

# BETWEEN THE SPECIES

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## The Ethic of Care and the Problem of Wild Animals

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Recently, a number of feminists concerned with the welfare of nonhuman animals have challenged the prevailing approaches to animal defense theory. A collection of essays, *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethisic for the Treatment of Animals*, challenges the "rights" or "justice" approaches usually taken by animal defense theories, most notably those of Peter Singer and Tom Regan, and argues in favor of an ethic of care for our relations to nonhuman animals. This work arises out of feminist discussions over the past fifteen years of the "feminine" ethic of care and its relationship to the "masculine" ethic of justice. Those writing in *Beyond Animal Rights* have extended this discussion by recognizing that the care-justice debate is important not only for relationships among humans but for human relationships to nonhumans as well. For what has been called the ethic of justice in this discussion is in fact the rationalistic and individualistic approach to morality that has long been taken to be the moral point of view in the Western tradition. According to its critics, this moral point of view has resulted in our culture's subordination and devaluation not only of women, but of nonhuman animals and nature as well. If this is the case, then Singer's and Regan's extensions of the ethic of justice to include nonhuman animals, however well-intentioned, are doomed to failure because they are part of a larger paradigm contrary to these goals.

In this essay, I will examine the claim that an ethic of care is preferable to an ethic of justice for our relationships with nonhuman animals. To limit my discussion, I will focus on our obligations to animals, even though there are obviously important questions about our obligations to nonanimal members of the biotic community, and I will focus on the morality of eating animals, even though this is only one of many important moral questions about our treatment of nonhuman animals. While I regard the care proposal as promising, I will argue that the distinction between domestic and wild animals raises an important problem for it: while the ethic of care seems to fit our interactions with domestic animals well, it is at best unclear how it might guide our interactions with wild animals. I will consider three different alternative moral approaches to wild animals: a holistic environmentalist approach, an individualistic justice approach, and a justice approach in interaction with and influenced by a care approach. By drawing on the lessons of the recent care/justice debate regarding human-to-human relations, I will show that the third of these alternatives works best. Because I do not regard care and justice as dichotomous, I see this not as a rejection of the thesis of *Beyond Animal Rights* but as a sympathetic extension of it.

The "Introduction" to *Beyond Animal Rights* provides four reasons for thinking that an ethic of care is more appropriate for our relationships to nonhuman animals than an ethic

of justice (or, what is generally considered the same thing, a rights theory).<sup>[1]</sup> First, an ethic of justice "envisages a society of rational, autonomous, independent agents whose property is entitled to protection from external agents" (Donovan and Adams 1996, 14), and thus uses rationality as a test of moral considerability, a test which nonhumans are likely to fail. On the other hand, the ethic of care focuses on relationships *between* individuals rather than on separate individual identities, and thus requires no such test of rationality for moral considerability. Second, an ethic of justice "presumes a society of equal autonomous agents, who require little support from others, who need only that their space be protected from others' intrusions" (Donovan and Adams 1996, 15). But humans and animals are in most ways *unequals*, and thus better fit into the care model which assumes an inherent inequality between carer and cared-for. Third, an ethic of justice is a rationalistic approach, prioritizing reason and suppressing emotion-based appeals for animal welfare. However, feelings play a central role in human relationships to animals, and the ethic of care regards feelings as morally relevant and informative. Finally, an ethic of justice tends to be abstract and formalistic, focusing on universal rules of morality, while our complex relationships with nonhuman animals seem better accounted for by the ethic of care's contextual approach focusing on the particulars of given situations.

These objections to exclusively justice-oriented approaches are valuable. The extent to which prevailing approaches to animal welfare are *exclusively* justice-oriented and thus problematic is evident in Singer's and Regan's insistence that moral arguments must not appeal to our feelings about animals. Singer begins his book *Animal Liberation* with an anecdote about a woman he met who described herself as an animal lover even as she offered Singer a ham sandwich. While acknowledging that many people have strong feelings for nonhuman animals that *may* move them to act in defense of animals, both Singer and Regan regard this woman's inconsistency as typical of a feeling-based approach to ethics. They hold that in general, our feelings lead us to be biased toward those close to us--toward pets, for instance, or, more generally, toward humans--instead of to recognize injustice however near or far from us it occurs. Instead of appealing to emotions, Singer's and Regan's arguments appeal to the purely rational demand for consistency. For instance, they appeal to so-called borderline cases--human beings of severely diminished capacities who we nonetheless count fully in our moral thinking. If these individuals are fully morally considerable, the argument goes, then consistency demands that we likewise count nonhumans of like capacities as fully morally considerable. This sort of argument uses the purely rational demand for consistency to extend the borders of moral considerability far beyond the starting point of human beings. Yet the success of this attempt to banish appeals to feelings from moral argumentation comes into question when we ask how this starting point was justified in the first place: How are we sure that all human beings are entitled to full moral considerability? Are

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<sup>[1]</sup>I do not believe that the following account of the distinction between the ethic of justice and the ethic of care is adequate; it is, however, the account that tends to be presupposed in the recent justice/care debate. The standard versions of these ethics tend to be rather extreme, or ideal-type, versions that are not necessarily defended by any moral philosophers in exactly these forms. Part of what I try to do, here and elsewhere, is to show the problems with these extreme versions of the ethics.

there purely rational grounds for this claim, or, more likely, does this claim depend on a basic feeling or conviction we share about the importance of human beings? In fact, it would be hard to find a moral argument that does not make a crucial appeal to emotion--it's just that sometimes emotions are so widely shared that they seem unquestionable, and thus somehow rational. Our feelings may not provide infallible moral guidance, but sometimes they are all we have to appeal to. Perhaps, then, we ought to proceed not by banishing feelings from our moral considerations on the grounds that they are unreliable, but by paying *more* attention both to our feelings *and* to the mechanisms by which they are and can be socially manipulated (Luke 1995 &1996). As the authors of *Beyond Animal Rights* point out, this is an approach that the ethic of care is much more attuned to than the ethic of justice.

While the ethic of care is certainly a promising approach to our relationships with nonhuman animals in this and other ways detailed in *Beyond Animal Rights*, there is a difficulty with this approach left largely unaddressed by these authors. That is, the arguments in this book make domestic animals the paradigm, and it seems at least possible that they work *only* for domestic animals. We can see this by returning to the four arguments offered in the book's "Introduction."

First, the ethic of justice is said to be inappropriate for our dealings with nonhuman animals because it "envisages a society of rational, autonomous, independent agents whose territory or property is entitled to protection from external agents" (Donovan and Adams 1996, 14). Without addressing the difficult issue of the rationality of nonhuman animals, the autonomy and independence of at least wild animals can be and has been defended. In fact, environmental ethicists have long emphasized the difference between wild and domestic animals along these lines: Aldo Leopold wrote that the essence of environmental ethics was "reappraising things unnatural, tame, and confined in terms of things natural, wild, and free" (Callicott 1992, 67). According to environmental ethicist J. Baird Callicott, wild animals are autonomous and independent, while domestic animals are human creations which are *metaphysically* unfree. By this Callicott means that domestic animals are nothing but what we have selectively bred them to be, such that it is as meaningless to speak of *setting free* domestic animals as it would be to speak of setting free a chair. Callicott and other environmental ethicists may be speaking of autonomy in a different sense than the rational autonomy used as a criterion by those defending an ethic of justice, but in any case it seems at least somewhat appropriate to think of human relationships with *wild* animals in terms of a society of independent agents whose territory is entitled to protection from others.

The second argument against the justice approach to nonhuman animals likewise seems to apply to domestic rather than to wild animals. Again, the ethic of justice "presumes a society of equal autonomous agents, who require little support from others, who need only that their space be protected from others' intrusions." The editors of *Beyond Animal Rights* continue: "But domestic animals, in particular, are dependent for survival upon humans. We therefore have a situation of unequals, and need to develop an ethic that recognizes this fact" (Donovan and Adams 1996, 15). Clearly, in this argument domestic animals are taken as paradigmatic, for wild animals are certainly not dependent for survival upon humans, at least not upon human *support*. Instead, they are dependent upon humans' putting an end to destruction of natural habitats, or on humans' *restraint*. In fact,

just as the ethic of justice would say, it seems that they *do* need only that their space be protected from others' intrusions. While domestic animals depend upon human support, wild animals would most benefit from the disappearance of humans entirely.

Even the argument about the role of emotion in moral argument seems to work better in domestic than in wild contexts. This is evident in "The Caring Sleuth: Portrait of an Animal Rights Activist," in which Kenneth Shapiro discusses the crucial role of sympathy in moral considerations about animals. He quotes Helen Jones, founder of the International Society for Animal Rights, who wrote that:

My first awareness of animal suffering was at the age of four or five. My mother took me to a zoo. As we entered we saw a large white rabbit, transfixed with fear, in a cage with a snake. Within a second or two the snake began swallowing the rabbit. . . My mother never again entered a zoo. I did, many years later, only to collect evidence for a legal case (Shapiro 1996, 130).

Jones experienced a sympathy for the rabbit that many of us share. But in a certain sense this sympathy is odd. After all, snakes *do* eat rabbits, however upsetting it is for us to see a rabbit be eaten, and we certainly cannot legitimately condemn snakes for this behavior, nor can we hope to protect rabbits from this fate. Or, we can only protect rabbits from this fate in places like zoos, when they are rabbits we take into our protection. But it does not seem that our sympathetic reaction to the rabbit in this situation is dependent on the fact that this rabbit is in a zoo. That is, it seems as if the sympathies to which the ethic of care appeals might be more relevant for domestic than for wild animals. As Callicott puts it, in the wild, the fundamental fact of life is eating *and being eaten*, but our sympathies would seem to be out of line with this fact, such that there are good reasons *not* to act on our sympathies for wild animals. This suggests that the fourth argument cited above also works better for domestic animals than for wild animals: at least when it comes to wild animals, a *contextual* approach focusing on particular situations seems less appropriate than an *abstract* approach focusing on the general facts of environmental biology.

From these considerations, it seems possible that the claims on behalf of the ethic of care in *Beyond Animal Rights* apply to domestic but not to wild animals. Thus, even assuming that the main arguments in this work are correct, we are left with the question of what moral approach is most appropriate for our relations to wild animals (as well as how the moral approach for wild animals relates to the moral approach for domestic animals). The fact that the arguments presented against the ethic of justice are *least* successful in the context of wild animals suggests that perhaps our relations to domestic animals should be based on an ethic of care, while our relations to wild animals should be based on the ethic of justice. That is, perhaps in relation to domestic animals, our primary obligation is to meet their needs and to protect them, while in relation to wild animals, our primary obligation is to leave them alone, or to stop interfering with them.

I will first address an objection to this proposal that would be raised by environmental ethicists. Environmentalists would begin by pointing out that the focus on domestic animals I have identified is present not only in the care approach to animal defense theory, but in standard (or "justice") approaches as well, and that *neither* approach works for wild animals. For instance, Mark Sagoff asks, "If the suffering of animals creates

human obligation to mitigate it, is there not as much an obligation to prevent a cat from killing a mouse as to prevent a hunter from killing a deer?" (Sagoff 1993, 88). Similarly, if nonhuman animals are said to have certain rights, such as a right to life, then we have a corresponding obligation to protect those rights. While it might be appropriate to endeavor to protect domestic animals' rights to life, it would be absurd, not to mention ecologically disastrous, to endeavor to protect wild animals' right to life (Sagoff 1993, 88-89).

Environmental ethicists would argue that animal defense theories, whether of the justice or care variety, fail in the context of wild animals because they are individualistic in the sense that it is *individual* beings that are considered morally important. What is needed, they would say, is an approach which is holistic in its focus, in that it is *wholes* such as biotic communities and species that are considered morally important. As Aldo Leopold put it, "a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise" (Leopold 1995, 152). Callicott expands on how Leopold's position contradicts animal welfare ethics, writing:

A central, stark fact lies at the heart of ecological processes. Energy, the currency of the economy of nature, passes from one organism to another, not from hand to hand, like coined money, but so to speak, from stomach to stomach. *Eating and being eaten, living and dying* are what make the biotic community hum" (Callicott 1993, 125).

Thus, according to environmental ethicists, in the context of wild animals, advocates of the ethic of care and advocates of the ethic of justice are *equally* mistaken in their moral attention to individual beings.

These considerations suggest that perhaps within the realm of domestic animals, it is appropriate to focus on individual animals, while outside that realm, it is appropriate to think more holistically. In fact, Callicott defends a version of this view in his most recent account of the relationship between animal liberation and environmental ethics (Callicott 1995). He develops an account of "nested communities" that reflect our degree of relationship to various beings and thereby provide the basis for our moral obligations. According to Callicott, we have the greatest moral obligations to those closest to us--to our immediate family--and gradually lesser obligations to those in our more distant communities--such as to neighbors, to citizens, to human beings in general, and to animals in general. One of the ways this account differs from traditional hierarchies which place nonhuman animals last in our moral consideration is by incorporating Mary Midgley's argument that domestic animals are and have always been members of one of our more intimate communities, the "mixed community" (Midgley, 1995). For Callicott, humans' close relationships with domestic animals means that domestic animals have a corresponding moral priority. Humans have "evolved and unspoken" contracts with animals such as pets, farm and work animals, but many of our current practices, such as factory farming, are in clear violation of the trust we have established with these animals, and thus are morally wrong. Callicott holds that killing and eating members of the mixed community is not in itself a violation of this contract, but that the "depersonalization" and "mechanization" of animals in factory farming is. On the other hand, wild animals are not part of the mixed community but are at the outer circle of our nested communities, and

thus our obligations to them are of a lower priority. These obligations are derived not from any kind of social contract or trust established between humans and wild animals, but from a description of the *biotic* community, and thus humans are clearly not morally forbidden from killing and eating wild animals either.

I will have something to say about Callicott's position on domestic animals shortly, but first I will challenge the claim that, in relation to wild animals at least, humans are morally bound only by holistic concerns about the health of the ecosystem. This would mean that in relation to members of well-populated species, there would be no moral problem with, say, torturing an animal for the fun of it. Environmentalists do not make a point of this, and, in fact, when the environmentalist Holmes Rolston defends meat eating, he says that "when eating [humans] ought to minimize animal suffering" (Rolston 1993, 140). Such a claim is uncontroversial enough that we might not notice that he doesn't say *why* humans ought to minimize animal suffering. In fact, he *can't* provide a reason for this claim within a system that only takes holistic concerns into account. That is, a "moral" approach that focuses *exclusively* on holistic concerns such that suffering becomes morally irrelevant violates some of our most basic moral convictions. As Karen Davis writes in response to Callicott's approach:

Leopold's plea for humans to think ecoholistically--"like a mountain"--has been taken by some environmentalists as a mandate to exclude from substantive and ethical consideration the individuated existences that help constitute the mountain. . . . The ontological result is a holism devoid of contents, resembling an empty shell. The ethical result is moral abandonment of beings whose sufferings and other experiences are inconsequential compared to the "big realm" (Davis 1995, 199).

In fact, Callicott's account of nested communities as a basis for morality is an attempt to avoid the morally outrageous conclusion that many humans should be eliminated on the grounds that their presence tends to destroy the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. However, if Callicott succeeds in avoiding this conclusion, it is by *departing* from environmental holism and appealing to widely shared moral convictions about the importance of human beings.

Since Callicott's environmental ethic for human-wild animal relations is too holistic to allow for some of our basic moral convictions, it might seem to follow that human-wild animal relations should be understood in terms of the individualism of the ethic of justice. That is, it might be argued that while we share with wild animals a *biotic* community, we do not share with them a *moral* community of a kind that would be necessary to ground the claim that we have positive responsibilities to them. While environmental critics of justice ethics point out the absurdity of extending the right to life to wild animals, an ethic of justice need not affirm that wild animals have a right to life. Instead, it can affirm that our primary obligation to wild animals is *noninterference*.

While there is something right about this view, I want to show that it also oversimplifies and distorts matters in important ways. Difficulties with this view are revealed by recent discussions among feminist ethicists of the analogous view that the "private sphere" of family and friends ought to be governed by the ethic of care, while the "public sphere" of

government and business ought to be governed by the ethic of justice. According to this view, the partialist ethic of care should be confined to the private sphere, and the rights-oriented ethic of justice should be confined to the public sphere. One reason to be wary of this view is that the public/private dichotomy is strongly gender-coded--the private sphere is regarded as feminine and the public sphere as masculine--and serves to reinforce gender divisions. Moreover, the boundary between public and private spheres is itself at issue, as the private and public sphere are not as different from one another as is commonly assumed. For instance, power relations, which are usually considered the distinguishing feature of the political, are also present in personal relations, as evidenced by widespread domestic violence. Also, dependence and vulnerability, which are usually considered distinctive of personal relations, are also present in public relations. Such overlapping features suggest that the private sphere should be not only caring but just, and that the public sphere should be not only just but caring. In fact, when the two ethics are dichotomized, they tend to take on distorted and damaging forms. For instance, an ethic of care which does not value autonomy tends to result in forms of "caring" which are oppressive to either the caregiver or the recipient of care. Likewise, an ethic of justice which does not value caring tends to result in forms of "justice" that are indifferent to individual suffering (Clement 1996).

These conclusions have clear implications for the present discussion. First, just as the public/private dichotomy is gender-coded, so too is the wild/domestic animal dichotomy. Karen Davis has shown that the wild/domestic animal dichotomy is analogous to the public/private dichotomy, such that these dichotomies serve in similar ways to justify the devaluation of women and domestic animals:

Animals summoning forth images of things that are "natural, wild, and free" accord with the "masculine" spirit of adventure and conquest idolized by our culture. Animals summoning forth images of things that are "unnatural, tame, and confined" represent a way of life that Western culture looks down upon. The contrast can be vividly seen in our literature. Whereas in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* the hunters of the great white whale conceive of their prey as an awesome, godlike being, in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* the little boys view the nursing sow, whom they violently rape with a spear, as an object of disgust (Davis 1995, 196).

It might be thought that Callicott does not fit this model because his view of nested communities claims to give domestic animals a higher moral priority than wild animals. However, he clearly does not regard domestic animals with the respect he has for wild animals. Above all, Callicott prizes the natural and the wild, and his deepest moral conviction seems to be that humans ought to overcome their alienation from nature and become more wild.

This leads to a second difficulty revealed by the feminist discussion of the public/private dichotomy. Like that dichotomy, the distinction between domestic and wild animals is not as clear as it is often made out to be. Again, Callicott emphasizes this distinction, regarding wild animals as autonomous beings while

arguing that:

barnyard animals, over hundreds of generations, have been genetically engineered (by the old-fashioned method of selective breeding) to play certain roles in the mixed community. To condemn the morality of these roles--as we rightly condemn human slavery and penury--is to condemn the very being of these animals (Callicott 1995, 195).

Against this assessment of farm animals, Karen Davis cites research on chickens which indicates that there is more to chickens than the roles humans have bred them to play. Researchers write: "Domesticated chickens have been shown to retain their ancestral repertoire of behaviors, which undermines the *prima facie* assumption that they have been rendered docile and servile through breeding for specific traits" (Davis 1995, 199). Also, "there is no evidence that genetic selection for egg laying has eliminated the birds' potential to perform a wide variety of behavior" (Davis 1995, 204). Callicott's claim that chickens are nothing but what humans have bred them to be seems less the result of careful observations of these animals than a convenient rationalization.

If wild and domestic animals are not completely different, this suggests that our moral stances toward them should not be completely separate, and that when they are, they will tend to be distorted. We can see that this is the case in Callicott's discussion of our obligations toward domestic animals. With his discussion of the mixed community and the trust established between humans and domestic animals, Callicott defends something like an ethic of care toward domestic animals. Yet this ethic is consistent with raising farm animals to kill and eat them, on the grounds that, as a result of selective breeding, farm animals are nonautonomous beings who exist only for this purpose. To the extent that this claim is true, the introduction of justice considerations is important because it reveals that this is a distorted version of the ethic of care. Just as there is a moral problem with caring for persons in a way that undermines their autonomy, there is a moral problem with caring for animals in a way that undermines their autonomy (to whatever extent they can be autonomous). In this way the ethic of justice and its emphasis on autonomy plays an important role in evaluating the ethic of care toward domestic animals.

Just as the ethic of justice has a role to play in an ethic of care toward domestic animals, the ethic of care should play a role in an ethic of justice toward wild animals. First, even if an ethic of justice does not affirm that wild animals have a right to life, there are clearly problems with the individualism of the ethic of justice in the context of wild animals. For instance, for such an ethic, moral claims are based exclusively on

characteristics of individual beings, such that environmental concerns about the stability and integrity of the biotic community become morally irrelevant. For instance, an individual member of a well-populated or even overpopulated species is no less valuable than an individual member of a endangered species, or even the *last* members of an endangered species. Taken to this extreme, such individualism seems to threaten the environmental considerations that are essential to the continuance of the individual lives protected. Thus, like the extreme holism of environmental ethics, the extreme individualism of the ethic of justice is morally problematic.

While environmental holists and individualist justice theorists debate whether individuals or wholes should be prioritized, the ethic of care reveals a third possibility. The ethic of care is individualistic in one sense: its moral attention is to *individuals* in virtue of their particular needs. However, it is holistic in another sense: it understands the basic reality to be relationships *between* individuals rather than individuals with their own separate characteristics. Thus, relationships, rather than individuals' characteristics, define the moral realm, but the particularities of individuals dictate the appropriate moral response.

One way in which this middle ground between holism and individualism affects an ethic of justice toward wild animals is the following. In general, we ought to adopt an ethic of noninterference with regard to wild animals because we are unaware of the negative effects our attempts to help animals might have on the natural environment. However, to understand our relationship with wild animals *exclusively* in terms of noninterference suggests that humans are *unnatural* beings who should not in any way be involved in the natural world. The ethic of care helps us avoid this moral distortion by understanding human moral responsiveness to individual animals as arising from the relationship between humans and nonhumans, namely our shared participation in nature. Consider a situation in which an individual encounters a wild animal who is suffering. Should one refuse to alleviate the animal's suffering on the grounds that doing so would be interfering with natural processes that we cannot understand? To do so, I think, would be contrary to one of our most basic moral convictions. This is not to claim that there ought to be public policy devoted to the alleviation of wild animal suffering, only that when an *individual* human being is confronted by the suffering of an *individual* animal, it would be morally unacceptable to say that we have a moral obligation *not* to relieve that suffering.

As part of the "reappraisal of things unnatural, tame, and confined in terms of things natural, wild, and free," Callicott argues that humans should stop attempting to impose artificial moral concepts on nature and instead "reaffirm our participation in nature by accepting life as it is given without a sugar coating" (Callicott 1992, 56-57). But what exactly does it mean to *participate* in nature? For Callicott, it seems to mean, first of all, to hunt. As his first elucidation of the idea of participating in nature, he recommends the "posture toward life of tribal peoples in the past. The chase was relished with its dangers, rigors, and hardships as well as its rewards" (Callicott 1992, 56). In other words, Callicott

assumes that our sympathies toward animals are somehow artificial while our inclination toward hunting is natural.

However, as Brian Luke shows, there are good reasons to believe that the sympathy we feel toward a suffering animal is at least as natural as, or in fact *more natural than* the hunting "instinct" championed by environmentalists (Luke 1995, 309). For instance, children's sympathies for animals often lead them to refuse to eat meat when they learn that it comes from slaughtered animals, at least until they are given "good" reasons not to act on these sympathies. More generally, the naturalness of our sympathies for animals is supported by the fact that elaborate social mechanisms are necessary to distance us from or to deny the reality of the animal suffering we cause, even, significantly, the suffering that hunting causes (Luke 1995).

Animal welfare advocates who operate from an exclusively justice approach share environmentalists' distrust of our sympathies for animals. However, contrary to Callicott's view that we need to abandon our sympathies and become more "natural," Singer and Regan in effect seek to "tame" us through appeals to reason. Again, the ethic of care reveals a third possibility, in which we recognize the moral importance of our *natural* sympathies toward animals, valuing, like Callicott, participation in nature, but disagreeing with Callicott's account of what is natural and what is artificial. As Luke puts it, instead of "taming ourselves," this involves "going feral" (Luke 1995). I have suggested that, in general, our moral obligations toward wild animals can be understood in terms of noninterference. However, such an approach can easily lead to the morally distorted view that we ought not be involved in nature at all, or that we are unnatural beings, and the ethic of care is necessary as a check against such a distortion.

In this essay I have considered a problem raised by the suggestion that the ethic of care, rather than the ethic of justice, is the appropriate ethic for our interactions with nonhuman animals. The problem is that this suggestion seems to make more sense for domestic than for wild animals, and that in fact, for the most part, the ethic of justice *does* seem to make sense for wild animals. That is, the ethic of care seems to "fit" our relations to domestic animals, while the ethic of justice seems to "fit" our relations with wild animals.

However, I have shown that these "fits" are only approximate, and that to develop a moral approach to both domestic and wild animals that does justice to our most basic moral convictions, we need to understand the two ethics not dichotomously, but as working together. This means that while the ethic of care will not work as the exclusive or predominant moral approach to wild animals, a satisfactory moral approach to wild animals must include the ethic of care.

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