DS Journal of Language, Linguistics and Literature
Volume 3 Issue 1, 9-20, Jan - Mar 2025
ISSN: 2583-8490 / https://doi.org/10.59232/LLL-V3I1P102

Original Article

Unintentional Animal Violence in Novel Engel's Bear and Coetzee's Disgrace

Prativa Poudel

Department of English, University of Louisville, Kentucky, USA.

prativa.poudel5555@gmail.com

Received: 02 January 2025; Revised: 04 February 2025; Accepted: 12 March 2025; Published: 31 March 2025

Abstract - Although unintentional violence against nonhuman animals is far more pervasive and harder to detect and regulate than intentional violence, critics and animal rights activists have not paid sufficient attention to it, leaving the causes behind the unintentional violence unexplained. This research unearths the human domestication of nonhuman animals to be pivotal in that it camouflages unintended violence, and the philosophical underpinnings behind the domestication and its role in unintended violence are explained by analyzing the major instances of unintended violence to nonhuman animals in Marion Engel's Bear and J. M. Coetzee's Disgrace. It is hypothesized that unintentional violence escapes from human notice and acknowledgement largely because of human beings' deep-rooted humanism, speciesism, anthropomorphism, and anthropocentrism, and ethics based on them underlies indirect duty, rationality, Cartesianism or automatism, human exceptionalism, animal instrumentalism, in isolation or combination.

Keywords - Unintended violence, Nonhuman animal, Cartesianism, Human exceptionalism, Animal instrumentalism.

1. Introduction

Like most people in real everyday life, the major characters in the novels seem to agree that direct ill-treatment towards animals is unethical. However, a research gap exists in philosophical and theoretical frameworks in understanding how this widespread common agreement can paradoxically create the foundational reason for mistreating nonhuman animals. This problem arises because we are so focused on not directly hurting animals physically, and thus, we normalize unintended violence against animals. The tentative consensus seems that as long as humans can avoid hurting animals directly and physically, they believe they are ethically not at fault. As long as human animals think their actions are in accordance with their beliefs, they are not explicitly, intentionally, or directly hurting them. They think that they are being kind to other animals. However, this very general agreement becomes the norm in philosophical and theoretical frameworks only to ground and justify discrimination against nonhuman animals. Once normalized, the unintended violence underlying the apparent care recedes into oblivion from their ethical compass without ever knowing their discrimination, thus resulting in unintended violence. The discrimination related to unintended violence takes place at many closely related, often overlapping, causal levels; however, within the time constraint, the following have been limited, recognizing their relevance in Engel's Bear and Coetzee's Disgrace: Sure, here is the passage with the sentences broken up while maintaining the structure: Behind the apparent care, which camouflages unintended violence, there is an exclusion of nonhuman animals from the bios politikos or moral law (as in Aristotle (1984) ubiquitously mentions, Man is a political animal by nature, suggesting human animals are more than animals).

There is always the calculation of ensuring human gains at the end through a detour, generally known as Kantian indirect duty. There is a Cartesian tendency to treat nonhuman animals as automata lacking reflective awareness. Then, there is the assumption that human animals are exceptional in that they have a higher position of giving but without sacrificing anything on their part, thus maintaining hierarchical opposition. There is an assumption that nonhuman animals are captive of their environment without Dasein, without the ability to transform the world as in Heidegger's (1995) famous dictum that animals are poor in the world, that they have the world that they do not, thus their captivity and perishability without dying). Moreover, some nonhuman animals have ethical faces only secondarily (as in Levinas' thinking). To reiterate the main argument of this paper, all of these philosophical thoughts play instrumental roles behind the causes of unintended violence against nonhuman animals, most crucially with animal domestication, in various forms beyond the ordinary sense of adopting animals: Those philosophical thoughts behind the causes provide a blindfold, in the form of approval, that prevents human animals from seeing their underlying intention in their apparent care, which carries violence. In this sense, the phrase "unintended violence" is deployed in this research. Each of the most prevalent types is illustrated by interpreting the actions and thoughts of the characters in Engel and Coetzee's novels. The essay concludes by proposing ways of mitigating unintended violence by drawing on the insights from Giorgio Agamben's jamming anthropological machine, Cora Diamond and Stanley Cavell's notion of ethical woundedness, and Jacques Derrida's absolute or radical justice: (1) First, human animals must recognize their animality; (2) secondly and subsequently, as humans, we must see that our finitude of mortality, suffering, and limitation of language are the same as those of other species; (3) thirdly, we must recognize that all living beings are singularly unique and multiple; (4) fourthly, we must base our ethical consideration on the incapacities and monstrosities of the other, rather than on capacities; (5) fifthly, we must keep our ethical door open for perfectibility by realizing that there is no limitation to care: We must feel constantly wounded by the realization that we are asked to do more than we can afford to and that we always fall short.

2. Analysis of Philosophy of Unintended Violence

To give an overview of the major argument and sub-arguments, let this essay begin with the literary texts in proper to elaborate on the causes behind unintended violence and their philosophical underpinnings when the female protagonist Lou in Engel's Bear has to stay in Carey's Island, Canada, in an official visit to take stock of the library at the Pennarth, she encounters the only other inhabitant. This male bear is tied by a chain to a pole in the muddy cabin, from whom Lou instantly expects reciprocity, "She was certain that it [bear] was there, and that it was benevolent," when she greets him with hello (Engel, 1976, p.33). When she sees no response, she walks away without noticing the chain. Speciesism and anthropomorphism subtly underlie the apparent domestication of the bear, as exploitation and objectification of the bear go unnoticed under the excuse of providing it with food and shelter. For Lou, the bear lacks Aristotle's zoon logon echon, or human rationality, yet she continues to anthropomorphize it, hoping she can make good use of him. From Heidegger, we know that "the zoon echon logon is the Greek determination of the human being as a living thing that has logos" (Elden, 2005, p. 282). The equation between the zoon echon logon and the zoon politikon leaves the bear outside the political community, thus without moral agency. If that were not the case, Lou would have bothered to free the chained bear, which she does belatedly but only occasionally when she instrumentalizes it to fulfil her sexual fantasies in her routine bestiality with the bear. Lou feeds the bear as often as she eats, naively believing that animals possess a voracious "parasitical hunger" (Engel, 1976, p. 34). Beneath her seemingly benevolent actions lies the violence of reducing the bear to mere sustenance and confining it to captivity. To Lou, the bear resembles Heidegger's (1995) captive animal—a creature existing in the world but lacking a sense of worldliness, incapable of forming a world or comprehending Being within it. This epitomizes humanism in its purest form. Lou does not seem to feel that her life is exposed to the world the same way the bear's life does, so she probably does not feel remorse or hesitancy in abandoning him when her job at the Pennarth library is complete, and she departs. Her actions with the bear are guided by the library books she reads about the bear, which were written in the 19th century on the paradigm of human

rationality. Lou has "no idea what animals were about. They were creatures. They were not human. . . their functions were defined by the size, shape, and complications of their brains. She also supposed they led dim, flickering, inarticulate psychic lives" (Engel, 1976, p. 60). In this description, the bear is merely Cartesian automata, an unthinking animal, irrational and driven by instincts, at best, a weak mind (Descartes, 1989, pp. 18-19). This detachment and the reliance on pre-conceived, book-learned ideas is exactly the kind of unexamined interaction with animals that Cavell et al. (2008) address in Philosophy and Animal Life. Lou's perception of the bear as having "dim, flickering, inarticulate psychic lives" demonstrates a failure to engage with the bear as a being with its own unique experience, a failure that Cavell et al. (2008) argue is a fundamental ethical problem. The way Lou uses books to understand the bear, instead of engaging with the bear directly, shows the problem of using human rationality to understand animals, which is a main point of discussion within Cavell et al. (2008). The book encourages a move away from such detached, intellectualized views toward a more attentive and responsive relationship with animals.

Admittedly mimicking the life of Lord Byron, Prof. David Lurie rapes a vulnerable student, Melanie, who is thirty years younger, and treats her in almost the same manner as he does prostitutes, including Soraya. Dismissed from his job and disgraced, he escapes to his lesbian daughter Lucy's farm, where some native men gangrape Lucy and attempt to kill David by setting him on fire. Then, they kill Lucy's sheltered but caged dogs. In contrast to the native people's direct and intentional violence in their rape and killing of the dogs, David's work with Bev Shaw, a friend of Lucy's, involves keeping an animal shelter and euthanizing animals, which David then has to dispose of. In Disgrace, when they cannot find second homes for animals, save their lives, or bring them back to normal health, David and Bev at the Animal Welfare Society cease animal suffering by euthanizing them when community people bring their no longer desirable pets. We know that David and Bev's primary job at Animal Welfare is to provide shelters to animals, treat them well, bring back sick animals to normal health, and find new homes for them. Euthanasia that they feel they have to resort to is not an exception: They euthanize pet animals daily, at times, without trying all available options to save those animals. This, too, falls under the category of unintentional violence because David and Bev do not intend to harm animals. Terminating animal suffering by euthanasia or mercy killing is rationalized in the humanist paradigm, camouflaging violence. This paradigm undoubtedly guides Bev Shaw and David's actions. They are there to shelter animals. Even in sheltering, David and Bev put too many animals in tiny cages without sufficiently knowing the restrictions imposed on their movement, freedom, and natural habitat, as well as an adverse intervention on their food habits and immunity. As David seems to feel, though fleetingly only, life's exposure to the world and death when, on his way back from the Animal Welfare clinic, he has to "stop at the roadside to recover himself. Tears flow down his face that he cannot stop; his hands shake. He does not understand what is happening to him" (Engel, 1976, 143). David is "haunted" or "wounded" by the egregious negligence of his ethical responsibility. David keeps a resilient stray dog, one that loves music just like he does, from being euthanized; however, when push comes to shove, he declares, "Yes, I am giving him up," abandons the dog to Bev Shaw's euthanasia (Coetzee, 1999 p. 214).

Behind Lou's benevolent sheltering and feeding, in addition to making love to the bear, in Engel's Bear, behind Lucy's providing shelters to stray dogs, and underneath David and Bev's actions at the Welfare Clinic, in Coetzee's Disgrace, lie Plato's rational man (i.e. animal plus), Aristotle's political animal (again, animal plus), Descartes' reduction of animal, including human animality, to automaton or machine; and Kantian and Utilitarians' animal without any rational mind, without moral sense. They all indicate that animals deserve moral treatment only as surplus, at best, after caring for the human species. Most crucially, there is plenty of utilitarian bias in Levinas as well, the supposedly leading figure of humanist ethics, and in Heidegger, one can find a little bit of Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes. In the following sections, each of them is taken to critique how each character's unintended violence is guided, thus blindsided, by these philosophers' ideas, who either espoused those ideas to respond to and endorse the ethical ideas of their time or provide further reasons to approve of them. As their endorsement and furtherance of these ideas on animals permeate Western philosophy, they produce effects across disciplines and institutions,

including cultural practices. Lou in Engel's the Bear and Lucy, David, and Bev Shaw in Coetzee's Disgrace assume a higher position than their nonhuman animal counterparts when they show care for the animals without self-sacrificing but always calculate their gains. The apparent care under the guise of animal domestication, which approves and hides the violence, is most pronounced in both novels. As Haraway (2008) suggests, the human-animal relationship is often shaped by power dynamics, where acts of care serve as a means of maintaining control rather than fostering genuine ethical reciprocity. In both The Bear and Disgrace, the illusion of compassion operates as a mechanism that reinforces human authority, underscoring the tension between dominion and ethical responsibility in human-animal interactions.

Domestication of nonhuman animals is the common denominator in Engel's Bear and Coetzee's Disgrace. In Bear, Lou is "not fond of animals. Had had a puppy once and been much moved when he was run over but had not missed him. Had been annoyed by kittens but rather pleased by calves on a farm she visited once" (Engel, 1976, p. 32). In Disgrace, David's daughter Lucy keeps a shelter for stray dogs, and Bev Shaw runs an animal welfare clinic that euthanizes various domesticable pet animals daily (Coetzee, 1999). Domestication is the most obvious blindfold that prevents human animals from seeing any violence in their belief that they are being kind to their nonhuman counterparts when provided food and shelter. First, domestication is historically selective in cutting only usable nonhuman animals. For example, some fifteen thousand years ago, grey wolves were turned into dogs for human protection and hunting. Today, "there are more than 400 breeds of dog, all with specialized appearance and behavior, and all derived from the wolf" (DeMello, 1985, p. 85). The wolf's displacement was the first intentional violence in the interspecies relationship, and it caused and continues to cause many nonhuman animal species to lose their immunity and other survival skills due to their removal from their natural habitat. Being forced to be displaced and subsequently dependent on humans, these animals enormously suffer from a condition called "neoteny" (p. 89), losing their natural abilities to cope with their environment, both physically and emotionally. Over time, although the economy may no longer appear to be the primary determinant behind pet keeping, the pet industry works clandestinely. It ensures that its violence remains invisible to the public when it further dwarfs animals by genetic modification and cross-breeding. There is a consensus among animal researchers that "years of domestication have led to dogs losing the problem-solving skills they once had in the wild. In behavioral studies, pet dogs fail basic intelligence tests that wolves and wild dogs pass with ease" (p.89). Pet keeping for enjoyment "has generally been thought to be something that only humans do" (p.146). Behind the first domestication to the present culture of pet keeping lies the same belief in human exceptionalism and rationality.

To further highlight the issue of rationality, or human beings' exceptionality as rational animals, in Engel's Bear, the Cary estate known as the Pennarth is "a classic Fowler's octagon" (Engel, 1976, p. 22). Fowler, the phrenological designer of the Cary estate, engineered it in the shape of an octagon and "thought it [octagon] good for the brain" (p.36). Now, the answer to the question of whose brain and who the true occupant of the estate is supposed to be undoubtedly the bear, not only because the name Pennarth means "bear's head" (p. 63) but also because the bear has been the constant occupant of the estate for decades. The library, an orthodox "nineteenth-century collection" (p. 95), exemplifies, in Van Herk's words, nineteenth-century rationality (p.144), which is the lens that Lou, an archivist for Historical Institute, resorts to in her attempt to know about the bear. The estate's grocery supplier, Homer, informs her that the bear is always "there, it belongs to the place" (p.27). Lou is advised to treat the bear "like a dog" and feed him "dog chow" (p.27), as has always been the case. "The idea of the bear struck her as joyfully Elizabethan and exotic" (p.29), in the sense of the age of exploration, colonial expansion, and taking everything foreign as exotic to tame and master the animal. Lou whispers to herself that she will be "happy" "in her kingdom" (p.30). Lou's precondition for her relationship is that the bear has to be good: "She wondered if the bear would be a good company" (Engel, 1976, p. 31). The sole criterion on which Lou bases her relationship with the bear is that it has to be a good company for her benefit. She even blotches the bare minimum, the utilitarian notion of mutual benefits or reciprocity.

At a deeper level, she has hardly any affection or liking for any animal, and that indifference or apathy to a nonhuman animal may not be violence. Her lack of fondness for animals may have to do with her not noticing animals' pain and suffering. Sadly, she appears to be not even Kantian and utilitarian as having some ethical responsibility to the nonhuman animal, even as an indirect duty. Lou always feels she is innocent and cannot give more or do more to the bear; thus, her actions trigger accidental violence toward animals. Lou "had expected to be afraid of the bear, but… it was benevolent" (Engel, 1976, p. 33). Lou seeks reciprocity from the bear rather than accepting the bear as a singular bear, a singular plural and unique animal. Lou does show a certain degree of utilitarianism at certain moments. Pertinently, Bentham calls utility the central idea of his utilitarian philosophy: "By the 'principle of utility is meant the principle that approves or disapproves of every action according to the tendency it appears to have to increase or lessen-i.e., to promote or oppose-the happiness of the person or group whose interest is in question" (Bentham, 2007 p.7). Utilitarianism cares about the happiness of humans and the well-being of nonhuman animals. Indeed, Lou cares about herself only, however unintentionally, as she repeatedly screams that she loves the bear but on the condition that the bear shows her some human-like behaviors. Throughout Engel's Bear, Lou expects the bear to shed off his wildness, which is giving up its animality, and show human behavior toward her and enhance her enjoyment, while Lou is indifferent to the bear's desires. What Peter Singer, a prominent utilitarian rights activist, says further clarifies my point, "If a being is not capable of suffering, or of experiencing enjoyment or happiness, there is nothing to be taken into account. This is why the limit of sentience (...) is the only defensible boundary of concern for the interests of others" (p.50). In addition, a relationship would have no balance of giving and receiving. Lou thinks that each relationship would come in terms of her unique reciprocal balance, that it is for her benefit, and that she feels right to receive it back. Lou "wondered if the bear would be the good company" (Engel, 1976, p. 31). She anticipates giving and receiving equally and expects the same from the bear. This conditionality of "good company" sketches what counts and what does not for any basis of interspecies relationship. It runs through the human practices of domestication of nonhuman animals and almost all philosophical discourses on nonhuman animals.

Lou knows very little about animals. Her lack of fondness for animals, in general, may not appear to affect her relationship with the bear, but the way she hardly misses her pet dog "when he was run over" tells a lot about her "dubious beginning" (Engel, 1976, p. 32), as well as her equally dubious ending, with the bear. Lou's descriptions of the bear, how it appears to her at different moments, are testimony to the same effect: "dusty bulk of blackish fur" (p. 34); "sad eyes"; unmenacing; toys, "something fierce and ogreish in the woods"; "enormous," parasitically "hungry"; "passive" (p.35); "stupid and defeated," "not a handsome bear"; "fur coat" (p.47); "old man with fur cloak" (p.54); "cross between a king and a woodchuck" (p.55); "like a dog, like a groundhog, like a man: big" (p.91); and so on. Lou quickly wonders how and what the bear thinks but only quickly dismisses this question of the bear's good manner and obedience: "Whatever he thinks, she decided, he behaves very well" (p. 51). For her, nonhuman animals "were creatures. They were not human. She supposed their functions were defined by their brains' size, shape, and complications. She also supposed they led dim, flickering, inarticulate psychic lives" (p.60). Although discrimination against nonhuman animals runs throughout human history, within Western philosophy, it reaches the climax in Cartesian formalization, when nonhuman animals are rendered automata: "By appealing to a strict dualism, Descartes reduces animals to the pure mechanism and categorically rejects the idea that we do not have any kind of duties toward animals" (Steiner, 2005, 138). Descartes declares, "All other beings, even if they possess some kind of soul other than an immortal one, are consigned to serving human needs" (p.138). Descartes' point is very similar to Lou's behavior in Engel's Bear in her efforts to turn it into an anthropomorphic character. Lou thinks that the bear is "not handsome" (Engel, 1976, p. l 35) and thinks further, "It would not be [handsome] if it always lived at the end of that chain. She thought briskly of restoring some gloss to it, taking it for walks" (p.36). By restoring glossiness to the bear, she believes she will be doing some favor to the bear, but she intends to please her visual sense by turning the bear into her sense of being handsome. Not knowing what is good for the bear, Lou's human kindness toward the bear underlies inevitably unintended violence. She still has not fathomed what it means to release the bear from the chain and liberate him from human violence. In the first encounter, she finds the

bear "not at all menacing" and decides she "can manage him" (p.36). For her, ironically, freeing the bear from the chain means managing it. Homer warns her not "to get soft with it" because "it is a wild critter after all" (p. 40). Only after the native woman assures Lou that the bear is good and that it likes her does she pluck her courage to take the bear for a walk the first time while still keeping it tied by the chain (Engel, 1976, p. 50). She reigns it with the rein tied to it. As Lou takes him to the water for play, she is concerned that she might be dragged around, but "when he reached the end of his chain, he backed up" (Engel, 1976, p. 51). As she feels victorious, she lets him walk free of chains on their way home. All this she does is brush him to bring gloss in the fur, make him handsome to her eyes, and turn him into a qualified candidate for her bestial desires. In the subsequent returns to the water, the bear is back in chain and "simply followed her docilely when she tugged his chain" (p.54). Only whenever she needs the bear for physical intimacy she lets it come out of the leashes. Once the bear tries to sleep upstairs by the fire, Lou sends him back to the squalid shed, the bear's designated station (p.57). The bear remains on the leashes from the first meeting until the end. She takes him to swim but keeps the bear tied to a pole during the swim, endangering its life. The bear remains in the chain while eating and resting as well. When she takes the bear on a visit to the native woman, the bear remains "on the chain" (Engel, 1976, p.86). The bear gets to come out of the chain only when Lou is in the mood to indulge in bestiality.

Lou describes the bear's "sad eyes" (Engel, 1976, p. 34), but if she knew the sadness or vulnerability of the Other, she would probably treat it as another mortal being that suffers as much as she does. That might lead to a moment of reckoning, an awakening. In Bear, Lou scans through the Linnaean system (p.43). Agamben's Open: Man and Animal mentions Carl Linnaeus' work (p.23). Agamben (2004) borrows the idea of Linnaeus, who rejects the Cartesian theory of animals as automata mechanica that animals operate on only bodily and mechanical principles. The bear's sad eyes do not yield any response as if it were faceless, in Levinas' sense. Without being able to elicit any response from Lou, the bear for her is no more than Cartesian automata, which has no speech. Lou's perception of her burgeoning relationship with the bear as 'friendship' (Engel, 1976, p. 46) reveals a misinterpretation rooted in anthropomorphism. By expecting the bear to reciprocate her actions according to human expectations, Lou exemplifies a problematic form of utilitarianism, similar to that critiqued by Tom Regan, where the recipient of 'good' treatment is expected to adhere to human-defined 'proper' behavior. This dynamic underscores a deeper issue: the domestication of animals is not merely a matter of physical control but is fundamentally driven by a 'metaphysical violence'-the hierarchical construction of human superiority over animals, as discussed by Gary Steiner (2005). Building upon Steiner's analysis of anthropocentric thought, it can be argued that metaphysical violence precedes and justifies physical acts of domestication, reinforcing speciesist hierarchies that sustain human dominance over animals. This perspective highlights how speciesism and anthropomorphism subtly operate to maintain the subordination of nonhuman beings, presenting domestication as an act of care while masking underlying power asymmetries. As Donaldson and Kymlicka (2020) argue, domestication is a political structure that positions animals within human frameworks of meaning and control, often denying them autonomous existence.

In The Bear, Lou's domestication of the bear appears to challenge conventional human-animal boundaries. Yet, it ultimately reaffirms human authority by reducing the animal to an object of personal exploration rather than recognizing it as a subject with its agency. This critique extends beyond interspecies relations, as Almiron (2016) suggests that the logic of domestication parallels historical patterns of human oppression, where mechanisms of control and exploitation operate across species boundaries. While seemingly transgressive, Lou's relationship with the bear mirrors broader societal structures in which power over the 'other'-whether animal or human-is normalized through narratives of care and intimacy. Thus, the novel exposes the paradox of domestication: while it blurs human-animal distinctions, it simultaneously reinforces the very hierarchies it appears to disrupt. In this sense, while appearing transgressive, Lou's relationship with the bear ultimately reaffirms human dominance by positioning the animal as an object within her personal narrative rather than recognizing its autonomous existence. Right from the first meeting, what stands out for Lou about the bear is its "long, thin, ant-eater's tongue" (Engel,

1976, p. 35). When the bear eats its food, she watches the bear's tongue with intrigue and fascination, craving to let it taste her body parts. Lou often lets the bear lick her hand with "a long, ridged, curling tongue" (p. 42). It is the bear's tongue that irresistibly ignites her sexual arousal and does most of the work on her body. The bear's tongue, as if made for licking her, is a "fat, freckled, pink and black tongue… It probed. It felt very warm and good and strange. What the hell did Byron do with his bear? . . . She might have been a flea he was searching for. He licked her nipples stiff and scoured her navel. …When she came [climaxed], she whimpered, and the bear licked away her tears. (p. 93) After she makes love to the bear, she checks her conscience to see "if she felt evil. She felt loved" (Engel, 1976, p. 94), but she never thinks about what the bear feels or if it is loved the same way or not. When Lou holds the bear's "big, furry, asymmetrical balls in her hands, she played with them, slipping them gently inside their cases as he licked. His prick did not come out of its long cartilaginous sheath" (Engel, 1976, p.111), evidently suggesting her inability to feel what the bear feels. However, she continues, "She took off her clothes. He began his assiduous licking. He licked her armpits and the line between her breasts that smelled of sweat" (p.115). Like any humanist human, one who believes in biological continuism, Lou is never able to retrieve her lost animality in her reduction of animality to mere sexuality. She presumes the bear's silence to be consensual sex: "She had to cajole and persuade him. She put honey on herself and whispered to him, but once the honey was gone, he wandered off, farting and too soon satisfied" (p.115). Even when she uses the trickery of putting honey on her body to lure the bear for licking, she fails but persists, "Eat me, bear," but the bear does not oblige her begging; instead, it falls asleep (p.115). Shortly after, on another occasion, she tries one more time, "His prick was thick, protected, buried in its sheath. She got down on her knees and played with it, but it did not rise" (p.119). She turns the simple act of feeding into sexual titillation, innuendo, or foreplay: "One morning she got on her hands and knees, and they shared their cornflakes and powdered milk and raspberries. Their strange tongues met, and she shuddered" (p.121).

Lou always wants to have intercourse with the bear in the afternoon, as if it were her sex toy, and she dreams of having a baby with him: "She lay naked, panting, wanting to be near her lover, wanting to offer him her two breasts and her womb, almost believing that he could impregnate her with the twin heroes that would save her tribe" (p.121). In an attempt to have coitus, "she mounted him [bear]. Nothing happened. He could not penetrate her, and she could not get him in. . . . He was quite unmoved. (Engel, 1976, p. 122). When Lou fails to have intercourse with the bear, it is no more good company; undomesticated, it is sent to bed without food, displaying calculation devoid of ethics. Lou's persistent attempts to impose her human understanding of sexuality onto the bear and her frustration with his lack of reciprocation illustrate the very problem Calarco (2008) addresses in Zoographies: the difficulty of truly encountering the animal outside anthropocentric frameworks. The way Lou reduces the bear to a sexual object and her inability to accept that the bear does not share her sexual desires speaks to the limitations of human understanding when it comes to the "question of the animal," as Calarco (2008) explores in his analysis of the philosophical attempts to define and understand the animal. The narrative shows how Lou's actions show a failure to truly encounter the bear as an animal and instead force a human idea of sexuality upon it, as Calarco's (2008) work shows, which is a common problem in the philosophical understanding of animals. Unlike those who indulge in intentional and brutal violence, Lou may not want to wear "circles of animals eating each other around her neck to church"; she may not use the bear's "guts for my windowpanes or his shoulder blades to cut my grass" (Engel, 1976, p. 127), but underneath her attempt to "love him" lurks bestial violence that she is never aware of. In her last sexual act, the bear's clear response of ripping the skin off her back sends her into flight. When the bear moves its leg and almost breaks "her arm," she instantly declares the relationship between them is over, "It is over. You have to go to your place and I to mine" (p.131). The bear tears "the skin on her back" (p.131) in a bearish way, and when she feels "blood running down her back (p.132), she shouts at the bear to "get out" and bolts the door behind it. Instead of acknowledging her abuse, which she always mistakes to be love, she bemoans that one bad "gesture" from the bear breaks "the high, whistling communion that had bound them during the summer" (p.134). This highlights a potential failure to recognize the bear as an individual with its own needs and experiences, which aligns with the need for a stronger theoretical basis for animal rights that Nussbaum discusses. (Nussbaum, 2000). Engel's critics almost invariably interpret her feelings in the aftermath to be Lou's renewal of

self, specifically focusing on this line: "The breath of kind beasts was upon her. She felt pain, but it was a dear, sweet pain that belonged not to mental suffering, but to the earth" (Engel, 1976, p.136). However, the fact is that there is no hint of remorse; instead, she appears jubilant. Humanists would likely say that she is renewed and rejuvenated due to the bruise of the beast, so it is all good. For them, there is no foul play or harm to the bear. When it comes time to leave, Lou easily breaks her promise to keep the bear "safe from strangers and peering eyes forever" (Engel, 1976, p.111). Her reaffirmation of the vow cannot be taken more than an attempt to lure the bear by reducing animality to sexuality, "I will not ever go away. I shall make myself strange garments out of fur to stay with you in the winter. I will not ever, ever, leave you" (p.113). Leaving the bear behind, she falsely feels redeemed that the claw "healed [her] guilt. She felt strong and pure" (Engel, 1976, p.140). In her final thought, she only calculates how much she has gained: That she feels "strong and pure" draws upon the ratio, therefore rationality, to which only man is a rational animal or zoon logon ekhon.

Even at the time of Lou's departure from the island, the bear remains unliberated. She asks Joe, another native, whether he will "kill him when Lucy goes," and Joe assures her that he will not unless the bear is "sick. We do not eat bear paws anymore. Anyways, Lucy will make us promise" (Engel, 1976, p. 138). And her last action: "She went up to him [the bear] and gently put his chain on (p.138). That possibility of the bear's killing, if it becomes sick, is not different from euthanasia, which plays a central role In Coetzee's Disgrace: David and Bev Shaw perform euthanasia when sick, fragile, old, ugly, and obeisant pets are brought to the Animal Welfare clinic. They do this under the skewed assumption of ending animal suffering. Lou in Engel's Bear similarly abandons the bear, while David in Coetzee's Disgrace abandons the one music-loving dog. Engel's Lou in Bear and Coetzee's David in Disgrace seem to feel what Diamond calls "wounded" for their inability to respond to the ethical call of the animal adequately. They continue to suffer from mixed feelings toward wild or domesticated animals because of their inability to measure the amount of wrong done to animals. They are haunted by anthropocentrism, anthropomorphism, and humanism, even when they want to do good to the animal. To reintroduce the issue of domestication and tie it with another novel, since the first Colonel first domesticated the bear, "There had always, it seemed, been a bear" (Engel, 1976, p. 26). The native woman, Lucy Leroy, a hundred years old, "looked after the bear after the Colonel died." When Lou looks up at Cary's framed portrait on the wall and looks down at the bear, "she felt she was their inheritor: a woman rubbing her foot in the thick black pelt of a bear was more than they could have imagined. More, too, than a military victory" (p.57). The very keeping of the bear is described in the novel as an act of Colonel Cary's efforts to follow Lord Byron's footsteps. Similarly, in Coetzee's Disgrace, the same image of Lord Byron provides a model for David's lifestyle. In this sense, there is a connection between David in Coetzee's Disgrace and the first Colonel in Engel's Bear. Lou, too, follows the same frivolity and looks at the bear's dance as if "Byron's bear danced" (p.115). Her vanity hardly knows any of the underlying harm. Like Colonel Cary, Lou is not "connected to anything" (Engel, 1976, p.84), and the same disconnection is the similarity between Coetzee's David and Engel's Lou.

David solves his "problem of sex" through sex obsession, debauchery, nymphomania, and Byronic perversion (Coetzee, 1999, p.84). In other words, his solution is the problem. His sexuality or sexual abuse is his animal abuse. He purchases this abuse by hiring prostitutes. There is no love in this lovemaking, merely substituting his sexual desire with the unemotional sexual act. Moreover, for that, his purchasing power can enact violence upon another body without really caring about the other. What makes this worse is that David is as old as Soraya's father, in that satisfaction is only for himself, and disappointment is for the other. He has received her service for a year now. The reason is that she is "quiet and docile" (Engel, 1976, p.1), evoking nonhuman animals, like the docility of Lou's bear. Not only Soraya but also other students are described as "the tame ones, the passive, the docile" (p.37), among whom is David's rape victim Melanie, who is domesticable or animalized in Agamben's sense. Like Engel's Bear, Coetzee's Disgrace is replete with instances of humans' inability to recognize violence on animals while trying to do good to them. Many types of pets are brought to the Animal Welfare Center for euthanasia. Perhaps pet-keeping as a form of domestication is one of the most blatant types of unintended violence. While on the surface, human

beings may be altruistic or benevolent toward animals, underneath their apparent love lies the unintended violence of depriving animals of their natural habitat as well as weakening their ability to survive in the wilderness, thus taking away their natural immunity to fight diseases and their ability to live adverse weather conditions. The dog species is central in Coetzee's novel and a remarkably curious case in that it was a different species some 15,000 years before human domestication (DeMello, 2021, p. 85). Now, the pet industry produces "more than 400 breeds of dogs" by genetic modification, reducing or eliminating their immunity for the sake of human aesthetics (p. 85). Pet keepers may feel that they are doing a favor to animals by giving them food and shelter, but they are accomplices to the pet industry. The pet industry follows what pet keepers want-docile, harmless, and pretty animals. In Coetzee's Disgrace, many animals, not just dogs and sheep, are brought to the Animal Welfare clinic because the owners find their pets either too old, weak, unhealthy, disobedient, excessively reproductive, or for budgetary reasons. "The dogs are brought to the clinic because they are unwanted: because we are too menny (Coetzee, 1999, p. 146). Despite making the case that suffering should be grounds for ethics, Bentham suggests that an animal's death is easy if it dies at human hands since that would be quick and painless (p. 307). His idea coincides with the thought of David and Bev Shaw's work at the Animal Welfare Center to euthanize animals.

When the natives come to terrify David and to domesticate Lucy as an animal of the place, they not only rape Lucy but kill her caged dogs, "The corpses of the dogs lie in the cage where they fell. The bulldog Katy is still around: they catch a glimpse of her skulking near the stable, keeping her distance" (Coetzee, 1999, p.108). To critically examine the situation there, the policemen do not hold the body to feel the real pain of the dogs. Firstly, the dogs' killers are ignored, and policemen hardly think of giving justice to nonhuman animals. Next, even if they were to punish the human criminals for killing those dogs, they would be punished for destroying human property but certainly not for killing nonhuman animals. These police officers do not raise the question of life or murder, as those terms are reserved for human beings alone. For the law and society, the irreplaceable loss of all Lucy's dogs is simply the loss of her property. Therefore, the lack of removal of hats as a gesture of respect is to refrain from dignifying animal death, as if following Heidegger's command that animals do not die but simply perish. In Coetzee's Disgrace, even often aloof, David can see that the "two young sheep are tethered all day beside the stable on a bare patch of ground" (Coetzee, 1999, p.123). Petrus believes he provides animals shelter, food, water, and other necessary care, particularly his sheep. Generally, from a layman's point of view, Petrus seems to be providing a kind of justice to these animals, but he is unaware of violating their movement, freedom, natural habitat, food habit, and even their grief and pain. He uses rope or chains to fasten animals together, which restricts their range of movement. David asks Petrus if "we could tie them [sheep] where they can graze?" (p.123). Here, David thinks tying the sheep in a green area could be helpful for them by feeding on their own. Providing food, David thinks, is being kind to these innocent animals without caring about their violation of freedom of movement. He might believe that he has been preventing sheep from hurting each other, ramming another neighboring sheep.

A loose sheep can seriously injure another who cannot defend himself and cause a wreck as the injured sheep seeks to escape the attack. These activities of David's do cause unintentional violence to nonhuman animals without his knowledge of engaging in uncanny violence. Due to being tied almost all the time, these sheep's problem-solving skills may have been severely compromised, just like Lucy's caging of dogs in the name of sheltering them. DeMello's point is noteworthy here: "Researchers believe that years of domestication lead to dogs losing the problem-solving skills they once had in the wild. In behavioral studies, pet dogs fail basic intelligence tests that wolves and wild dogs pass with ease" (Demello, 2012, p.89). This is also the case with sheep as well. Thus, the character, David, does serious unintentional violence to those sheep without acknowledging their serious harm on the other side. This scenario brings to light the central questions explored in Atterton and Calarco's (2004) Animal Philosophy: Essential Readings in Continental Thought, where the ethical implications of human-animal interactions, particularly concerning freedom and constraint, are thoroughly examined. The idea that well-intentioned actions can inadvertently impose violence on animals by restricting their natural behaviors and habitats is a key theme discussed by the continental philosophers presented in Atterton and Calarco (2004). Similarly,

David's actions in Disgrace (Coetzee, 1999) offer a practical illustration of the complexities of human understanding, showing different possible ways humans can wrongly interpret animal needs and well-being. This issue of how humans interpret is part of a more general philosophical discussion about the nature of animal life, ethics, and our relationship with animals. (Cavell, S., Clark, J. M., Diamond, C., & Lerman, J., 2008). Additionally, it challenges traditional anthropocentric views, highlighting the complexity of understanding and respecting animal autonomy, directly relevant to David's limited perspective on the sheep's well-being (Atterton & Calarco, 2004).

According to Agamben, the anthropological machine is the cause of the divide between human and nonhuman animals (Agamben, 2004, p.92). This machine creates, recreates, and imposes the dichotomies between humans and nonhuman animals. He divides machines into ancient and modern. Ancient anthropological machines regard people as slaves or animals in the form of humans without being completely human. Likewise, in modern machines, he regards people in the form of animals without realizing that they are animals. Therefore, this anthropological machine is deeply rooted in human culture and society. In addition, this has become a norm in our society. Thus, it is the cause of the divide between humans and nonhuman animals. This keeps humans at the center and animals at the margin. So, anthropological machines should be jammed to reduce the gap between humans and nonhuman animals. This concept of blurring the lines between humans and animals resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's (G., & Guattari, F., 2004) idea of "becoming," which explores the possibility for people to establish a meaningful relationship, understanding, or bond with and understand nonhuman animals by surpassing limitation regarding the idea of fixed identities. Avoiding the divide between humans and animals will reduce unintentional violence toward animals. Agamben's jamming anthropological machine could be one way to address the problem of violence against nonhuman animals, both unintentionally and intentionally, in that conceptual intervention could pave the way for the beginning of the betterment of animals' lives. After jamming the machine, in the future community or community-to-come, the human and the animal would be the same in the sense that bare life and political life would overlap. Agamben envisions a future where natural law and common law would become indistinguishable, and justice would no longer be partial. That would be the recognition of animals in man or the first step toward establishing an interspecies community where the human animals would be in equal relation to other species. That is a community to come. Since we are still trapped in the humanist conception of humans, thus falling into the domestication of all types, we need to go beyond humanism, which goes beyond the humanist idea of all-knowing humans and reconfiguring humans in their animality. This all-knowing human would suppose that he fully recognizes all other species and the world, at least assuming that everything is knowable to him. This error is another reason behind unintended violence against nonhuman animals, though this also lurks behind intended violence. Those who keep and domesticate pet animals are guided by the wrong belief that they are doing good to nonhuman animals.

3. Solution

For any basis of viable solutions, we need to make amendments to the humanist philosophers' errors that run from Aristotle through Heidegger. Derrida's proposal of the concept of animot and radical justice may be the strongest path forward in mitigating animal violence, especially the unintended kind. Human beings are guilty of lumping together multitudes of animals into the same realm of animals. His concept of "animot" destabilizes the divide between humans and animals (Derrida, 2008, p. 37). Since there are more differences between animals and animals and among humans as well, this paper argues that, following Derrida, it is necessary to multiply the difference rather than erase it. The multiplication of differences among species will recognize that each species is unique and singular and that no conceptual machinery of one species, for example, an anthropological machine, will be able to discriminate against other species based on capacities or otherwise. In other words, multiplication will open up the possibility of justice.

Derrida puts forward a pathway to recognize the "heterogeneous multiplicity of the living." (Derrida, 2008, p.31). This identification can happen only from outside the anthropological machine, using Agamben's phrase again, i.e., when species are no longer balanced between natural and political life (p. 25). Every living being is singularly multiple, a singular multiple like Chimera. Derrida also declares that humanist humans uncover the monstrous multiplicity, and if we prefer to be ethical, we have to learn how to love this monstrous multiplicity. Absolute justice is about responding to the call of the "monstrously other," which can only begin if we recognize the multiplicity of animals (Derrida, 2008, p. 54). To multiply species is to be understood as recognition of existing multiplicity, which is to question the arbitrary divide between the man and the animal, one species vs. the rest of all other species, and one human species vs. trillion nonhuman species. The multiplication of differences among species will recognize that each species is unique and singular and that no conceptual machinery of one species, for example, anthropological machines, will be able to discriminate against other species based on capacities or otherwise. In other words, multiplication will open up the possibility of justice. Human beings fail to recognize unintentional violence because they see the ontological difference between human and nonhuman animals. Derrida makes the point that there is no distinction between animals and humans concerning incapacities, though each is heterogeneously singular and unique. Compared to all other philosophers, Derrida and Agamben have been found to be the sure guide to propose the basis for solutions to address the problem of animal violence.

4. Conclusion

My findings suggest that if a human character sees her animality, therefore sharing the animality with nonhuman animals, sharing the finitude that all animals suffer, it would probably be the first step toward recognizing the violence against nonhuman animals in humanist benevolence. The best possible solutions could be constructed out of Agamben's idea of jamming anthropological machines and Derrida's radical justice. If Agamben's theory calls for rigorously challenging anthropocentrism, humanism, speciesism, utilitarianism, and discriminative animal representations, Derrida's theory of justice calls for ethical responsibility to the animal other. The concept of animot is Derrida's way to alleviate the use of depoliticization of nonhuman animals. While scrutinizing animot, Derrida uses the term finitude, that every living being is mortal and that absolute justice has to be unconditionally offered to all living creatures, primarily to the most vulnerable and monstrously other. However, Derrida cautions us that even when the animal is liberated into "multiple animot," the human is always there tracking them, categorizing and domesticating them (2008, p. 38). Even if all truth claims are disavowed in this autobiography (the autography that humanist humans write about animals), the risk of metaphysical taming or anthropocentrism remains but without its teeth to bite or hurt universally. The point is that anthropocentrism may not be completely eradicated, but it can be weakened, thus affecting some mitigation or alleviation of animal suffering. This exploration of challenging anthropocentrism and speciesism aligns with Cary Wolfe's (2003) critique of the "discourse of species" and his posthumanist project. The idea that recognizing our shared "finitude" with nonhuman animals is a crucial step in ethical responsibility is central to Wolfe's (2010) argument that posthumanism involves a fundamental re-evaluation of the human's place in the world and a movement away from human exceptionalism. This aligns with Darwin's (C., 2004) work in The Descent of Man, which, although it does not directly address animal rights, laid the groundwork for understanding the continuity between humans and other animals. His idea suggests that humans are not as distinct from the animal kingdom. Darwin's emphasis on shared ancestry and biological similarities challenges a strict adherence to rules, laws, or any guidelines that shape anthropocentric views. His idea can be seen as an early foundational step towards recognizing a shared vulnerability or "finitude." The idea that anthropocentrism may not be eradicated but weakened is also in line with the idea that posthumanism is a process and not a state of being.

Finally, by employing a critical philosophical lens to examine unintentional animal violence, the approach used here moves beyond vivid descriptions of physical abuse. Explicitly linking literary representations to foundational philosophical concepts, such as Cartesian dualism, speciesism, etc., reveals how these ideas perpetuate a blind spot, masking important but harmful details of our actions. This is making it hard for us to

comprehend the ethical implications. Precisely, the way that appears to be true as benign actions appear on the surface. Moreover, the issue raised here is a less researched area, so the analysis in this essay provides a more nuanced and insightful understanding of how similar violence is enabled in our day-to-day activities.

References

[1] Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, Stanford University Press, pp. 1-119, 2004.[Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[2] NuÌ ria Almiron, "Beyond Anthropocentrism: Critical Animal Studies and the Political Economy of Animal Exploitation," *The Political Economy of Communication*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 17-30, 2016. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[3] Aristotle, *Complete Works of Aristotle, Volume 2: The Revised Oxford Translation*, REV-Revised, Princeton University Press, 1985. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[4] Matthew Calarco, and Peter Atterton, *Animal Philosophy: Essential Readings in Continental Thought*, Continuum, 2004. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[5] Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Dover Publications, 2007. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[6] Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida*, Columbia University Press, 2008. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[7] Stanley Cavell et al., *Philosophy and Animal Life*, Columbia University Press, 2009. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[8] J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace*, Penguin Publishing Group, pp. 1-220, 1999. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[9] Charles Darwin, Adrian Desmond, and James Moore, *The Descent of Man: Selection in Relation to Sex*, Penguin Classics, pp. 1-864, 2004. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[10] Gilles Deleuze, and Felix Guattari, *Becoming-Animal*, Animal Philosophy: Readings in Continental Philosophy, Continuum, pp. 87-100, 2004. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[11] Margo DeMello, *Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human-Animal Studies*, Columbia University Press, 2021. [CrossRef] [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[12] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I am*, Fordham University Press, pp. 1-192, 2008. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[13] Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign*, University of Chicago Press, vol. 1, pp. 1-368, 2010. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[14] Rene Descartes, *Animals are Machines*, Animal Rights and Human Obligations, pp. 13-19, 1989. [Google Scholar]

[15] Sue Donaldson, and Will Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights*, Oxford University Press, pp. 1-317, 2011. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[16] Donald S. Hair, "Marian Engel's "Bear"," *Canadian Literature*, vol. 92, pp. 34-45, 1982. [Go ogle Scholar]

[17] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, University of Minnesota Press, pp. 1-360, 2008. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[18] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, Indiana University Press, pp. 1-400, 1995. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[19] C. Nussbaum, *Animal Rights: The Need for a Theoretical Basis*, pp. 1506-1549, 2000. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[20] Tom Regan, Utilitarianism, Vegetarianism, and Animal Rights, *Philosophy & Public Affairs,* vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 305-324, 1980. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[21] Tom Regan, and Peter Singer, *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*, 1989. [Google Scholar]

[22] Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-323, 2011. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[23] Gary Steiner, *Anthropocentrism and its Discontents*, University of Pittsburgh Press, pp. 1-323, 2005. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[24] A. Van Herk, *Afterword*, M. Engel, Bear, McClelland & Stewart, pp. 143-147, 1990.

[25] Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-252, 2003. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]

[26] Cary Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism*, University of Minnesota Press, vol. 8, pp. 1-283, 2010. [Google Scholar] [Publisher Link]