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Editorial: 'Flourish'

For this special issue of *Animal Studies Journal*, entitled 'Flourish', our approach was two-fold. Complementing the 2021 conference of the Australasian Animal Studies Association on animal flourishing, we encouraged papers that explored animal and human-animal communities that are thriving and flourishing, both in the general sense and in terms of flourishing theory. A second area of interest was in works that offer or address creative and non-traditional outputs. The issue opens with papers in these two categories, followed by additional general papers and concluding with a selection of reviews of recent works in the field of animal studies.

The opening 'Provocation from the Field' by David Brooks investigates the accuracy of official accounts of animal flourishing, in this case data which points to kangaroo populations being 'in plague proportions' and which thereby serves to rationalise the large-scale kangaroo killing which takes place each year. Brooks's intervention interrogates the official process of estimating kangaroo numbers in Australia for the purposes of defining quotas for the 'kangaroo industry'. His calculations suggest that these are based not only on extrapolation but on biologically impossible suppositions about reproductive rates. Next, Lynda Birke and Lori Gruen explore the concept of flourishing in co-species terms, in an article addressing relationships between 'disabled' animals and their human companions, which the latter frequently report experiencing in terms of 'Mutual Rescue'. The next set of papers are literary in focus or in nature. Iris Ralph's 'Wild Dogs and Decolonisation' explores dingoes and greyhounds in relation to representational decolonisation in Ivan Sen's film *Mystery Road* and Omar Musa's novel *Here Come the Dogs*. Toyah Webb proposes and explores the potential of 'avian Weird' in relation to the New Weird fiction of Jeff VanderMeer. Two creative works explore an alternate spirituality, in Sue Hall Pyke's 'Snake Church', and an alternate zodemocratic future in Pablo Castelló's 'Zoolondonopolis'. The 'Flourish' papers conclude with Eva Meijer's exploration of hope as a political practice in the Anthropocene, in relation to the achievements of the Dutch Party for the Animals.

Three general papers follow, each addressing questions of representation within different spheres. Annika Hugosson highlights the mis/representation of hyenas in Disney's *The Lion King* and related media, foregrounding the representational responsibilities of the film industry. Camille Bellet and Emily Morgan examine the ways in which the meat industry portrays animals in advertising, foregrounding ways in which these are underpinned by long-held values including but also extending beyond species relations themselves. Finally, Luke Henderson's paper on greyhound racing brings this issue full circle to the question of the accounts that inform policy. Henderson's exploration of the power relations behind the brief ban and subsequent reinstatement of greyhound racing in New South Wales, and the present consequences finds that 'policy initiatives have decentralised animal welfare to the benefit of key industry stakeholders'.

In our review section, Peter Li reviews Liz P. Y. Chee's *Mao's Bestiary: Medicinal Animals and Modern China*. Michelle Hamadache reviews David Brooks' *Animal Dreams*, and David Herman reviews *The Handbook of Historical Animal Studies*, edited by Mieke Roscher, André Krebber, and Brett Mizelle.

We hope our readers will enjoy this varied issue.

Sally Borrell, deputy editor

Clare Archer-Lean, associate editor

Contributor Biographies

Camille Bellet is a Wellcome Trust Research Fellow in Humanities and Social Science at the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHSTM), University of Manchester. She has a background in veterinary medicine and epidemiology, and specialises in public health and human-animal studies. Her research sits at the intersection of the medical humanities, animal studies, sensory studies, and science and technology studies. She is interested in how practices with and knowledge about nonhuman animals are constructed and respond to particular socio-cultural, institutional and organisational contexts.

Lynda Birke is a Visiting Professor at the University of Chester, UK. She is a biologist, who has specialised in interdisciplinary research, especially feminist science and human-animal studies. Her most recent work has focused on human-horse relationships. Books include *Dreaming of Pegasus: Equine Imaginings* (edited with Harry Wels, Victorina Press 2021), and *Un/Stable Relations: Horses, Humans and Social Agency* (authored with Kirrilly Thompson, Routledge 2017).

David Brooks, poet, novelist and essayist, is an honorary Associate Professor in Australian Literature at the University of Sydney, where from 1999 he co-edited the journal *Southerly*. In early 2018 he curated and wrote much of the *100 Days Project* (100 blog-posts over 100 days), devoted to the plight of kangaroos in contemporary Australia (<https://www.arcohab.org/a-100-days-of-kangaroo>), and has written longer essays on the same subject. His latest works are *Animal Dreams* (essays on non-human animals in literature, philosophy and contemporary culture, Sydney U.P., 2021) and *Turin: approaching animals* (Brandl & Schlesinger, 2021). He lives with rescued sheep in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales.

Pablo Castelló is a Research Assistant at the Cambridge Centre for Animal Rights Law. From July onwards, and as a postdoctoral fellow at Queen's University, he will study how our political and legal systems could provide institutional mechanisms to enable the political participation of nonhuman animals in zodemocratic decision-making processes. twitter: PabloPCastello

Lori Gruen is the William Griffin Professor of Philosophy at Wesleyan University in CT where she also is Professor of Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Science in Society. She is the founder and coordinator of Wesleyan Animal Studies. She is the author and editor of 15 books, including *Ethics and Animals: An Introduction*, *Entangled Empathy*, and *Animal Crisis*, co-authored with Alice Crary, *Ecofeminism: Feminist Intersections with Other Animals and the Earth* co-edited with Carol J. Adams, *Critical Terms for Animal Studies*, *animaladies: gender, animals, and madness* co-edited with Fiona Probyn-Rapsey and *Carceral Logics: Human Incarceration and Animal Captivity* co-edited with Justin Marceau. She has also published in scholarly as well as popular journals. www.lorigruen.com

Michelle Hamadache is a Sydney-based writer and the current Course Director of the Master of Creative Writing program at Macquarie University. She has published short stories, essays and poetry in *Southerly*, *Island*, *Mascara Literary Review* and *Cordite*, *Wasafiri Journal of International Writing* and *Antipodes*. Her research work focusses on fantastic literature and colonial and postcolonial representations of Algeria in English.

Luke Henderson is a recently graduated Master of Public Policy student with the University of Sydney, who gave focus to areas related to animal welfare in Australia, particularly greyhound racing in New South Wales. He volunteers at a greyhound rescue where he drew inspiration for his Masters dissertation. Previously, Henderson has worked as a television programmer in his native New Zealand, as well the United Kingdom and more recently Australia.

David Herman's recent publications include 'The Task of a Translator: Engaging with Klaus Modick's Anticipatory Ecofiction,' in *Barzakh Literary Magazine*, and 'Experimental Writing as Autoethnography: Thalia Field's Decentered Stories of Personhood,' in *Transpositiones: A Journal for Transdisciplinary and Intermedial Cultural Studies*. He is currently working on a collection of posthumanist fables titled *Animal Crossings*.

Annika Hugosson is a PhD student of cultural anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her doctoral research is focused on the multispecies diaspora resulting from the Russo-Ukrainian War, specifically on networks of people and pets forced to migrate to and through Poland.

Peter J. Li is Associate Professor of E. Asian Politics, Animal Law and Policy at the University of Houston-Downtown, and China Policy Specialist for Humane Society International. Dr. Li specializes in Chinese Politics with an emphasis on domestic politics, foreign relations and animal protection policy. His latest publication *Animal Welfare in China: Politics, Culture and Crisis* (Sydney University Press, 2021) addresses welfare challenges, wildlife protection and policymaking, and other developments impacting nonhuman animals at a time of great transformation. Other peer-reviewed publications include ‘Enforcing Wildlife Protection in China’ and ‘Reopening the Trade after SARS: China’s Wildlife Industry and the Fateful Policy Reversal’.

Eva Meijer is a philosopher, novelist, and multidisciplinary artist. Meijer currently works as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Amsterdam (NL), on the four-year research project *The politics of (not) eating animals*, supported by a Veni grant from the Dutch Research Council, and as a postdoctoral researcher in the project *Anthropocene ethics: Taking animal agency seriously* at Wageningen University and Research (NL). She is the chair of the Dutch study group for Animal Philosophy. Recent publications include *When Animals Speak. Toward an Interspecies Democracy* (New York University Press 2019) and *Animal Languages* (John Murray 2019). Meijer wrote thirteen books, fiction and non-fiction, her work has been translated into eighteen languages.

Emily Kathryn Morgan is Associate Professor of Art History at Iowa State University. She is the author of *Street Life in London: Context and Commentary* (Museums Etc. 2014), and she has published articles in *Art Journal*, *History of Photography*, and *Food and History*, among others. Her current research project considers visual cultures of industrial-scale slaughter and meat production.

Sue Hall Pyke’s primary habitat is in Tyacoort Woorroong [Djargurdwurung]Country, a beautiful unceded territory cared for by the Eastern Maar Nation. She writes lyrical memoir, fiction, poetry and critical essays, teaches in creative writing and Indigenous studies, and provides scholarly research assistance. Sue twitters @suehallpyke and Instagrams at @suzimez. See also <https://suehallpyke.com/>

Iris Ralph is a professor in the English Department of Tamkang University. Dr. Ralph received an M.A. (English) and a Ph.D. (English) from the University of Texas at Austin, and a B.A. (English) from San Francisco State University, USA. Dr. Ralph also holds a B.Sc. from Monash University and a Graduate Diploma in TESOL and Literacy from Victoria University, Australia. She is the author of *Packing Death in Australian Literature: Ecocides and Eco-sides* (Routledge 2020), journal article publications, and book chapters published in edited anthologies. Her research interests are animal studies and ecocriticism.

Toyah Webb is an MA student at the University of Sydney, where she is writing her thesis on the representation of nonhuman subjectivity in speculative fiction. Her latest work can be found in *Canadian Literature* and *Poetry New Zealand Yearbook*.