



EurSafe News

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Dear EurSafe Members,



first of all, I hope that you are well and healthy when this newsletter reaches you. Memorable times lie behind us, in which we not only privately but also professionally had to deal with drastic measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic. And, of course, there are also uncertain times ahead of us, in which we do not know how the situation will develop further.

All the more I am pleased that I can nevertheless present the current issue of the EurSafe News focussing on the topic of *Morality in Animals*. During the 2019 EurSafe congress in Tampere, the idea came up to dedicate a newsletter to this highly interesting and increasingly flourishing research field. The following three contributions provide different perspectives as well as approaches addressing the question of morality in animals and its ethical implication.

In the first contribution, 'Re-framing the debate over animal morality,' Simon Fitzpatrick raises the general question whether morality is uniquely human or exists in at least some non-human animals. In order to find an adequate answer to this question, he points out that the problem pertains to the concepts of 'morality' and 'moral' within the debate on morality in animals. Presenting different positions and comparing different approaches within analytical philosophy, he suggests to focus on relevant questions like what different species can do, what psychological mechanism underlie animals' behaviour, and, of course, what kind of ethical implications follow from them.

In the second contribution, 'What we miss when we overlook animal culture,' Kristin Andrews states that we do not do justice to cognitive animals such as chimpanzees or laboratory rats when we compare



CONTENTS

Re-framing the debate over animal morality Simon Fitzpatrick | 3

What we miss when we overlook animal culture Kristin Andrews | 7

The role of touch in animal morality Birte Wrage | 10

Entomophagy hype - more about entrepreneurship opportunities than ethical food Minna Santaoja and Mari Niva | 13

Strachan Donnelley: Frog Pond Philosophy Bernice Bovenkerk | 17

EurSafe Executive Committee Update Franck Meijboom | 19

Announcements | 21

Contact | 23

them to human children or model organisms, respectively. She argues that cognitive animals are social animals endowed with cultural properties and practices, which can be described as social norms. Further, she illustrates that social norms can even be regarded as moral norms if they imply practices such as care and cooperation or feelings such as empathy or guilt. Based on this, Andrews concludes that there is an importance to see cultural and moral animals as *aliens*, and as *familiars* – by taking into account not only similarities with human beings but also animals' different realities and environments.

Birte Wrage's contribution, 'The role of touch in animal morality,' connects to Andrew's argument by addressing the specific importance of touch within our moral lives, which underlies complex social norms. Wrage claims that the tactile sense and purposeful touch interaction play not only a crucial role for human beings, but also in the social lives of many non-human animals. Based on arguments such as the congruent physiology of the tactile sense across mammal species, the prevalence of social touch behaviour like consolation as well as possible norms around touch behaviour, the author concludes that attention to animal's touch interactions would not only enhance the debate on their moral capacities, but can also inform ethical debate regarding our treatment of moral animals.

Besides the topic of *Morality in Animals*, we are continuing the discussion about insects in agricultural and food ethics started in the previous newsletter. Thus, in the final contribution, 'Entomophagy hype – more about entrepreneurship opportunities that ethical food. Media analysis from Finland', Minna Santaoja and Mari Niva present results of their Finnish media analysis on edible insects. The authors indicate different perspectives on insect ethics and highlight how insects are debated in the Finnish media discourse. Based on their findings, Santaoja and Niva propose that ethical questions related to the production and use of insects need be more considered in the near future, and that different professionals such as social scientists, ethicists and philosophers should be

more involved in insects networks to develop an adequate ethics perspective on this issue.

Further, this newsletter contains a book review. Bernice Bovenkerk introduces Strachan Donneley's work on 'Frog Pond Philosophy: Essays on Relationship Between Humans and Nature', edited by Donneley and Jennings. In her review, she highlights the most striking aspects of the book and gives reasons why one should read it and where its weaknesses lie.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to Franck Meijboom's update on the work of the Executive Committee. As usual, you will find a list of upcoming (and meanwhile mostly postponed) events and congresses.

If you are interested in contributing to EurSafe News in the future, please feel free to contact any member of the editorial board. We are looking forward to your ideas and suggestions for further articles, book reviews, conferences, books, and symposia.

I hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter, and I wish you a good and healthy summer season!

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Re-framing the debate over animal morality

Simon Fitzpatrick



Is morality uniquely human or does morality exist in at least some non-human animals? Are animals full-fledged moral creatures or do they merely exhibit *proto-morality*—evolutionary building blocks or precursors to morality, but not quite the genuine article? Such questions, prompted by remarkable advances in empirical research into the social and emotional lives of non-human animals, have aroused much recent interest amongst scientists, philosophers, and in the popular media, not least for their apparent bearing on questions of human uniqueness, evolution, and the ethical status of animals. The debate over animal morality has produced many valuable contributions and stimulated new areas for empirical and theoretical research. However, focusing on these questions has led researchers to talk at cross-purposes and down some unproductive paths (Fitzpatrick, 2017). The problem concerns the terms 'morality' and 'moral'.

One initial source of confusion stems from the fact that many have interpreted the question of whether morality exists in animals to amount to asking whether animals act in ways that *we* might judge to be *good* according to our own normative standards—chimpanzees consoling friends who have lost a fight, rats helping a drowning companion. But, Joseph Stalin was surely a moral creature, even if we don't judge his deeds kindly, and we typically regard resentment as a moral attitude, even if we don't think it good to resent others. So, it seems better to ask whether animals have a *moral psychology*: mental

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states and processes that are somehow *about*, or connected with, things that are of moral significance.

On that question, researchers have ostensibly divided themselves into three camps: the human exceptionalists, who hold that nothing like a genuine moral psychology can be found in other species, the anti-exceptionalists, who hold that core features of a moral psychology are definitely shared with many other species, and the building-block theorists, who hold that at least some species possess elements of human moral psychology, but not the full thing. However, the disagreement between these camps stems from their endorsing different definitions of what it is to have a moral psychology. Korsgaard (2006) is an exceptionalist because she ties our moral psychology to a kind of self-reflection referred to as ‘normative guidance’, widely assumed absent in other animals: the ability to reflect upon the motivations for one’s actions and think about whether or not one should have those motivations. Bekoff

and Pierce (2009) are anti-exceptionalists because they adopt a much broader understanding of what it is to have a moral psychology, including capacities for empathy and sympathy towards others, attitudes of jealousy and resentment, maintaining co-operative arrangements, and having a sense of fairness—things for which they see evidence in many species. In contrast, de Waal (2013), while agreeing with Bekoff and Pierce that capacities for empathy and sympathy and a sense of fairness are crucial building blocks of a moral psychology, nonetheless argues that humans are unique in that we are able to explicitly formulate and share moral codes with each other. That is why we have moral systems, but other apes, for instance, do not.

This naturally suggests the question: who has the ‘right’ definition? This is where much of the debate has been focused: why this or that definition of what it is to have a moral psychology is better. Exceptionalists are accused of anthropocentrism; anti-exceptionalists of widening the circle too far.

But, we need to step back and think about *what it is* to define ‘morality’ and get the definition *right*. Here, we see crucial differences in approach.

Western philosophers typically approach such definitional questions through the method of *conceptual analysis*: begin with intuitions about canonical applications of the term, propose a definition of the term in the form of necessary and sufficient conditions, then compare that definition with intuitions about the application of the term in new cases. If it comports with what intuition suggests, great; if it doesn’t, a revised definition is required. This is what drives many philosophers to react with incredulity at the thought of animals as moral creatures: they find it so counterintuitive that rats, say, could have a moral psychology and they evaluate rival accounts of what it is to have a moral psychology by how well they comport with their intuitions about which things are moral creatures.

However, researchers like Bekoff and Pierce and de Waal seem to take a different approach to defining terms like ‘moral’. They are primarily interested in how moral psychology *evolved* and wish to set armchair intuitions about the nature of this psychology and who has it aside. They seem to regard it as a *natural kind*, analogous to ‘water’ or ‘heat’. Delimiting the kind *moral psychology* is an empirical, not conceptual matter: we start with clear instances of the kind, then perform scientific investigation to find out the key hallmarks that set it apart from other kinds. As has been the case with scientific articulation of other natural kinds, the results may be surprising and counterintuitive—rats and humans may indeed manifest instances of this kind.

But, there is another important difference between these approaches that compounds the problem of miscommunication. The kind of conceptual analysis that philosophers typically perform with terms like ‘moral’ is also driven by, and inseparable from, background concerns in metaphysics and epistemology. Every student of ethics should know that the different traditions in ethical theory have quite different conceptions of the subject matter

of ethics—what morality is all about. For Kant, morality is about obligation and duty, for the utilitarians it is about happiness and suffering, etc. This disagreement is crucially intertwined with disagreement about how ethical knowledge could be possible. Kant’s conception of ethics is driven by his concern that ethics be given a foundation in reason; while, as empiricists, the utilitarians prefer to see ethical knowledge as ultimately empirical and the subject matter of ethics as something that can be studied scientifically, like psychological states of happiness.

It is vital to keep this in mind when understanding a position like Korsgaard’s on morality in animals: for Korsgaard, this issue is crucially bound up with questions about the metaphysics and epistemology of ethics. Normative guidance is the ‘essence’ of morality because Korsgaard adopts a largely Kantian view of the metaphysics and

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epistemology of ethics grounded in self-reflection. That is why she can't recognise de Waal's building blocks of morality as building blocks of morality at all—empathy and sympathy have nothing to do with the ability to obligate oneself. Proponents of the natural kind approach, however, tend not to have such background concerns driving their agenda. That would be to put the cart before the horse: better to begin with an empirically informed account of how our social psychology works and then reflect on what metaphysics and epistemology makes the most sense of our practices, rather than have such concerns drive our account of what it is to have a moral psychology. But, this is, nonetheless, how many philosophers approach the question of morality in animals, and it means that researchers have not only adopted different methodologies, but have also often been interested in different things: metaethics vs. evolutionary psychology.

What about those who ostensibly agree on thinking of morality as a natural psychological kind? Scientists like Bekoff and de Waal can make common cause with naturalistic philosophers and researchers in the cognitive science of morality in thinking of moral psychology as something to be revealed by empirical investigation. Here, however, another problem arises: how do we decide between different ways of drawing the boundaries of this kind? How do we decide, for instance, between Bekoff and Pierce's expansive account of what it is to be a moral creature and de Waal's more restrictive account, and various others on the market? Is empathy enough for being a moral creature, or is something else required, like an understanding of explicit codes of conduct, or some sense of *ought*? The situation is similar to the debate over what it is to have a 'language'. Is the essence of language syntactic structure, or is it intentional communication, or just exchange of information? Much ink has been spilled here, but it is an entirely terminological dispute. We have a variety of potential natural kinds (some more inclusive than others) and there is no debate of value to be had over which has more or less ownership of the pre-theoretical concept 'language'. Similarly, the pre-theoretical concept 'moral' is

vague enough that there is no substantive debate to be had over which of a number of possible natural kinds constitutes its 'real' extension.

So, if we wish to avoid talking at cross-purposes or wasting our time with merely terminological disputes, we should stop asking whether animals are 'moral' or 'proto-moral'. Better, I suggest, to focus on more fine-grained questions about what different species can do, what psychological mechanisms underlie their behaviour, and what philosophical implications may follow from this. For instance, are rats motivated to help others because of others' distress, what role does that distress play in their psychology, and what might this tell us about the potential harmful effects on the welfare of laboratory rats, say, of keeping them in conditions where they are routinely exposed, but prevented from responding to, the distress of conspecifics (Monsó et al., 2018)? These are much more precise, more tractable, and substantive questions than whether or not we should call rats 'moral' or 'proto-moral'.

paper

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What we miss when we overlook animal culture

Kristin Andrews



Thirty years ago, the comparative psychologist David Premack wrote that chimpanzees have the cognitive abilities of 3-year-old children (Premack 1988). This idea took hold in comparative cognition, encouraging scientists to see apes as human toddlers. Seeing animals as little children appears natural to many humans, if the numbers of people pushing pups in prams is any indication.

To see grown animals as toddlers is to wear a special kind of blinder, one that keeps us from seeing what is in front of us. While a small dog may not be able to walk as long as an adult human, and a mature chimpanzee does not have all the concepts an adult human does, small dogs can walk (and sniff, and pee, and run, and dig) and mature chimpanzees can predict behavior (and communicate, and plan, and remember).

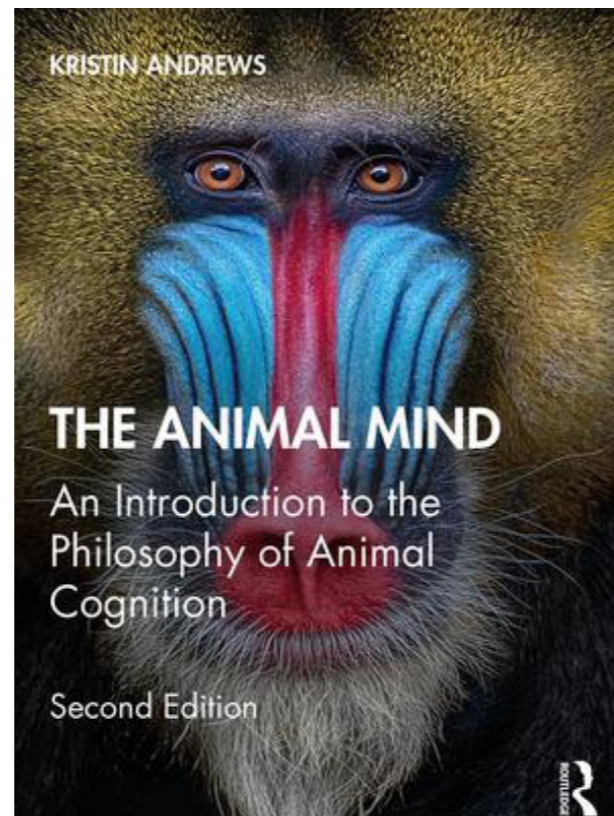
While the scientific narrative of chimpanzees as human children has largely fallen out of favor, alongside a greater sensitivity to cognitive developmental stages, I see another set of blinders that we all too readily wear. These are blinders toward animal cultures, social norms, and moral practices.

Cognitive animals, including all animals who can learn associatively, have ways of living that are not reducible to their biology. Pluck an animal out of their natural environment, and you have changed them, because the environment has become part of their cognitive system. Like a human with dementia who loses the last of himself when taken out of his familiar home to be cared for in an institution, cognitive animals who have adapted to a certain kind of physical environment will be a different kind of being outside that environment.

Cognitive animals who are also social animals, including all those animals who make any contact with another, be it for reproduction, care of offspring, or group living, have ways of living that are not jointly reducible to their biology and physical environment. Rather, part of who they are is their social environment. This includes familiar ideas of group size and social organization. The lonely rat burrow with only one rat, or bee hive with only one bee, would have an inhabitant who acted atypically. Street dogs living in packs that lack the normal sex ratio will show more instability and stress than those living in stable packs. Look at a single bee, a lone rat, or a dog plucked off the street, and we only see a shadow of the animal that they were, or that they could have been, in a natural social environment.

Social animals may also have some properties that can only be seen when we look at their group practices. Among these are cultural properties, which biologists Kevin Laland and Vincent Janik describe as, ‘group-typical behavior patterns, shared by members of animal communities, that are to some degree reliant on socially learned and transmitted information’ (Laland and Janik 2006: 524). Some of these cultural practices can be described as social norms, patterns of voluntary behaviors that individuals expect community members to conform to, where violations lead to sanctions (Andrews 2020). And some of these social norms can be considered moral norms, if they involve practices of care, cooperation, or reciprocity, or if they invoke moral sentiments such as empathy, anger, or guilt.

Human social norms include practices of greeting, such as handshakes, hugs, and kisses. As these practices are now quickly changing, we get to see a social norm become a moral norm before our eyes. Not shaking someone’s hand may have seemed rude or odd in 2019, but today the viral risks apparent in the offer of a hand would be a moral affront. Most human norms that differ between cultures are more social than moral, including norms of dressing, architecture, arts, cooking and eating, celebrating and worshipping. These different cultural practices provide entertainment for travelers, and the possibility of participating in



or observing these social norms can often be the highlight of a vacation abroad.

Social norms in other species may include practices of greeting, such as male baboon genital handling and the spotted hyena display of an erect ‘penis’ (in males and female). Chimpanzees may have norms about the sharing or distribution of food resources, ownership of objects, cooperation, helping, exchanges of food for sex, infanticide, and even norms of fashion—after a high-ranking female chimpanzee in a sanctuary community started wearing a straw-like blade of grass in her ear, other chimpanzees began to do the same. Some of these norms, such as the chimpanzee females who protest when males mishandle unrelated infants, may be best understood as moral norms, if they invoke practices of care and moral sentiments of empathy or anger.

The lone lab rat doesn’t have social norms or culture. We don’t even know that much about the sociality and culture of wild rats (see Schweinfurth 2020 for a review). Treating a rat like a model organism is like treating a chimpanzee as a 3-year-old child. Treating a chimpanzee as a toddler neglects the complexity of animals as beings with

a life history, at a particular developmental state. Treating a rat as a mere model organism neglects the complexity of animals as beings with a cultural context, at a particular position in that culture. When we think of animals as stripped out of these larger contexts, we fail to see them fully. This may be just as true of invertebrates as it is of chimpanzees.

Captive cultures can arise if animals are permitted to live together, but as institutionalized, they may resemble typical animal cultures as much as Romanian orphanages, American prisons, or utopian planned communities resemble typical human cultures. The cultures may be unstable, and may fail to display characteristic moral properties that had the opportunity to evolve over generations.

By taking off the blinders and seeing chimpanzees not as 3-year-old children, scientists made progress in their research. It took forty years for humans to figure out how to create a false belief test for chimpanzees. For too long researchers offered ape subjects versions of the Sally/Anne task, which involves a child taking another child’s chocolate bar or toy ball. Human children care about their possessions, especially candy. Apes not so much. When researchers thought of their subjects like adult wild chimpanzees, and gave them a cleverly designed battle scene to watch, the apes easily passed the false belief task (Krupenye et al. 2016).

Chimpanzees shouldn’t be taken as human children. Rats shouldn’t be taken as mere model organisms, at least not if you want to understand the rat. Those of us who have not shared a cultural environment with other animals really don’t know them. Alien abduction stories are implausible for many reasons, not least of which is that species with the scientific mind necessary to master space travel should know how little you can learn from a biological being taken out of their community. Like a liver taken from a body, a human taken from their family, a chimpanzee taken from their community, we can only understand so much without the opportunity to study the larger system.

Cultural and moral animals will only be seen if we seek to understand them on their own terms, not as children, or as savages, or as machines, or from within some other easy-to-digest framework. Rather, we need to see them as aliens, and as familiars. The similarities come from our shared evolutionary history, and likely includes having conscious experience and a number of cognitive capacities. But with different cultural practices, different embodied realities, different environmental scaffolds and constraints, we are also very different. In these ways, humans are very different from other animals, but this makes it all the more exciting to go and visit them, observing and, if invited, maybe even participating in their own cultural practices.

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The role of touch in animal morality

Birte Wrage



Touch is an important medium of human's social lives from birth on. It is central to the bond of infant and primary caregiver, plays a major role in healthy physical, social, and emotional development (Feldman, 2011), and has a strong communicative function in connection with emotions (Hertenstein et al., 2006). Moreover, touch underlies intricate social norms, as it implies an increase in vulnerability to bodily harm. Therefore, touch is involved in our moral lives in fundamental ways, be it as a facilitator of the development of social capacities relevant for morality, as a means to gain (potentially morally relevant) social information, a medium to comfort and console others, or as a potential infringement on another's boundaries.

In a co-authored paper on nonhuman animal morality, Susana Monsó and I argue that the tactile sense and purposeful touch interactions likely play a similar role in the social lives of many nonhuman animals and that paying more attention to them can thus inform the debate on animal morality, specifically the question whether certain capacities and behaviors that are deemed moral in humans can be found in nonhuman animals (Monsó & Wrage under review). Moral capacities that we proposed to be at least partially evidenced by touch in certain social contexts are e.g. trust, care, tolerance, jealousy, disgust, and cruelty. Trust may be shown by allowing or seeking out touch or by engaging in so-called vulnerable contact behavior, care may be evidenced in an animal's response to another's vulnerability, tolerance may be shown in (the lack of a) response to another animal's touch, jealousy may take the form of

preventing, disrupting, or responding negatively to affiliation in others, disgust may involve avoidance of coming into contact with another and so on, all of this granted that the animal has a certain amount of control over her behavior.

We base this claim of congruence of the role of touch in humans and nonhuman animals, on the one hand, on the physiology of the tactile sense and the influence of maternal touch on infant development, which seems to be alike (at least) across mammal species (Hertenstein et al., 2006; Botero, 2016). This means that the calming, comforting, and affiliative effect of touch is accessible to a wide range of species, and that social development in mammals is heavily influenced by the experience of maternal touch (see the infamous maternal deprivation studies by Harlow [e.g. Harlow 1958]). Since we understand morality as a social capacity, maternal touch then is a facilitator of moral development, and thus indirectly linked to animal morality.

On the other hand, we argue that there already is precedence for inferring moral capacities in animals from social touch behaviors. The behavior in question is consolation, which is defined as an increase in affiliative contact in response to another's distress (Burkett et al., 2016) and taken to be indicative of empathic concern. This 'affiliative contact' is, in most cases, a form of touch like embracing, stroking, contact sitting. Consolation behavior is found in a range of nonhuman animals from rodents to elephants to great apes to corvids (ibid.). From the prevalence of this behavior across species and the acceptance of touch behavior as indicative of a moral capacity (empathy) in the study of consolation we argue that more attention should be paid to the ways in which animals purposefully engage in touch, to the social information they potentially gain through touch, and to the ways in which they navigate each other's and their own vulnerability in these interactions, to ensure a fairer assessment of animals' moral capacities.

One overarching dimension we mostly had to bracket in that paper due to limited space is that

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of power relationships. These relationships are obviously a crucial part of the social context in which touch behavior needs to be interpreted. For example, power may override trust in touch inter-

actions (e.g. a behavior that among equals could indicate trust may indicate submission, dominance, disrespect etc. among unequal partners), and power disparities may increase or decrease tolerance towards certain forms of touch from certain conspecifics in certain situations (think of e.g. the difference in lenience of adults towards infants and adolescents in a social group, of play between unequal partners, or of social grooming rules).

Two further aspects that are important for considering touch in animals as informative of their moral capacities that paper had to set aside for space reasons are differences in sensory acuity and the possibility of touch through a medium. Since communicative touch has been proposed by some as the evolutionary precursor to human language, it is likely that touch plays a role in the social lives of non-linguistic animals for that purpose, and specified tactile organs with high tactile acuity may be indicative of this. Moreover, not all touch happens directly, body to body, as tactile information can be transmitted through a solid or liquid medium (i.e. probing an object with a stick and thus discerning its features, riding a bike and feeling the smooth or bumpy road, or swimming next to another and feeling the water getting pushed against one due to their movement).

For at least two species that are notoriously discussed in connection with complex social cognition outside humans this may be especially relevant, namely for elephants and dolphins. Elephant trunks and feet are extremely sensitive to tactile stimuli and allow for discriminative touch with high acuity. Moreover, elephants communicate over long distances by low frequency calls that travel through the ground, and these calls may have a tactile quality to them (like when you feel a large truck drive by your house). Therefore, elephants may have access to social information through touch in a specialized way that should be incorporated in the discussion of their moral capacities. Similarly, dolphins use tacto-acoustic signals (e.g. calls that feel like a 'buzz') socially, and it has been suggested that there may be norms

guiding their use, for example prohibiting aversive signals that are used to stun prey ('sonic punch') among conspecifics (White, 2007). Furthermore, as a highly social aquatic species, dolphins may be making intricate use of touch mediated by water without an acoustic component, e.g. when swimming in formation.

Considering the moral hue that purposeful touch seems to have due to the possibility of physical harm and the possibility to gain social information, a closer look at animals' touch interactions could not only enrich the debate on their moral capacities, it comes with ethical implications. Human practices of animal use and interacting with animals routinely interfere with animal's physical access to each other, their control over their personal space and bodies, and their access to maternal care and familial bonds. The links between morality and touch make this problematic beyond welfare, as these forms and degrees of touch deprivation all potentially diminish animals as moral beings. Ethical debate is needed to consider what treatment we owe to moral animals and if, for example, the role of touch in animal morality may have to be acknowledged by a right to maternal touch.

paper

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Entomophagy hype – more about entrepreneurship opportunities than ethical food *Media analysis from Finland*

Minna Santaoja and Mari Niva



Minna Santaoja



Mari Niva

An enthusiastic discussion on eating insects started in Finland in 2015, a couple of years after the publication of the FAO (2013) report on edible insects. Until late 2017, however, rearing and selling insects for food was banned in Finland, as they were (and are) considered a novel food requiring special authorization according to EU regulation. However, due to increasing interest in insect eating and the budding 'insect economy', in September 2017 the Finnish food authority changed its interpretation of the regulation, making it possible to sell specified species of insects for human consumption as of late 2017.

Imaginative entrepreneurs and entomophagy-enthusiasts had gone around the ban for instance by selling insects in jars as 'kitchen decoration' or offering tastings in food fairs on consumer's own responsibility. Insects were promoted as an ecological and ethical food, but following the discussion in

the media, it seemed the arguments were not properly developed but were taken for granted. Furthermore, from an ethical perspective, insects as *animals* seemed to be entirely missing from the public discourse.

In our paper, originally published in a Finnish philosophy journal (Santaoja and Niva, 2018), and then in a condensed form in English in the EurSafe 2019 conference book (Santaoja and Niva, 2019), we analyzed the Finnish media discourse on edible insects. We examined insect eating and the Finnish 'insect economy' from the perspective of ethics, ecology and aesthetics and asked, in particular, what ethical aspects are relevant in thinking about insects as a new farmed animal group, and where the arguments of ethical insect food are grounded. The analysis was not strictly philosophical, as our backgrounds are in environmental policy and food and consumer studies. To analyze our findings from the media, we drew on multidisciplinary literature on entomophagy and insect economy. Here we will focus on our findings from the media analysis, and discuss particularly the ethical perspectives of insect eating. Our research material constituted of press releases, official documents, newspaper articles and social media content such as blogs. Systematically we collected articles on entomophagy from the digital archive of Helsingin Sanomat, the main daily newspaper in Finland, from May 1999 to November 2017. The search yielded 39 articles, most of which were published in 2015 or after. Helsingin Sanomat is an important thought leader and a source of information for many Finns, so the handling of entomophagy in the newspaper provides a good understanding of the public discourse on insects in Finland. Additionally, we have had access to a network of insect economy actors in Finland (see Arppe et al., 2020 for details and an analysis of how the insect economy emerged in Finland).

Perspectives on insect ethics

Gjerris et al. (2016) have presented a system-

atic review of different ethical perspectives, anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric, in using insects as food. The different perspectives draw from different schools of animal ethics, with the difference being whether animal welfare or animal rights is emphasized (Erens et al., 2012). Another perspective is deontological: here the focus is on reflecting on whether eating insects is in itself right or wrong.

The animal welfare perspective seems to be dominant in discussions of the ethics of insect eating. It discusses whether insects suffer or not, but leaves aside the question of industrial animal production as potentially morally problematic in itself. A good example of the former kind of ethical thinking is the FAO report on edible insects, in which ethical problems in insect production are considered to be small. In the 200-page report the issue is touched upon for half a page, and insect ethics is considered from the welfare perspective, focusing on the living conditions and killing methods of insects. However, according to existing research on insect sentience, there seem to be many open questions regarding insect welfare and since there is little knowledge on their experiences, their wellbeing is difficult to assess (Adamo, 2016).

Insects are often considered as the 'ultimate other' of the animal kingdom. In many current accounts, consumers' disgust towards insect food is seen to be the main hindrance for entomophagy becoming more widespread in the West (Deroy et al., 2015). The otherness of insects may so far have protected them from being harnessed to industrial production, but it may also have prevented or at least slowed down the development and establishment of insect ethics. Interestingly, Vincent Holt proposed already in 1885 that eating insects would be not only economical but also an ethical thing to do: by bringing insects to our tables we would become aware of what we are doing to them. More recently Loo and Sellbach (2013) have also proposed that eat-

ing insects would allow for new sensitivities, connections and emotions to emerge. However, emphasizing emotions as the base for insect ethics may be problematic, if emotions towards insects are mainly negative. Aaltola (2010) suggests reflexive empathy instead, which combines experience with rational deliberation. Reflexive empathy would still require exposure to insects and close observation of their lives for developing experiences of familiarity. However, the exposure does not require the eating of insects but could take place in other contexts, such as observing insects in nature as part of formal and informal education.

Insects - non-animals?

'Entomophagy would save the world', claimed a title in Helsingin Sanomat in spring 2015. Throughout the years, the tone of reporting on edible insects has been overall very positive and excited in the newspaper. Insects have been promoted as an ecological source of protein: 'In comparison to meat production, insect rearing is economical, environmentally friendly, effective and healthy', wrote Helsingin Sanomat for instance in February 2017. For the ecological promise to come true insects would then need to substitute for other animal-sourced proteins in the diet. Curiously enough, the first insect product

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that came on the Finnish market was a bread with added cricket flour. Similarly, many other insect foods currently sold are not intended to replace meat but rather use insects as an exciting extra condiment. Curiously, one of the main target groups for marketing insect foods seems to be vegetarians or even vegans. Finnish insect food producers have introduced an oxymoron ‘entovegan diet’ in their marketing, rendering insects as non-meat and compatible with plant-based diet. Indeed, in the last years, vegetarian or ‘flexitarian’ diets have been promoted for both environmental, health and ethical reasons. Against this backdrop, introducing a new source of animal protein into western diets and harnessing a new animal group into industrial production seems a somewhat backward development.

In the media discourse insects are, in fact, often likened to cereals. The ‘growing season’ of crickets is said to be six weeks, and killing the insects is referred to as ‘harvesting’. The chosen killing method in insect production in Finland is freezing. ‘The death of a cricket is thus very similar to that in nature: it goes into hibernation and eventually its vital functions cease’, wrote Helsingin Sanomat almost poetically, not questioning insect welfare or the production in general. Insects are referred to as products, biomass, raw material, grocery, ingredient, mass and particles. The discourse is utilitarian and commodifying, and insects as animals seem to be missing – or rather, insects are perceived something other than animals. For instance, a columnist in Helsingin Sanomat wrote about dreaming of cricket powder that would allow her to ‘easily substitute animal protein’.

The main discourse regarding entomophagy in the Finnish media has been emphasizing entrepreneurship and economic opportunities. Several former pig farmers are reported to be converting their facilities for insect production. The discourse becomes clear in headings such as ‘Using insects for food provides also new earning possibilities for food industry’ or ‘N.N. aims to make millions

by feeding people insects’. Insect production is also driven by perceived trendiness of entomophagy. Insects are marketed as an opportunity to get something new and exciting on the plate: ‘As a bar snack insects would work well’, or ‘It would be silly to miss out on such a great new experience and texture in food’, quotes from Helsingin Sanomat articles attest.

The Finnish hype in 2015–2018 around entomophagy can be located between the economic strive for innovation and the need to create new, more sustainable forms of life (Last, 2014). Although the hype seems to have cooled down recently (Arppe et al., 2020), it seems that from the perspective of the producers that was only the first wave and the real transition into insect food is still ahead. Indeed, there are numerous research and innovation projects going on in Finland, developing different aspects of ‘insect economy’. Insects as animals and the animal rights perspective still seem to be missing in those networks. Insects are not only planned to be served to people, but there are plans to use them as animal feed, and that is where the larger production volumes would probably lie. Discussion about insects as feed has mostly been missing in the public media in Finland, and as the animal feed production remains invisible, it may be that ethical questions are considered even less than in producing insects for origin-conscious consumers. It would be paramount for social scientists, ethicists, humanists and philosophers to actively take part in the networks and bring forth and develop insect ethics perspectives.

book review

Strachan Donnelley
Frog Pond Philosophy

*Essays on the Relationship Between
Humans and Nature*

Edited by Ceara Donnelley
and Bruce Jennings

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Book review by

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Research

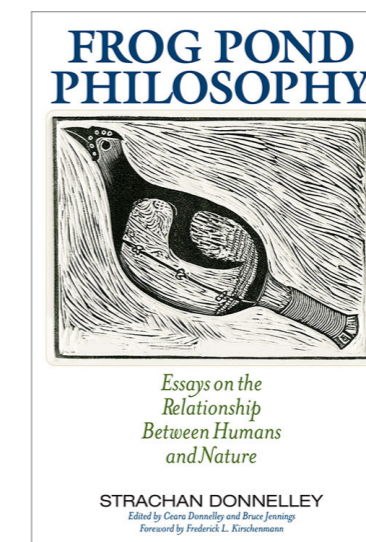
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Strachan Donnelley: Frog Pond Philosophy

Essays on the Relationship Between Humans and Nature

Edited by Ceara Donnelley and Bruce Jennings

Book review by Bernice Bovenkerk



The authors

Strachan Donnelley was an environmental philosopher and bioethicist, best known as director of the Hastings Center, whose untimely death at the age of 66 cut short his work on the manuscript of this book, which consists of a collection of essays spanning more than forty years of his work. His daughter Ceara Donnelley and his friend and colleague Bruce Jennings took it upon themselves to edit the final version. As some of the chapters are based on published and others on unpublished work, readers will find some repetition in the book. Personally I did not mind

this repetition, as it helped me to better grasp the complexity of Donnelley’s views. Apart from being a philosopher with a unique point of view about how humans should relate to nature, Donnelley was a passionate outdoorsman, fly-fisherman, hunter, conservationist and a self-declared ‘marginalist’, an unconventional man.

Their ambition

The book spans a lifelong quest for finding an answer to the question of how humans should relate to non-human nature. Using many personal and intriguing stories about his own encounters with non-human nature, Donnelley’s ambition is to show how humans and non-human nature are inextricably interconnected. We should aim to better fit human communities into nature, both for nature and for humanity’s sake. Donnelley stands firmly in the Leopoldian ecocentric tradition, regarding humans not as conquerors of the biotic community, but as ‘plain members and citizens of the land’. He laments the

fact that – in his view – a lot of theorizing in environmental philosophy has not much regard for its own philosophical roots. In this book, he traces Leopolds' views back to the philosophical theories that were formative for current-day worldviews. Donnelley in particular studies thinkers whose ideas were opposite to the dominant philosophical and scientific worldview of their time, that were based on Cartesian dualism and mechanistic Newtonianism – from Heraclitus to Spinoza and from Darwin and Whitehead to Mayr and Jonas. Building on all their ontological views, Donnelley drafts his own 'philosophical cosmology'.

The results

The philosophical cosmology that is presented in the book is an unfinished and open-ended worldview that is strongly influenced by evolutionary and ecological thinking whilst trying to avoid the naturalistic fallacy. This cosmology does not explain nature in terms of deterministic and mechanical laws and it challenges essentialist thinking about species. This cosmology forms the background for Donnelley's thoughtful and thorough discussion of Aldo Leopold's work in part 3 of the book and that should appeal most to environmental philosophers.

Most striking

Most striking to me was the interplay between abstract theorizing and personal stories, that read almost like a novel. Donnelley takes the reader along on his own trip of self-discovery. Sometimes the personal stories even seem to form the foundation for all his theoretical thinking. For example, in his encounter with a big rainbow trout, in the story Big Little Snake, Donnelley realized the importance of commonalities between humans and non-human organisms: We all similarly struggle to preserve our individual being. Also interesting was Donnelley's answer to what is often seen as Leopold's paradox: why does Leopold, with all his appeals to preserving the integrity, beauty and stability of the biotic community not condemn hunting? Being a hunter himself, Donnelley realized that it is precisely the hunter in Leopold that gave him his insight that humans are part of nature, rather than standing outside or above it.

Reasons not to read the book

As a result of the personal stories about fishing and hunting in the wilderness the book seems inevitably American and male-centered and this might not appeal to scholars who cannot so easily identify with this perspective. His idiosyncratic views also become clear when we peruse the list of references of the book, where we find not a single female philosopher. His defense of Leopold's views on hunting also raises some uneasy questions: do we need to become hunters in order to better understand our place in the biotic community? Isn't the hunter's perspective still one of human domination? Does hunting or fishing teach us about the predator-prey relationship and our role as potential prey or is it a rather one-sided affair? Moreover, as Donnelley is a moral particularist who does not believe in universal principles, the reader will look in vain for concrete moral guidelines. His main guideline is that we should substitute the current 'economic bottom-line' thinking with 'nature alive' thinking – a term he borrows from Whitehead.

Reasons to read the book

The lack of moral guidelines could at the same time be regarded as a strength of the book. Donnelley shows how 'bewilderingly complex the world and its values' are and argues that we need to learn an art of 'moral ecology', which could be read as an appeal to cultivate a context-sensitive and virtue ethical theory of environmental philosophy. He gives the reader lots of ammunition to reflect on what such a philosophy would entail. This is by no means an easy book to read, but it is well worth it for those who like a challenge. The personal stories cause a welcome dynamic in the book and will stick in the reader's memories. A must-read for all scholars in environmental philosophy.

updates

EurSafe Executive Committee Update



3 March 2020: the EurSafe board meets in Utrecht. It is the annual face to face meeting with a rather full agenda including the conferences in 2021 and 2022, finances, member communication and the role of the website. In the week before, there was

some email exchange about whether the Corona virus may have an impact on our meeting. As president, Kate emailed 'I encourage everyone to make a decision on travel that you feel comfortable with. There is no expectation either way (traveling or not travelling).' In the end most of us were in Utrecht and we had a fruitful meeting.

It only is three months ago, but it feels as a text from another century: being with more than 10 persons in a relatively small meeting room, with colleagues from all over Europe who can travel whenever they like. It's quite a contrast with what happened in the weeks after and with what most of us are still confronted with. Universities that are closed down, all teaching online, international meetings that have been cancelled, and delays in research activities. And in spite of the serious impact of these measures, they still are incomparable to the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on the health and life of many around the world.

So first of all, I hope you read this text in good health. Since we would not have a 2020-conference, the impact of the current situation for EurSafe is relatively limited. Nonetheless, the outbreak raises some new questions.

First, it raises questions about the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on our conferences. Since we do not have a conference this year we have sufficient time to prepare for the 2021 meeting in Fribourg. Ivo Wallimann and his team at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland are still carefully planning

the meeting on 24-26 June 2021. More information and the **Call for Abstracts** are available [here](#). Although there are many uncertainties at this moment,

I cordially invite you to submit your abstracts. Your research input and thoughts are even more crucial for the success of the conference than any discussion about what may (not) be possible in terms of hosting an international conference next year June.

Second, already before the current situation the board have been exploring the possibilities to use the EurSafe website as a platform to exchange news, job opportunities or new projects, but also to encourage discussion. Currently, there is a lot and very valuable interaction at the conferences and we have relevant updates in EurSafeNews, but to function as a community it seems important to have more opportunities for exchange of news and thoughts. Therefore, we are working on expanding the functions of the website with a discussion platform. I hope to inform you about the launch in the next months.

Finally, the current outbreak raises all kind of ethical questions that are (also) in the field that

we discuss within our EurSafe community. It is obvious that the current outbreak is not a mere human health problem, but is linked to our interaction with animals and nature. Furthermore, in the aftermath of the outbreak there may be renewed questions about food security and justice, food safety and the impact on the future of agriculture. These, and many other questions will be on our agenda and we ask for innovative reflections, ideas and answers.

I wish you all the best and hope you have a good and healthy Summer!

Best regards,

Franck Meijboom
On behalf of the Executive Board, 25 May 2020

EurSafe 2021

Justice and Food Security in a Changing Climate

The 2021 Congress of the European Society for Agriculture and Food Ethics (EurSafe) in Fribourg focuses on ethical issues concerning food security in times of a changing climate. We welcome papers from a broad range of topics and encourage contributions focusing on food security and climate change.

Call for Abstracts at events.unifr.ch/eursafe2021/en

announcements

AUGUST, 6-7, 2020

14. International Conference on Veterinary Ethics and Animal Care
Vancouver, Canada
[website](#)

SEPTEMBER, 8-9, 2020

14. International Conference on Animal Ethics and Animal Welfare Science
Singapore, Singapore
[website](#)

SEPTEMBER 9-11, 2020 (ONLINE)

MANCEPT Workshops
Including a workshop on animal agency
Workshop convenors: Josh Milburne, Eva Meijer, and Angie Pepper
Contact: jmilburn02@qub.ac.uk
[website](#)

SEPTEMBER, 24-25, 2020

Originally planned
Wild Animal Ethics Conference
New date will be announced on the following website
St. Andrews, United Kingdom
[website](#)

SEPTEMBER, 25-26, 2020

UNIFood Conference
Belgrade, Serbia
[website](#)

OCTOBER, 7-8, 2020

Aquaculture and Fisheries
Vienna, Austria
[website](#)

OCTOBER, 8-9, 2020

Doing animal health in a more-than-human world
Vienna, Austria
[website](#)

OCTOBER, 15-18, 2020

International Society for Environmental Ethics 17th Annual Summer Meeting
Blue Rive, Oregon
[website](#)

DECEMBER, 6-9, 2020

4th International Conference on Global Food Security: Achieving local and global food security at what costs?

Le Corum, Montpellier, France
[website](#)

JUNE, 23-25, 2021

Postponed, actually planned for summer 2020

7th International Conference – Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Sustainability, Ethics and Governance

Lisbon, Portugal
[website](#)

JUNE, 24-26, 2021

16th EurSafe Conference – Justice and Food Security

Fribourg, Switzerland
[website](#)

JULY 22-29, 2021

5th Minding Animals Conference

Incorporating the 1st Compassionate Conservation Oceania Conference
Sydney, Australia
[website](#)

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