New Directions in Animal Advocacy'. For more information: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/asj/>

### **Member Publications: Books**

***The Animals in that Country***, Laura Jean McKay, Scribe, 2020



Hard-drinking, foul-mouthed, and allergic to bullshit, Jean is not your usual grandma. She's never been good at getting on with other humans, apart from her beloved granddaughter, Kimberly. Instead, she surrounds herself with animals, working as a guide in an outback wildlife park. And although Jean talks to all her charges, she has a particular soft spot for a young dingo called Sue. As disturbing news arrives of a pandemic sweeping the country, Jean realises this is no ordinary flu: its chief symptom is that its victims begin to understand the language of animals — first mammals, then birds and insects, too. As the flu progresses, the unstoppable voices become overwhelming, and many people begin to lose their minds, including Jean's infected son, Lee. When he takes off with Kimberly, heading south, Jean feels the pull to follow her kin. Setting off on their trail, with Sue the dingo riding shotgun, they find themselves in a stark, strange world in which the animal apocalypse has only further isolated people from other

species. Bold, exhilarating, and wholly original, *The Animals in That Country* asks what would happen, for better or worse, if we finally understood what animals were saying.

For more information: <https://scribepublications.com.au/books-authors/books/the-animals-in-that-country>

### **Member Publications: Articles**

Brooks Pribac, Teja 2020. "Place Attachment and the Roots of Spiritual Relating in Animals", *Humanimalia* 11(2): 76-100. Available from: [www.depauw.edu/site/humanimalia/issue22/pdfs/brooks-pribac-pdf.pdf](http://www.depauw.edu/site/humanimalia/issue22/pdfs/brooks-pribac-pdf.pdf)

Ralph, Iris 2019 "Ecophobia and the Porcelain Porcine Species", *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 26(2): 401-412. Available from: <https://academic.oup.com/isle/article/26/2/401/5524009>

Ralph, Iris 2019/2020. "Packing Death in Australian Literature", *Kritika Kultura*, 33/34: 618-640. Available from: <https://journals.ateneo.edu/ojs/index.php/kk/article/view/3087>

Young, Janette, Holly Bowen-Salter, Lisel O'Dwyer, Kristen Stevens , Carmel Nottle, and Amy Baker 2020 "A Qualitative Analysis of Pets as Suicide Protection for Older People", *Anthrozoos: A Multidisciplinary Journal of the Interactions of People and Animals*, 33 (2):191-205.

Available from:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/X25TZ4BHAEENNJJFAH2E/full?target=10.1080/08927936.2020.1719759>

## **News and opportunities**

### **Contribute to a Vital Survey into Animal Studies**

Survey close date: 16 April 2020

You are invited to take part in a research study about the field of Animal Studies (also known as Human Animal Studies, Critical Animal Studies). This survey is aimed at scholars including research higher degree students (PhD and Masters), academic staff at Universities/Colleges and independent scholars, who are familiar with and work within Animal Studies. This survey is open to everyone, including those who did the 2015 version. It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Before doing this survey, please read the participant information sheet: Participant information Summary (you may need to open link in a new window). The survey can be exited at any time by pressing the "Exit This Survey" button at the top right corner of the questionnaire, or by pressing ALT-F4. You may quit the survey at any time. Submitting your completed questionnaire is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. The survey is anonymous and is found at this link:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AnimalStudies2020?fbclid=IwAR2g\\_Xv9SmApec9UgPo1aUOTE XimJg1oP8ckwwrjAeRjEXIR4E-AG3wZOM4](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AnimalStudies2020?fbclid=IwAR2g_Xv9SmApec9UgPo1aUOTE XimJg1oP8ckwwrjAeRjEXIR4E-AG3wZOM4)

## **Reading Groups**

### **Melbourne:**

The Human Rights and Animal Ethics Research Network meetings are currently suspended. For more information email: [hrae-info@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:hrae-info@unimelb.edu.au)

### **Sydney:**

The Animal Rights in Sydney (ARIS) Reading Group meetings are currently suspended. For more information email: [siobhan.osullivan@unsw.edu.au](mailto:siobhan.osullivan@unsw.edu.au)



## **Calls for Papers and Conferences**

### **Call for Abstracts: Developing Feminist Animal Studies: Critical Perspectives on Food and Eating**

**Due Date: 27 April 2020**

We are looking for chapter proposals for an edited volume: *Developing Feminist Animal Studies: Critical Perspectives on Food and Eating*. The book is offered for publication in the Critical Animal Studies series of Brill. If you are interested in contributing to this book, please submit an abstract (maximum 250 words), along with a brief bio to [kadri.aavik@helsinki.fi](mailto:kadri.aavik@helsinki.fi). Decisions of acceptance of the abstracts will be made by early May.

### **Call for Papers: 'Pathogenic Entanglements and Multispecies Encounters: What Narratives for What Responsibilities?'**

University of St Andrews, St Andrews 24-27 August 2020



**Due Date: 5 April 2020**

For more information: <https://www.theasa.org/conferences/asa2020/cfp>

This panel explores narratives in which responsibilities for/towards other living beings are framed and contested. Depicting bats or mosquitoes as “epidemic villains” carrying diseases (Lynteris 2019) informs both biopolitical imaginary and technopolitics and therefore merits close attention. Projects of more-than-human solidarity (Rock and Degeling 2015), dreams of interspecies separation (Kelly and Lezaun 2014) or of interspecies coexistence (Lorimer 2017) circulate and determine the nature of health interventions. We ask: what responsibilities for/towards are privileged in narratives of multispecies pathogenic encounters? What is anthropology’s responsibility in engaging with these entanglements of men, pest and pets? We welcome papers that interrogate the epistemic objects and political economies at play in hierarchies of responsible species. Such efforts should help us comprehend what is at stake in creating, widening or reducing the scope of pathogenic responsibilities. Submit paper proposals to:

<https://www.eventsforce.net/standrews/frontend/reg/tAbsSubmitterLogin.csp?pageID=39963&eventID=88&userType=submitter>

For further details email: Emmanuelle ([er477@cam.ac.uk](mailto:er477@cam.ac.uk)) or Rosie ([rosie.sims@graduateinstitute.ch](mailto:rosie.sims@graduateinstitute.ch)).

### **Call for Papers: 19th Annual North American Conference for Critical Animal Studies**

University of St Andrews, St Andrews 24-27 August 2020



**Due Date: October 1, 2020**

For more information: <http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/2020/03/northamericanicasconference/>

Submit a 200-250 words (third person one paragraph) abstract and paper description as a Word Doc attachment in an e-mail with a 80-100 biography (third person one paragraph). Submit to: Dr. Anthony J. Nocella II – [nocellat@yahoo.com](mailto:nocellat@yahoo.com) with email subject title: North American ICAS Conference.

### Call for Papers: Therapies Incorporating Horses

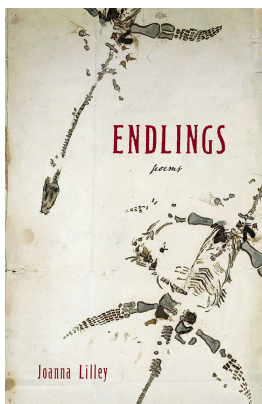
University of Warwick, United Kingdom: 18-20 June, 2020

**Due Date: 30 November, 2020**

The Human Animal Interaction (HAI) Section of the American Psychological Association has issued a Call for Papers for a special issue covering “Therapies Incorporating Horses to Benefit People: What are They and How are They Distinct?” The deadline for manuscript submittal is November 30, 2020. Please direct any inquiries (e.g., suitability, format, scope, etc.) about this special issue to the guest editor: Wendy Wood ([wendy.wood@colostate.edu](mailto:wendy.wood@colostate.edu)).



## New Books and Publications



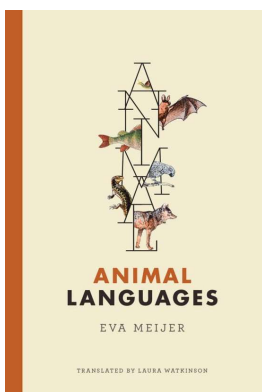
### *Endlings*

Joanna Lilley, Turnstone Press, 2020

*Endlings* takes us across continents and through the long expanse of aeons to give voice to the dead. In poems that are lyrical, exact, and deeply melancholic, Joanna Lilley demands audience for the final moments of animal extinction. From the zebra-horse quagga and chiding dodo, to the giant woolly mammoth and delicate Xerces Blue Butterfly, the haunting, urgent words of these “endlings” cut to the bone to expose the brutality of Nature and the devastating repercussions of human ignorance and intent, while giving hope that our humanity will help save what remains. For more information: <https://www.turnstonepress.com/books/poetry/endlings.html>

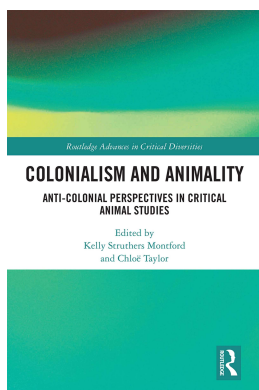
### *Animal Languages*

Eva Meijer, MIT Press, 2020



Is language what sets humans apart from other animals, as many have argued? Or do animals speak in their own languages, to each other and to us? In *Animal Languages*, Eva Meijer explores the latter possibility. Meijer makes a profound observation. Talking with animals forces us to challenge the hierarchy of humans and other animals, and suggests a new way of thinking about language. *Animal Languages* shows us that language is broader and richer than we imagined, and that meaningful expression does not require human words. For more information:

<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/animal-languages>  
<https://www.turnstonepress.com/books/poetry/endlings.html>



### ***Colonialism and Animality: Anti-Colonial Perspectives in Critical Animal Studies***

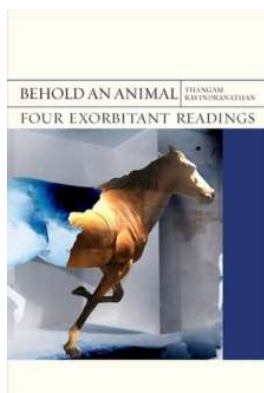
Edited by Kelly Struthers Montford and Chloë Taylor, Routledge, 2020

The fields of settler colonial, decolonial, and postcolonial studies, as well as Critical Animal Studies are growing rapidly, but how do the implications of these endeavours intersect? *Colonialism and Animality: Anti-Colonial Perspectives in Critical Animal Studies* explores some of the ways that the oppression of Indigenous persons and more-than-human animals are interconnected. This book will be of interest to undergraduate and postgraduate students, activists, as well as postdoctoral scholars, working in the areas of Critical Animal Studies, Native Studies, postcolonial and critical race studies, with particular chapters being of interest to scholars and students in other fields, such as Cultural Studies, Animal Law and Critical Criminology. For more information:

<https://www.routledge.com/Colonialism-and-Animality-Anti-Colonial-Perspectives-in-Critical-Animal/Struthers-Montford-Taylor/p/book/9780367856120>

### ***Behold an Animal: Four Exorbitant Readings***

Thangam Ravindranathan, Northwestern University Press



As animals recede from our world, what tale is being told by literature's creatures? This work examines incongruous animals in the works of four major contemporary French writers: an airborne horse in a novel by Jean-Philippe Toussaint, extinct orangutans in Eric Chevillard, stray dogs in Marie NDiaye, vanishing (bits of) hedgehogs in Marie Darrieussecq. Resisting naturalist assumptions that an animal in a story is simply-literally or metaphorically-an animal, Thangam Ravindranathan understands it rather as the location of something missing. The animal is a lure: an unfinished figure fleeing the frame, crossing bounds of period, genre, even medium and language. Its flight traces an exorbitant (self-)portrait in which thinking admits to its commerce with life and flesh. It is in its animals, at

the same time unbearably real and exquisitely unreal, that literature may today be closest to philosophy. This book's primary focus is the contemporary French novel and continental philosophy. In addition to Toussaint, Chevillard, NDiaye, and Darrieussecq, it engages the work of Jean de La Fontaine, Eadweard Muybridge, Edgar Allan Poe, Lewis Carroll, Samuel Beckett, and Francis Ponge. For more information: <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Ravindranathan-Thangam/Behold-an-animal---four-exorbitant-readings/9780810140721>