UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

https://helda.helsinki.fi

How to Mourn for Animals? : From Misanthropic Melancholia to Animal Ethical Mourning

Aaltola, Elisa; Pihkala, Panu

2025
Environmental Philosophy Inc
http://hdl.handle.net/10138/627422
Aaltola, E & Pihkala, P 2025, 'How to Mourn for Animals? From Misanthropic Melancholia to Animal Ethical Mourning', Environmental Ethics, vol. 47, no. 3, pp. 237-258. https://doi.org/10.5840/enviroethics2025101100

Downloaded from Helda, University of Helsinki institutional repository. https://helda.helsinki.fi
This is an electronic reprint of the original article.
This reprint may differ from the original in pagination and typographic detail.
Please cite the original version.

Environmental Ethics
Volume 47, Number 3 (Fall 2025): 237–258
DOI: 10.5840/enviroethics2025101100

How to Mourn for Animals? From Misanthropic Melancholia to Animal Ethical Mourning

Elisa Aaltola and Panu Pihkala

The paper explores "animal ethical mourning" through three directions: 1) mourning for nonhuman animals, 2) mourning for lost human ideals, and 3) mourning with nonhuman animals. First, it investigates the political and moral significance of animal ethical mourning arguing it is a radical normative act. Second, it claims such mourning extends also to given human ideals, which our treatment of animals reveals to be forsaken. Here, it introduces "misanthropic melancholia" and argues it to form one affectively challenging yet normatively illuminating aspect of animal ethical mourning. Finally, it considers what it means to mourn with other animals. The paper's central claim is more rituals and rhetoric are needed to evoke these aspects of animal ethical mourning.

Mourning is one of the ways we exercise our capacity for love.
(Lear 2022: 74)

INTRODUCTION

In the autumn of 2023, vandals cut down a 300-year-old Sycamore Gap tree (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) in Northumberland, UK. Locals reacted with both anger and sorrow. The police described the cutting of the tree as an act of "stealing joy" (Brown 2023). In news reports, residents told they had felt a strong sense of connection with the tree, which had become an icon of the area, and its demise was felts as a "personal loss." As a result, something remarkable happened. Tributes

Elisa Aaltola, PhD, is a Senior Researcher and Associate Professor (docent) in philosophy at the University of Turku, Finland. Her research has focused on animal philosophy and normative moral psychology. Aaltola has published twelve books on these topics, including *Varieties of Empathy: Moral Psychology and Animal Ethics* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018) and *Animal Suffering: Philosophy and Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). In 2021, she was awarded the Pro Animalia Prize for her life's work for animals, and in 2022, she was named the "Changemaker of the Year" in her native Finland. She thanks Koneen Säätiö (Kone Foundation) for their generous funding of this article. elanaa@utu.fi.

Panu Pihkala, from the University of Helsinki, is an expert in interdisciplinary eco-emotion research. He is also an adjunct professor of environmental theology (Title of Docent) at the University of Helsinki and a researcher in HELSUS Sustainability Science Institute. He hosts the podcast *Climate Change and Happiness* (https://climatechangeandhappiness.com) with Dr. Thomas Doherty and serves as an advisor for many projects on eco-emotions. panu.pihkala@helsinki.fi.

This is an Open Access article distributed under a Creative Commons CC BY-NC-ND license.

started pouring in and the local authorities opened a book of remembrance for the tree, which according to reporters "quickly filled up with memories and poems and messages of thanks." Thousands of messages were posted online expressing sadness over the loss of the tree (Gates 2023). Clearly, the destruction of this Sycamore Gap tree was a cause of immense grief for a large number of people.

Such grief marks normative significance—something valuable, indeed invaluable, has been lost. This event makes manifest a moral psychological phenomenon that has begun to gain attention in environmental literature: grief entwines with moral concern toward nonhuman nature and as such should be highlighted as an emotion capable of coaxing appreciation for our surrounding world (Cunsolo and Landman 2017, Barnett 2022). In short, when we feel grief for a forest, we recognize its moral worth.

Also, the death of nonhuman animals can spark profound grief. The passing of companion animals is frequently met with grief (Park et al. 2023). The loss of a dog, for instance, can be a moment of immense sorrow, accompanied by a long period of mourning (Pierce 2012). Also the deaths of wild animals can evoke sorrow, particularly when they belong to an endangered species (Bexell et al. 2023). The death of "Lonesome George" is a case in point. George was the last member of the Pinta Island Tortoise (*Chelonoidis niger abingdonii*), a subspecies of the giant tortoise, doomed to lasting solitude at a Galapagos research center. When he died of old age, his whole species vanished from Earth. Grief was expressed both over the loss of him as an individual (and his lonely existence) and the loss of the species. Indeed, media reports stated this singular animal became the face of extinction (Hulse 2012), which lead to multifaceted sorrow—his caretaker lamented the personal loss of a beloved animal, and a number of people across the globe mourned both the extinction of his species and the species loss ravaging our planet in general (see also van Dooren 2014).

Therefore, grief and mourning can be felt in relation to environmental and animal losses. In scholarship, grief and mourning in the context of environmental losses has gained growing attention, as terms such as environmental grief and ecological grief have been introduced (Kevorkian 2004, Cunsolo and Ellis 2018). Both public mourning (Barnett 2022, Mihai and Thaler 2023) and private ways of grieving for nonhuman nature have been explored (Park et al. 2023). Whilst most of the discussion has revolved around mourning for ecological destruction, e.g., James Stanescu, Thom van Dooren, and Kathryn Gillespie also have discussed the profound grief arising from noting the suffering and death faced by nonhuman animals (Stanescu 2012, van Dooren 2014, Gillespie 2016).

Yet, the dynamics between mourning and morality require further examination, particularly as it comes to losses taking place among *nonhuman animals*—a theme that largely has been neglected in emotion research. In this paper, we investigate the different dimensions of what we call "animal ethical mourning,"[1] i.e., mourning experienced due to animal suffering and death. Our key question is: what types of

[1] In the final section of the paper, the term "ethically mourning animals" also would be applicable.

mourning are typically felt in relation to nonhuman animal losses, and what are their normative challenges and benefits? We pay special attention to the role of rhetoric and rituals and explore ways to make animal ethical mourning more visible and tangible in societies. We also discuss the possibility of mourning not only *for* but also *with* nonhuman others.

Before beginning, one clarification needs to be made. It may seem impossible to mourn for beings whom we have never met, and whose numbers run in the billions. However, we believe such mourning is quite real, and in the course of this paper hope to make a convincing case for its existence.

(THE DIFFICULTY OF) MOURNING FOR NONHUMAN ANIMALS

Do human animals mourn for nonhuman animals? Animal ethical mourning is most common in relation to companion animals (DeMello 2016, Park et al. 2023), as a significant number of people living with companion animals express strong grief when those animals die (Adrian et al. 2009). Yet, such grief is often *disenfranchised*, as societies tend to contest its severity and force it into a private emotion (Park et al. 2023): one usually cannot take days off from work to mourn for one's companion animal, nor will one place obituaries in newspapers or hold public funerals for lost animals. We propose this is due to the manner in which animals are still often viewed as non-persons and individuals void of inherent value. A dog may be positioned as a family member, but legally she remains property, a thing rather than a person, and a companion whose value remains instrumental. Mourning appears as an exaggerated response to the loss of things and property, which offers one explanation for the lack of public mourning for nonhuman animals and the sense of embarrassment associated with it. In other words, the cultural inability to recognize nonhuman animals as inherently valuable subjects stands in the way of mourning for them.

Judith Butler talks of "grievability," a trait some have and others lack, as we are taught to recognize only given types of beings as worthy of grieving (Butler 2004). Scholars of ecological grief have applied this term to environmental losses (Cunsolo and Landman 2017), and some have made use of it also in the context of nonhuman suffering and death (Stanescu 2012). As it comes to the latter, the lack of grievability is particularly poignant in relation to those nonhuman animals, whose instrumentalization is most evident. Following suit, it has been suggested contemporary cultures do not denote animals typically hunted, farmed for food, or used for other lethal purposes as grievable (Gillespie 2016). It seems to us that particularly the anthropocentric worldview, which posits humans are categorically distinct from the rest of nature, morally more valuable than nature, and entitled to use non-human beings and things in whichever way suits human interests best, severely hinders our ability to mourn for animals. How could a human being used to viewing chickens as food, rather than as a cognitively capable and sentient individuals, mourn for their deaths? Therefore, mourning for nonhuman animals—particularly those animals commonly killed and/or consumed by human beings—is currently

rare in dominant cultures and a deviation from social norms (Pribac 2021). In short, particularly farmed or hunted animals remain outside the scope of "grievability."

Following Butler's thesis, this absence of mourning comes with moral implications, as the value of those animal lives considered ungrievable, together with the moral significance of their deaths, is denied. Indeed, as James Stanescu has argued, absence of mourning disavows the value and rights of nonhuman animals (Stanescu 2012). In our view, this points toward the normative significance of animal ethical mourning: lack of such mourning can lead to the denial of animal ethical values, whilst its existence can act as a reminder of those values.

Another consequence of the "ungrievability" of nonhuman animals is those human individuals, who do mourn for them, often find themselves socially isolated and misunderstood. Stanescu states mourning for lost nonhuman lives separates the mourners from their human communities—it is a "social unintelligibility," an anomaly with communal repercussions—and can even lead to condemnation (Stanescu 2012: 579). Indeed, manifesting animal ethical mourning can signal incongruity with one's social surroundings, and spark a sense of stigmatization and alienation—a phenomenon often faced e.g., by vegans (Bresnahan et al. 2016). Because of this, the attitudes of animal rights advocates toward grief and mourning are diverse. While some have explored pioneering ways to practice animal ethical mourning either in private or in public (Monahan 2016, Mullin 2016, Pribac 2021), many others have been shaped by the grief-averse cultures of industrialized societies (Horwitz and Wakefield 2007) and the challenges met particularly by animal ethical mourning. Hence, there is a peculiar inconsistency in animal rights awareness: also those working hard for animal rights often avoid mourning for animal lives, thereby disavowing the very beings they seek to protect (Stanescu 2012). Simply put, many evade animal ethical mourning in fear of social rejection, which means their grief becomes disenfranchised by both others and themselves.[2] Stanescu illustrates this beautifully when writing of a visit to the supermarket:

> In front of you is the violent reality of animal flesh on display. . . . This scene overtakes you, and suddenly you tear up. Grief, sadness, and shock overwhelm you, perhaps only for a second. And for a moment you mourn, you mourn for all the nameless animals in front of you. Those of us who value the lives of other animals live in a strange, parallel world to that of other people. . . . To tear up, or to have trouble functioning, to feel that moment of utter suffocation of being in a hall of death is something rendered completely socially unintelligible. Most people's response is that we need therapy, or that we can't be sincere. So most of us work hard not to mourn. (Stanescu 2012: 568)

It seems to us animal ethical mourning is routinely hidden in name of social acceptance. A deeply anthropocentric culture used to viewing animals as commodities rather than as individuals is inevitably antagonistic toward such mourning, and the fear of social rejection invites many to conceal it. Thus, a vicious circle is formed. The socially enforced ungrievability of animals leads to the disenfranchisement of

[2] For an example of an empirical study about this, see Marton et al. 2020.

animal ethical mourning, which again feeds the denial of the animals' inherent value as individuals and further adds to the presumption that they, indeed, are ungrievable.

However, being a social anomaly can be a risk worth taking due to moral reasons. Butler and others argue grief and mourning are political emotions, capable of pointing toward the moral significance of another (Clifton 2005, Butler 2009). As suggested in the quote at the beginning of this paper, mourning expresses love: we mourn for those whom we love (Rose 2011, Barnett 2022). By implication, animal ethical mourning communicates moral appreciation of and even love toward nonhuman animals, and thereby comes with political power capable of contesting the anthropocentric worldview. Here, particularly public expressions of mourning are crucial, as they can invite societal interest in animal losses, legitimate animal ethical concerns, and encourage a new interspecies politic capable of doing justice to nonhuman lives and deaths. Therefore, even if the human mourners will temporarily have their own realities questioned, the benefit of animal ethical mourning is it will raise nonhuman realities into public awareness. By mourning for other animals, we can help make *their* lives—their realities—morally and politically recognized.

Indeed, mourning is a radical normative act. Through it, we manifest the sincerity and depth of our values. It is one thing to say on the level of clinical, rational language—in the form of an abstract moral argument—one believes cows are individuals with inherent value. It is quite another thing to publicly mourn for an individual cow. Public mourning demonstrates personal commitment to moral values: it underscores one is not ashamed of them, and instead considers them important enough to risk social stigmatization. Further, it points toward our societies' moral failures and politicizes the suffering caused by, e.g., animal industries. Gillespie makes an important point in observing the embarrassment often linked to grieving for animals originates partly from the manner in which animal industries have been de-politicized. The anthropocentric worldview depicts animal agriculture and industries as "natural" and thereby apolitical entities, thus implying they simply have to be accepted. In this context, public mourning is a political protest: "To mourn the unmourned is to make an intentional statement about the violence of species hierarchies" (Gillespie 2016).

Animal ethical mourning has moral and political power, which can prevent future losses. According to Joshua Trey Barnett, grief and mourning allow us to notice what is truly valuable and motivate us to take action to prevent further damage to the things and beings we value. Failure to grieve and mourn, on the other hand, implies nothing worthy has been lost, which again renders political action highly unlikely. Following suit, our normative attitudes toward other species, together with how we treat those species in the future, are arguably strongly dependent on whether we mourn for nonhuman lives or not (Barnett 2022: 19). If we wish to recognize the inherent value of animals, and to dismantle the practices that cause them unnecessary suffering and death, animal ethical mourning is thereby highly constructive. To put this in other terms: if animal ethical norms and values are to become more than theory, they need social, political, and moral psychological in-

centives. More specifically, they need to be incorporated into societal and political decision-making, and bolstered by moral psychological motivation (Aaltola 2018). We argue animal ethical mourning acts as one potent way to advance these projects. This applies particularly to the losses of those creatures, whom are most intensely instrumentalized and seldom mourned for, such as farmed animals.

SORROW OVER LOST HUMAN IDEALS: MISANTHROPIC MELANCHOLIA OR MOURNING?

Philosopher Jonathan Lear emphasizes loss can concern both life and meaning, as we can mourn for lost life and lost meaning (Lear 2022).[3] Loss of meaning is particularly evident in cases where we come to see that the ideals we used to hold dear have been tarnished. Sigmund Freud touched upon this issue in the context of the First World War. In his essay "On Transience," he points out how human triumphs in sciences and arts were suddenly overshadowed by the senseless destruction of war. The very species, which was supposed to epitomize reason, morality, and progress, was waging a gruesome combat against its own kind and as a result, the great thinkers eager to extoll human advancement appeared to have been utterly wrong (Freud 1953). As Lear points out, here Freud expresses grief over humanity and its failed ideals—he is speaking of loss or crisis of meaning (Lear 2022).[4]

As Lear points out, human beings often believe themselves to be doing great good, when in fact they are doing real harm (Lear 2022: 92). This is perhaps nowhere as evident as in how human beings treat nonhuman nature and its beings (Aaltola 2019). Losses concerning nonhuman animals—the quantitatively immense and qualitatively invasive forms of violence inflicted upon them in agriculture, hunting, research laboratories, and other similar practices—can easily lead to loss or crisis of meaning among those who value nonhuman lives. In the grip of such a loss, one can come to think many of the ideals connected to humanity have failed to come to fruition. How could human beings, societies, and cultures commit such vast and intense violence against fellow-beings? This disbelief even can shatter assumptions about humanity. By consequence, it is not rare for people concerned over the treatment of nonhuman animals to express deep disappointment at humanity, become cynical over our species' ability to live by the ideals and meanings central to many cultures, and to even resort to misanthropy.[5]

But what are the lost ideals? As cultural variation of meaning is immense, we will here focus particularly on Western ideals. Different historical eras ranging from Greek philosophy to Enlightenment have argued humanity stands for rational and moral progress. Renowned philosophers such as Aristotle claimed theoretical reason to constitute the *telos* of human beings—our very essence—the use of which aligns with and makes us capable of moral virtues, such as practical wisdom and

[3] The intimate interconnections between loss and meaning are emphasized also by several grief researchers, e.g., Robert A. Neimeyer and his framework of meaning reconstruction (Neimeyer et al. 2010).

[4] What is termed "crisis of meaning" need not lead to *complete* loss of meanings, but rather their alteration; however, *some* meanings, or aspects thereof, are lost.

[5] There is an important, ongoing discussion in animal ethics about misanthropy (Cooper 2018).

justice (Aristotle 1999). Later thinkers, most notably Immanuel Kant, reiterated the central tenet of this claim: human beings have reason, which allows them to become moral agents (Kant 1996). Such reason and morality were presumed to lead to constant cultivation of minds and societies. Indeed, Western philosophy has been eager to insist human beings are primarily rational and moral creatures, capable of great progress.

The careless, destructive treatment of both nonhuman nature and animals manifests in a painfully succinct manner that such ideals have failed to materialize. The Anthropocene, climate crisis, species extinction, and anthropogenic animal suffering all point toward *the failures* rather than cultivation of reason, morality, and progress (Jamieson 2014). It is not rational to destroy one's environment, nor is it moral to subject masses of other-minded creatures to intolerable suffering and unnecessary death. An enlightened, virtuous, and progressive species would not inflict such misery and damage to other creatures, let alone damage their own habitat in such an extensive way. Becoming aware of the average behavior of our species (average, because some cultures and individuals are more to blame than others) can, thereby, lead to a sense of grave disappointment in humanity and trigger loss of meanings central to it (see also Pribac 2021). It also can spark profound feelings of guilt and shame (see Jensen 2019, Aaltola 2021).

This elemental disappointment in and crisis of meaning is intertwined with grief in various, often profound forms. When grieving and mourning nonhuman losses, we can simultaneously grieve and mourn for human ideals. It is agonizing to realize one's belief in humanity was in substantial ways unwarranted. We may not lose all the meanings and ideals linked to humanity (for surely, some amount of reason, morality, and progress still exists, together with the hope they invite), but we face losing much of what we used to believe about ourselves. We are not as rational, moral, or progressive as many like to think—instead, we irrationally and immorally sow misery and devastation around us, thereby ultimately hindering also our own ability to survive—and recognizing this can cause immense grief (see also Martusewicz 2014). One dimension of animal ethical mourning is thereby formed of the sorrow we may feel over the lost potential—lost ideals—of humanity, complicated by guilt.

Such grief over lost ideals can in some cases be termed "melancholia." In "Mourning and Melancholia," Sigmund Freud distinguishes the two emotions mentioned in the essay's title. Whereas mourning is a healthy and temporary reaction to a loss, which we will in time overcome, melancholia is a long-lasting mental state characterized by self-criticism. A melancholic individual will stay with their loss and make it a point of self-effacement, often thinking they are somehow morally culpable for the loss haunting them. What causes melancholia's permanency, according to Freud, is the individual's inability to understand the nature of their grief, which hinders their ability to heal. More specifically, in a state of melancholia, one may know *who* has been lost, but not *what* has been lost—the meaning of the loss

remains opaque (Freud 2019). This leaves the bereft in limbo: they cannot overcome a loss the true nature of which they do not fully understand.[6]

Now, Lear argues if we identify with humanity and its ideals, disappointment in the two will manifest as a disappointment also in oneself (Lear 2022: 32). This is the cause of what we term "misanthropic melancholia," a state in which we begin to dislike both ourselves and our species over what human beings are doing to nonhuman nature and animals. As suggested above, it is not uncommon for people invested in animal ethical issues to harbor resentment for their own species, and since many feel guilt over not being able to change what is happening, resentment is aimed also toward their own failures as human beings. In a state of misanthropic melancholia, mourning turns into a lingering and persistent sense of melancholic loss, the primary object of which is one's belief in humanity.[7] Yet, the individual feeling misanthropic melancholia is not fully aware of what they have lost, and for what they in reality are grieving.

Melancholia has some similarities with given uncomfortable and morally troublesome affective states, such as bitterness, resentment, and schadenfreude. Also, misanthropic melancholia can entwine with such states. Panu Pihkala has pointed out these states can activate in relation to environmental issues, whereby a person concerned over, e.g., the climate crisis, may become embittered over human actions and even feel schadenfreude toward their conspecifics—perhaps especially those who have opposed progressive climate politics (Pihkala 2022). The same applies in the animal ethical context, as for instance an animal advocate can start to feel varieties of resentful antipathy toward those who take part in the use of animals, ranging from farmers and politicians to meat-eaters (Cooper 2018). Now, in light of the first section of this paper, this is understandable. If one is made to feel like a social anomaly, and if one's animal ethical views are continuously invalidated, bitterness and other aggrieved states easily ensue. Further, generic misanthropy in the sense of moral resentment toward *Homo sapiens* has been argued to be quite reasonable when considering all the harm our species has caused to the rest of nature (Cooper 2018). However, psychologically comprehensible as such responses may be, misanthropy remains morally problematic. This is because it increases hostility, distrust, and other morally destructive phenomena whilst preventing the type of hope and empathic cooperation required for human beings to take collective action on behalf of nonhuman animals (for an argument against misanthropy, see Gerber 2002). The self-effacement it may entwine with in the form of shame, also can be morally unproductive (Aaltola 2021). In other words, misanthropy will make it ever more difficult to bring about animal ethical progress.

[6] There is a long-standing discussion especially in philosophy and psychology about varieties and definitions of melancholia (or melancholy), and its connections to depression (see, e.g., Radden 2000). In relation to environmental issues, melancholia has been prominently discussed, e.g., by Lertzman (2015) and applied to various topics, such as "Petro-melancholia" (LeMenager 2011) and wildfire-ridden Australia (Bristow and Witcomb 2016).

[7] For a careful reading of misanthropy, see Gerber 2002 and Cooper 2018.

Because of this, it may first appear both misanthropic melancholia and its more toxic companions should be resisted on normative grounds: they hinder our ability for collective moral action and thereby harm animal ethical objectives. Whilst mourning is a healthy reaction to a loss, melancholia can become an unhealthy preoccupation that has morally unsound consequences, and which should be contested. Lear offers one argument against such antipathy toward humanity. He discusses a person, who during a lecture had remarked that nobody would miss human beings, were our species to go extinct. For Lear, this statement illustrates withdrawal from and refusal of humanity—here, humanity becomes something shameful, which one should not identify with, and the loss of which deserves no sorrow. Importantly, the person making the statement relieves herself from the deeply uncomfortable notion of mourning for one's own species, and this may be the very reason for the statement in the first place. It is difficult to mourn for one's own ideals and the shortcomings of one's own species, and it is far easier to try to emotionally detach from and even hate humanity (Lear 2022). Here, misanthropic melancholia appears as a failure to mourn, with morally destructive consequences.

Yet, melancholia is a complex state, worthy of a closer examination.[8] For example, Renée Lertzman argues the current cultural climate tends to focus on positive feelings such as hope, leaving difficult emotions and unconscious states aside. This has meant internal phenomena such as ambivalence, shame, and melancholy are often missing from discussions concerning environmental awareness. However, for us to gain a fuller view into such awareness, the mental states categorized as difficult need to be acknowledged and processed (Lertzman 2015).[9] Indeed, whilst seeming counter-productive at first glance, they can serve important moral functions: also challenging and painful emotions can be morally pedagogic. This applies also to misanthropic melancholia.

Surprisingly, Lertzman argues melancholia can include a sense of profound moral care. She uses the term "environmental melancholia" and argues it to be "a condition in which even those who care deeply about the wellbeing of ecosystems and future generations are paralyzed to translate such concern into action" (Lertzman 2015: 4). Therefore, people undergoing melancholia over what is happening to nonhuman nature are in fact professing care, even in their painful passivity. It seems to us the very existence of melancholia implies care: we would not undergo such chronic sorrow had we not cared for what we lost. This care, however, is conflicted and complicated. In Lertzman's view, it is ambivalence—a state, where we vacillate between seeing x as negative and positive—which leads to environmental melancholia, whereby one wavers between seeing e.g., logging as a cause of environmental damage and positioning it as a source of livelihoods. Thereby,

[8] For example, Bristow and Witcomb (2016) use the word melancholy to refer to a kind of "pensive sadness in which one can dwell," which also can be helpful for the encounter of ecological grief. It is not the same as a complicated grief, which does not allow for mourning; perhaps the former could be called melancholy and the latter melancholia (see also Radden 2000).

[9] Similar arguments about the importance of engaging with difficult eco-emotions have been made by many others; for reviews, see Pihkala 2020 and 2022.

melancholia includes the intricate coexistence of value and disvalue, a marriage of love and hate, which is precisely the reason why melancholic individuals may struggle to name what has been lost.

Arguably, all this also applies to misanthropic melancholia. First, misanthropic melancholia is built on profound concern toward both nonhuman beings and our lost ideals, which manifests that it is not a morally corrupt but rather a morally motivated emotion. Second, in its grip, one vacillates between love and hate of human beings. Even the most ardent misanthropic will, amidst their hate, likely love some human beings and elements of humanity—a categorical hate of all humanity is difficult to envision in a social reality where we depend upon each other for survival. Indeed, it seems to us deep empathy toward both human and nonhuman animals can entwine with misanthropy, as (somewhat paradoxically) a person without such empathy likely would not have enough care to be misanthropic in the first place. One's feelings toward humanity remain ambivalent, which renders the loss lingering beneath one's sorrow equally unclear.

We suggest this ambiguity points toward another paradox embedded in misanthropic melancholia: by pointing anger at human beings, it is also capable of educating those same human beings to improve their actions. As such, misanthropic melancholia can be a source of valuable moral guidance. In fact, noting the relevance of melancholia is, according to Lertzman, necessary if we are to enable new forms of action against environmental degradation. If it is to become more inventive and effective, environmental advocacy must allow room for difficult states such as ambivalence, anxiety, loss, and disappointment. It should cease focusing only on the positive rhetoric of hope, and also work with the type of pained and confused mental states capable of teaching us something new about morality (Lertzman 2015). Arguably, this applies also to, e.g., animal industries: effective action requires we pay heed, not only to hope and care, but also to anger, disappointment, and even misanthropy, and listen to what these mental states are communicating. By implication, denying one's own misanthropic melancholia emerges as nothing short of morally unproductive, because doing so disconnects us from facing uncomfortable yet educational realizations. Indeed, such denial may prevent us from learning how to become more moral in our actions toward nonhuman nature and animals.

Following suit, we make the bold suggestion that misanthropic melancholia, when engaged with reflectively, can be a morally constructive state. Working with it not only allows us to become conscious of the disappointment and anger we may feel toward humanity, but also helps us to channel those emotions into moral action. But what does this mean in practice? Coming to terms with misanthropic melancholia requires that we face its ambiguous, multifaceted nature and work with the difficult feel of which it consists. We need to give room for the negative affects we may harbor toward our own species, and recognize the extent to which our societies and cultures have failed nonhuman nature and its beings, and ultimately

human ideals.[10] In short, we are to note our pained, ambivalent emotions and the loss they point toward. Such acceptance of challenging emotions also requires we notice the morally beautiful elements of misanthropic melancholia—the potentially profound concern and love behind it—and our capacity for moral change.

What about mourning itself—what are the moral implications of animal ethical mourning for human ideals? Now, it is vital to note mourning for the loss of ideals does not necessarily signal their abandonment. If anything, it makes one more committed to the best of those ideals. When we notice how poorly we have done in the realms of reason, morality, progress, and related ideals, the wise course of action is not to forsake all of these in a state of cynical haste, but rather to protect, guard, and nourish them evermore ardently (see also Lear 2022: 30). In other words, if our goodness is fragile, this is not a cause to toss it aside, but rather to give it more strength. This again means, like misanthropic melancholia, animal ethical mourning should include a sense of striving to do better by nonhuman animals—to be morally more capable as human beings—in the future.

As was argued earlier, mourning expresses one's ability to love and value others (Martusewicz 2014, Lear 2022: 74). We mourn for those whom we love, and in so doing fortify our moral appreciation of them. Following suit, mourning for the loss or crisis of ideals can act as a method of recognizing the moral value of those ideals—when we mourn for human reason, morality, and progress, we point toward their value. As such, mourning for lost ideals comes with radical possibilities, as it can make us more aware of the need to uphold our most valued moral principles. Here, one does not dwell excessively in hate or resentment, getting stuck in past human failings, but rekindles love and appreciation of ideals, and lets them motivate one to do better in the future. Instead of simply looking toward the past, feeling miserable over our failings, we can thereby, with the aid of mourning, direct our attention toward the future and ask: "How can we regain our ideals and finally live according to them?"

MAKING ANIMAL ETHICAL MOURNING VISIBLE: RITUALS AND LANGUAGE

The communal nature of animal ethical mourning is vital: mourning must take not only a private but also a public form, thereby rendering animal ethical commitments socially visible and culturally legitimate (see also Gruen 2014). One way of inspiring public recognition of animal losses is the act of *witnessing*. Kathryn Gillespie has underscored the links between witnessing, mourning, ethics, and politics in the context of animal agriculture. By inviting people to witness the suffering of farmed animals through, for instance, stories, we can write nonhuman animals into our cultural awareness. As Gillespie points out, "To bear witness to the plight of animals in the dairy industry and to tell stories that transgress the common perception of dairy-production as benign is to share the plights of those

[10] Thinkers such as Rebecca Martusewicz and Leslie Head have argued somewhat similarly (Martusewicz 2014, Head 2016).

whose lives are otherwise erased" (Gillespie 2016: 577). In sum, for nonhuman animals to become grievable and morally recognized, we need public displays of animal ethical mourning, motivated, for instance, by acts of witnessing. Next, we discuss two elements important for facilitating public animal ethical mourning: new rituals and novel uses of language.

Rituals are a major part of culture. The noted ritual scholar Ronald Grimes has proposed it is beneficial to focus on elements of rituality in various kinds of human activity, such as performances and traditional rituals. These elements include a distinct time and place set for the ritual, symbolic actions performed together or by a leader, possible repetition, and effects that bind the participants together at least for the duration of the ritual (Grimes 1992). Now, various kinds of rituals and ritualistic elements can be powerful tools with which to practice animal ethical mourning. Rituality has been developed counter-culturally in relation to environmental concerns (de Massol de Rebetz 2020, Mihai and Thaler 2023), and there is a need for similar development in relation to animal ethical mourning.

Rituals can help to both legitimize grief and explore its moral dimensions. On these grounds, Mihaela Mihai and Mathias Thaler have argued what they call "environmental commemoration" can render environmental grief legitimate and facilitate environmental ethical awareness (Mihai and Thaler 2023). Lori Gruen has made a similar argument in relation to animals, as she proposes there is a need to establish compassionate practices and techniques of grieving for nonhuman creatures (Gruen 2014). In the following, we discern three types of possible rituality in this context, with a reminder these are but some examples among many.

First, ritualistic elements in *art performances and exhibitions* can deal with animal suffering and death (Mullen 2016, Barr 2017). Going to an art performance or exhibition usually includes many ritual elements, starting from stepping outside the ordinary course of daily life into a space and time set apart.[11] This kind of liminal space can allow for deeper engagement with emotions related to animal suffering and death, such as grief and guilt. For example, various exhibitions by the Finnish artists Terike Haapoja and Laura Gustafsson have enabled visitors to explore the darker aspects of animal industries and to connect with animal ethical mourning (Radomska 2023).[12] Second, *memorials* can serve a similar purpose. There are profound interconnections between memorials and rituals, as erecting and visiting memorials can be seen as ritual activities. Sometimes people organize explicit rituals at the memorial sites, such as animal ethical grief rituals at the Memorial for Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) in the United States (Barnett 2022). Again, this offers a ritualistic way of facing and cultivating animal ethical mourning. Third, *rituals devoted to animal ethical mourning*, taking place in public spaces, are a further way of ritualizing grief. One example is the theme day called "Remembrance Day for Lost Species" (usually November 30th) established in the 2000s in Britain and currently observed in countries across the globe. Various kinds

[11] Cf. the notion of liminality by Victor Turner (Turner 1969).

[12] See, e.g., https://www.terikehaapoja.net/gustafssonhaapoja-no-data/.

of grief rituals have been organized during this remembrance day, including both private rituals for smaller groups and public street processions where people, e.g., carry symbolic corpses of extinct animals (de Massol de Rebetz 2020).[13]

Rituals for ecological grief have been challenging to produce and facilitate partly due to the afore-discussed social backlash, and rituals for animal ethical mourning can be even more contested among the general public. By consequence, there is a regrettable absence of memorial places and other rituals for, e.g., farmed animals, laboratory animals, animals killed in trophy hunting, and roadkill animals. Yet, pioneering advocates have been developing rituals for these animals, and their work provides inspiration for a much-needed wider activity on this front.

The anthropocentrically hierarchical evaluation of animals, whereby "pets" hold a unique position, whilst, e.g., farmed animals are sidelined, is (regrettably) present in memorial and ritual cultures. There are many pet cemeteries across the world, and even though establishing them has been met with some resistance, they are largely accepted. Animals valued for cultural reasons, such as horses and dogs killed as part of military service, also have received memorials (Kean 2016). Memorials for, e.g., road kill animals (Monahan 2016), and memorials for animals killed in medical testing (such as a stone memorial in the central pet cemetery in Helsinki), have faced much more ire and opposition. In the meantime, memorials for farmed animals remain extremely rare. In our view, it would be morally imperative to generate memorials and grief rituals precisely for the unnamed and invisible animals, such as laboratory and farmed animals. Fortunately, some pioneering work on this front has begun to take place, one example being the vigils organized next to slaughter transport vehicles (Pribac 2021).

Mourning can be aided also by language—a rhetoric of sorrow. As Lisa Feldman Barrett and others have shown, in human beings, emotions often interlink with language (Barrett 2017). Moreover, with language, individuals can be psychologically framed to undergo given emotions: how a situation is described to them will influence how they feel about it. Some scholars have underscored this in relation to ecological grief. For instance, Barnett argues rhetoric and language stand at the root of our ability to mourn for other species: without words for species and their loss, we cannot mourn for extinction (Barnett 2022). Also, Renée Lertzman highlights the links between naming, processing losses, and environmental action. To mourn and take action, one needs to know what has been lost, and to do so, one needs to name it (Lertzman 2015: 101). We suggest a similar emphasis on language needs to be applied also to animal ethical mourning. Simply stated, without language concerning the viewpoints and experiences of other animals, we cannot fully mourn for their suffering or death, and without language concerning the violence committed against animals, we cannot take action against it. Further, without the

[13] These types of grief rituals have a strong political dimension, and it can be challenging to balance between the vulnerability caused by public grieving and the political message, which can evoke hostile reactions from others (Pihkala 2021).

type of rhetoric that guides and frames us to grieve for nonhuman beings, animal ethical mourning may fail to materialize.

It seems to us, bar the loss of companion animals, language of sorrow is largely missing from the everyday animal ethical context. We are not rhetorically invited to feel sorrow for what human beings are doing to other animals. Our cultures are rife with words for and stories of mourning for human beings, but far less lingual attention is placed on the sorrow one can feel over other animals. This applies also to public mourning: there is very limited cultural discourse on mourning for animals (Johnston and Probyn-Rapsey 2013, DeMello 2016). In particular, mourning for animals killed by human beings is an issue seldom mentioned and largely hidden from common cultural contents. In our view, for animal ethical mourning and action to become more available and widespread, this needs to change. To mourn, we need lingual prompts, such as cultural stories (e.g., in literature, social media, and films) on how to mourn for animals, words and definitions that establish such mourning as a legitimate phenomenon (hence, "animal ethical mourning"), eulogies,[14] and so forth (see also Rose 2011). Further, we need language dedicated to examining animal lives, viewpoints, subjectivity and death—e.g., both fiction and scientific accounts of what it is like to be a nonhuman being living in a world governed by humans. To summarize, more language should be dedicated both to the nonhuman viewpoint (what does the pig undergo in animal agriculture?) and animal ethical mourning (what does it mean for a human being to mourn for other animals?).

In conclusion, we suggest human cultures would benefit from more rituals and language concerning animal ethical mourning. We need ways in which to display mourning for the billions of victims of, e.g., animal agriculture and nature loss by way of obituaries, memorials, vigils, and other traditional techniques of mourning. We also would benefit from inventing new techniques of mourning, capable of signaling the vast destruction to which nonhuman nature and animals are subjected. Moreover, we need to apply old concepts and narratives, and invent new ones to invite people to mourn for their nonhuman kin. These rituals and rhetorical tools would render animal ethical morning more socially accepted, thereby alleviating the stigmatization otherwise connected to it. In other words, they would help us to engage with disenfranchised grief.

Moreover, we need rituals and rhetoric with which to mourn for lost or damaged ideals. Where are the memorials or funerals for broken values? Where are the obituaries for lost human potential? Currently, it is difficult to find rituals and, e.g., narratives of mourning for lost ideals from anywhere but highly intellectual and inaccessible art, and this severely limits individuals' capacity to come to terms with animal ethical mourning. Without such rituals and rhetoric, people undergoing animal ethical mourning in private all too easily feel alienated and alone, incapable of making sense of what they are feeling, and perhaps left in a state of misanthropic melancholia. If, on the other hand, our cultures were to publicly recognize vital

[14] See, e.g., Linzey 2015, which contains, e.g., "A vigil for all suffering creatures," "A liturgy for animal burial," and "Memorial prayers for animals."

ideals and meanings have been abandoned, individuals would be in a better position to come to terms with disappointment, anger, and sorrow. Ultimately, such rituals and rhetoric could motivate the type of forward-looking action on behalf of nonhuman animals mentioned earlier. They could invite us to reflect on what we have done to other species in the past, and to act with significantly more moral regard in the future. In sum, our claim is simple. To manifest appreciation of ideals such as reason, morality, and progress, we need both rituals and words with which to do so.

ANIMALS IN MOURNING: MOURNING WITH NONHUMAN BEINGS

Finally, we wish to briefly introduce a fourth dimension to mourning for nonhuman animals. People often focus on the losses experienced by human animals. Indeed, in literature on grief and mourning, emphasis is almost solely on the human viewpoint—human emotions—which leaves out nonhuman perspectives. Yet, catastrophic losses occurring in the nonhuman world are most poignantly experienced by nonhuman creatures themselves, which suggests a need for, not only mourning *for*, but also mourning *with* nonhuman animals (van Dooren 2014, Gillespie 2016).

As argued by renowned ethologists such as Marc Bekoff, numerous nonhuman animals can feel both basic and complex emotions (Bekoff 2000). A growing number of scholars also suggest all animals capable of complicated social bonds are probably able to feel grief when losing individuals close to them (King 2013a, 2013b; Pribac 2013). Across the animal world, grief is argued to originate from the ability to feel attachment, and from the pain one feels in moments of forced separation (Pribac 2013), which means all species capable of attachment probably can feel grief. Following suit, the list of animals able to grieve is no longer limited to token species such as dolphins, but includes also more ordinary creatures. As Barbara King states: "Based on this understanding of grief, it is not only big-brained mammals like elephants, apes, and cetaceans who can be said to mourn, but also a wide variety of other animals, including domestic companions like cats, dogs, and rabbits; horses and farm animals; and some birds" (King 2016: 10).

There are regrettably many reasons for nonhuman grief. To give an example, when a forest is cleared, a multitude of animals experience heavy losses. As Barnett emphasizes, forests are more-than-human communities (Barnett 2022). They are not mere resources for the logging industry or for the hiker looking for wilderness experiences, but communities consisting of a multitude of species. The same applies to wetlands, rivers, lakes, oceans, mountains—all nature. We exist on a planet full of interspecies communities. When harm is done to such communities—when forests burn, oceans eutrophicate, or glaciers melt—the losses experienced by nonhuman animals can be catastrophic. Some die, some lose their habitat, some lose their parents or their young.

Nonhuman animals experience losses also outside of such natural communities. Farmed animals are typically forced to lose their young—for instance, cows, pigs, hens, and sheep will all lose their offspring prematurely, either before the offspring is even born (hens), soon after birth (cows), or when the offspring is only a few

weeks old (pigs and sheep). Simultaneously, the young lose their mothers, which has been supported to cause severe psychological distress (see, e.g., Daros et al. 2014). As Gillespie posits, in animal agriculture, one can notice grieving animals everywhere, most notably where social ties are being forcibly severed (Gillespie 2016). On a broader scale, farmed animals have lost the opportunity to live out their lives freely according to their inherent traits and needs, in their natural environments. This means their fleeting lives contain immense, anthropogenic losses.

By implication, when humans mourn for lost forests or other places of nature (Celermajer 2021), or for nonhuman animals, there can be shared grief over species boundaries, even if the particulars and intensities of that grief have steep variations. In other words, we can mourn with nonhuman animals—with the cow, whose calf was forcibly taken, with the pig stuck in a farrowing crate unable to ever see the sun, and with the insects, birds, and fishes, who lose their habitats due to the climate crisis. In our view, mourning with other animals signals moral appreciation for their own viewpoint, their unique nonhuman grief—it is an act of love toward those undergoing pain.

The grief of nonhuman animals is morally significant particularly in three ways. First, it fortifies the need to treat other animals with much more care than is currently the case. For instance, the fact that crows can mourn for their kin problematizes hunting: killing a crow will not only cause damage to that individual, but also her kin, who will likely suffer grief (on crows and grief, see van Dooren 2014). Similarly, the fact that cows and other farmed animals miss their young (and the young miss their parent), forces us to critically examine forced separation commonly inflicted on animals in agriculture—and indeed to critique animal industries in general for the immense losses they cause to nonhuman animals. Further, nonhuman grief summons us to speak of habitat destruction in a manner capable of accommodating animal perspectives: loss of habitats is not merely a material but also a profoundly experiential issue.

Second, the ways in which nonhuman animals grieve and mourn can teach us more about the complexities of their phenomenal worlds and the richness of their inner realities in ways that allow us to better appreciate their moral value as individuals.[15] A pig is not just a physical "thing" but a minded individual with emotions, some of which we have in common. Third, recognizing nonhuman grief also invites us to cultivate our animal ethical mourning rituals and rhetoric in imaginative ways. Here, nonhuman beings can act as teachers for human creatures. Some ancient texts discuss this mythically, as for instance The Qur'an depicts how a raven taught humans they should bury their dead (Lipscombe-Southwell 2022). To approach this mythical issue realistically, what can we learn about how ravens or other animals grieve and mourn for their kin? What can other animals teach us about life and death, and about the entanglement of all life on Earth?

[15] van Dooren (2014) points out the world also may lose ways of mourning via extinctions: the unique ways in which various species participate in mourning are lost when those species die.

Significantly, nonhuman grief can take forms inaccessible to human beings, which renders *mourning with* challenging. Gillespie points out animals may experience far richer and more intense emotions than humans (Gillespie 2016), and we argue likely they also experience emotions unknown to us—different species are probably invested with exceptional emotions, the quality and intensity of which human beings have no knowledge. Following suit, if we wish to do moral justice to other animals, we must remain open to the fact they are still largely unknown and opaque to us—creatures filled with a variety of distinct ways of feeling and thinking—and their grieving and mourning is something of which we may only catch a glimpse.

Here, Gillespie points out an obvious bias. In the West, people may happily notice animals such as dolphins or elephants undergo grief, for this requires nothing from them. However, noting grief in farmed animals is much more complicated and meets emotional resistance, for it raises the uncomfortable issue of complicity: many in the West are directly responsible for causing grief to farmed animals and are thereby unwilling to recognize such grief. Gillespie states: "Acknowledging the grief of the cow who loses her calves repeatedly in service to the production of milk as a commodity good is a difficult task that may evoke many more emotions than just grief: guilt, shame, denial" (Gillespie 2016: 583). This bias is arguably present also in scholarly literature, as grief of particularly farmed animals is regrettably understudied and unnoted, deserving of far more attention. Unfortunately, human attitudes toward other animals' ability to undergo grief follow the prejudices familiar from the first section of this paper. In one study, out of 1000 surveyed individuals, 90 percent believed some or all animals can feel grief, but this ability was more likely seen in companion animals rather than, e.g., farmed animals. As the authors point out, the finding suggests people need more education so as to become less biased in attributing grief to animals (McGrath et al. 2013).[16] The existence of this bias underscores the importance of mourning with other animals, for it is through such mourning we can signal recognition of their internal realities, their grief, regardless of the species or its instrumental value to human beings.

This leads us back to the importance of rituals and rhetoric. As with mourning for nonhuman animals and mourning for human ideals, mourning with other animals requires more rituals and words. We need more narratives and other lingual depictions of how animals mourn for their kin, as this allows us to witness their losses, which again sparks moral and political awareness (van Dooren 2014, Gillespie 2016). The challenge, then, is to construct new ways of speaking of nonhuman mourning, and of mourning with other animals: we would benefit from, e.g., tales of how hens or foxes grieve for their kin, and of how human beings can feel sorrow with the anguished hen or fox. Further, we also need other means of speaking (e.g., via visual art), and a wide set of rituals with which to note nonhuman grief. The task at hand, thereby, is to invent rituals, with which to manifest the possibility of grief shared between vulnerable creatures—human and nonhuman alike.

[16] van Dooren (2014) discusses the ways in which human exceptionalism sometimes manifests in a belief that only humans are able to know death and mourn related issues.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, we have made three arguments. First, both mourning for nonhuman animals and mourning for human ideals is needed, as mourning allows us to manifest appreciation for the moral significance of the animals and ideals in question. Following the quote from the beginning of the paper, sorrow is an expression of love. If we undergo sorrow over the suffering and death of nonhuman animals, we signal our love toward those animals, our wish that they were treated with more care. Moreover, if we feel sorrow for failed human ideals, we manifest a desire that they be finally brought to fruition. In our view, both are facets of animal ethical mourning. In this context, we have introduced the term "misanthropic melancholia," and discussed how it both differs from and enriches animal ethical mourning.

Second, we must also mourn with other animals, thereby expressing moral recognition of the animal viewpoint and commitment to learning how to live in a shared world with ethical care. Here, emphasis is on paying attention to how animals grieve for their own losses.

Third, we have argued in all these cases, more rituals and rhetoric of mourning are needed. Obituaries, memorials, vigils, and other rituals can facilitate animal ethical mourning, both in relation to the lost nonhuman animals, our broken human ideals, and mourning with other animals. Human cultures also would benefit from rhetoric devices such as narratives concerning nonhuman grief, lost animals, and unfulfilled ideals—lingual methods capable of reminding us why to undergo animal ethical mourning in the first place.

Nonhuman suffering, losses, and grief are growing immensely in the era of climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and animal industries. For us human animals to become more morally aware of the destruction we have caused, and to safeguard nonhuman life in future, such mourning is surely needed. As van Dooren observes, grief is linked with learning about one's vulnerability to dangers, which is both an ethical issue and a requirement for survival. Moreover, e.g., losses of species are "death warnings" to us about the dangers we are facing.[17] We argue mourning practices over the losses faced by both humans and other animals are a method of manifesting the value of vulnerable creatures—they are a means of paying heed to "death warnings" and of fighting for survival. In this sense, animal ethical mourning is about learning how to protect life across species. What could be a more worthy project in this era of crises?

[17] See also Pihkala and Aaltola 2025.

See van Dooren 2014, where he writes also of the effort to make language concerning mourning animals to be a form of mourning in itself. We hope our article might have elements of this, too.

REFERENCES

Aaltola, E. 2018. *Varieties of Empathy: Moral Psychology and Animal Ethics*. London: Rowman & Littlefield Int. https://doi.org/10.5040/9798881816827

Aaltola, E. 2019. "The Meat Paradox, Omnivore's Akrasia, and Animal Ethics," *Animals* 9(12). https://doi.org/10.3390/ani9121125

Aaltola, E. 2021. "Defensive over Climate Change? Climate Shame as a Method of Moral Cultivation," *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 34(1): 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10806-021-09844-5

Adrian, J., A. Deliramich, and C. Frueh. 2009. "Complicated Grief and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Humans' Response to the Death of Pets/Animals," *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic* 73(3): 176–187. https://doi.org/10.1521/bumc.2009.73.3.176

Aristotle. 1999. *Nichomachean Ethics*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company. https://doi.org/10.5040/9798216385226.ch-027

Barnett, J. T. 2022. *Mourning in the Anthropocene: Ecological Grief and Earthly Existence*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press. https://doi.org/10.14321/j.ctv2npq91p

Barr, J. 2017. "Auguries of Elegy: The Art and Ethics of Ecological Grieving," in *Mourning Nature: Hope at the Heart of Ecological Loss and Grief*, ed. A. Cunsolo and K. Landman. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1w6t9hg.14

Barrett, L. 2017. *How Emotions are Made*. New York: Mariner Books.

Bekoff, M. 2000. "Animal Emotions: Exploring Passionate Natures," *BioScience* 50(10): 861–870. https://doi.org/10.1641/0006-3568(2000)050[0861:AEEPN]2.0.CO;2

Bexell, S., K. Nikitina, and L. Manna. 2023. "'This Image Haunts Me to This Day': Exploring the Psychological Impacts of Wildlife Loss on Conservation Professionals Through Photovoice," *Ecopsychology* 15(3). https://doi.org/10.1089/eco.2022.0095

Bresnahan, M., J. Zhuangand, and X. Zhu. 2016. "Why Is the Vegan Line in the Dining Hall Always the Shortest? Understanding Vegan Stigma," *Stigma and Health* 1(1): 3–15. https://doi.org/10.1037/sah0000011

Bristow, T., and A. Witcomb. 2016. "Melancholy and the Continent of Fire," in *A Cultural History of Climate Change*, ed. Tom Bristow and Thomas Ford. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315734590

Brown, Mark 2023. "Felling of Sycamore Gap Tree Damaged Hadrian's Wall, Inspection Reveals," *The Guardian*, 5 October.

Butler, J. 2004. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York: Verso.

Butler, J. 2009. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* London: Verso.

Celermajer, D. 2021. *Summertime: Reflections on a Vanishing*. London: Penguin Random House.

Clifton, S. 2005. *The Ethics of Mourning: Grief and Responsibility in Elegiac Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Cooper, D. 2018. *Animals and Misanthropy*. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315099668
Cunsolo, A., and N. Ellis. 2018. "Ecological Grief as a Mental Health Response to Climate Change-Related Loss," *Nature Climate Change* 8: 275–281. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-018-0092-2
Cunsolo, A., and K. Landman. 2017. *Mourning Nature: Hope at the Heart of Ecological Loss and Grief*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780773549357
Daros, R. R., J. Costa, M. Von Keyserlingk, M. Hötzel, and D. M. Weary. 2014. "Separation from the Dam Causes Negative Judgement Bias in Dairy Calves," *PLoS ONE* 9(5): 5–9. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0098429
de Massol de Rebetz, C. 2020. "Remembrance Day for Lost Species: Remembering and Mourning Extinction in the Anthropocene," *Memory Studies* 13(5): 875–888. https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698020944605
DeMello, M. 2016. *Mourning Animals: Rituals and Practices Surrounding Animal Death*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
Freud, S. 1953. "On Transcience," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey. London: Hogarth Press.
Freud, S. 2019. "Mourning and Melancholia," *Routledge Handbook of Psychoanalytic Political Theory*, ed. Yannis Stavrakakis. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315524771-17
Gates, Tony 2023. "A Tree Was Felled. No One Heard It. How Do You Find Out Who Did It?," *The New York Times*, 6 October.
Gerber, L. 2002. "What Is So Bad About Misanthropy?," *Environmental Ethics* 24(1): 41–55. https://doi.org/10.5840/enviroethics200224140
Gillespie, K. 2016. "Witnessing Animal Others: Bearing Witness, Grief, and the Political Function of Emotion," *Hypatia* 31(3): 572–588. https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12261
Grimes, R. 1992. "Reinventing Ritual," *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 75(1): 21–41.
Gruen, L. 2014. "Facing Death and Practicing Grief," in *Ecofeminism: Feminist Intersections with Other Animals and the Earth*, ed. Carol Adams and Lori Gruen. New York: Bloomsbury. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781501388323.ch-007
Head, L. 2016. *Hope and Grief in the Anthropocene Re-conceptualising Human-Nature Relations*. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315739335
Horwitz, A., and J. Wakefield. 2007. *The Loss of Sadness: How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195313048.001.0001
Hulse, Carl 2012. "A Giant Tortoise's Death Gives Extinction a Face," *The New York Times*, 2 July.

Jamieson, D. 2014. *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle Against Climate Change Failed—and What It Means for Our Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199337668.001.0001

Jensen, T. 2019. *Ecologies of Guilt in Environmental Rhetorics*. London: Palgrave. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-05651-3

Johnston, J., and F. Probyn-Rapsey 2013. *Animal Death*. Sydney: Sydney University Press.

Kant, I. 1996. *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. T. Hill and A. Zweig. New York: New York University Press.

Kean, H. 2016. "Britain at War: Remembering and Forgetting the Animal Dead of the Second World War," in *Mourning Animals: Rituals and Practices Surrounding Animal Death*, ed. M. DeMello. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

Kevorkian, A. 2004. *Environmental Grief: Hope and Healing*. Cincinnati: Union Institute and University.

King, B. 2013a. *How Animals Grieve*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226043722.001.0001

King, B. 2013b. "When Animals Mourn," *Scientific American* 309(1): 62–67. https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican0713-62

King, B. 2016. "Animal Mourning: Précis of *How Animals Grieve*," *Animal Sentience* 4(1). https://doi.org/10.51291/2377-7478.1010

Lear, J. 2022. *Imagining the End: Mourning and Ethical Life*. New York: Belknap Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674287471

LeMenager, S. 2011. "Petro-Melancholia: The BP Blowout and the Arts of Grief," *Qui Parle* 19(2): 25–55. https://doi.org/10.5250/quiparle.19.2.0025

Lertzman, R. 2015. *Environmental Melancholia: Psychoanalytic Dimensions of Engagement*. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315851853

Linzey, A. 2015. *Animal Rites: Liturgies of Animal Care*. London: Wipf and Stock.

Lipscombe-Southwell, Alice 2022. "As the Crow Dies: The Strange World of Bird Funerals," *BBC: Science in Focus*, 20 May.

Marton, B., T. Kilbane, and H. Nelson-Becker. 2020. "Exploring the Loss and Disenfranchised Grief of Animal Care Workers," *Death Studies* 44(1): 31–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2018.1519610

Martusewicz, R. 2014. "Letting Our Hearts Break: On Facing the Hidden Wound of Human Supremacy," *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* 19: 31–46.

McGrath, N., J. Walker, D. Nilsson, and C. Phillips. 2013. "Public Attitudes Towards Grief in Animals," *Animal Welfare* 22(1): 33–47. https://doi.org/10.7120/09627286.22.1.033

Mihai, M., and M. Thaler. 2023. "Environmental Commemoration: Guiding Principles and Real-World Cases," *Memory Studies* 17(6). https://doi.org/10.1177/17506980231176037

Monahan, L. 2016. "Mourning the Mundane: Memorializing Road-Killed Animals in North America," in *Mourning Animals: Rituals and Practices Surrounding Animal Death*, ed. M. DeMello. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

Mullen, L. 2016. *Complicated Grief*. London: Solid Objects.
Mullin, C. 2016. "Now on Exhibit: Our Affection for, Remembrance of, and Tributes to Nonhuman Animals in Museums," in *Mourning Animals: Rituals and Practices Surrounding Animal Death*, ed. M. DeMello. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
Neimeyer, R. A., L. Burke, M. Mackay, and J. Van Dyke Stringer. 2010. "Grief Therapy and the Reconstruction of Meaning: From Principles to Practice," *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy* 40(2): 73–83. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-009-9135-3
Park, R. M., K. Royal, and M. Gruen. 2023. "A Literature Review: Pet Bereavement and Coping Mechanisms," *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 26(3): 285–299. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888705.2021.1934839
Pierce, J. 2012. *The Last Walk: Reflections on Our Pets at the End of Their Lives*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226922041.001.0001
Pihkala, P. 2020. "Eco-anxiety and Environmental Education," *Sustainability* 12(23): 1–38. https://doi.org/10.3390/su122310149
Pihkala, P. 2021. "Ympäristöahdistus ja rituaalit: analyysiä ympäristötunteiden rituaalisesta käsittelystä," *Uskonnontutkija* 10(1). https://doi.org/10.24291/uskonnontutkija.109191
Pihkala, P. 2022. "Toward a Taxonomy of Climate Emotions," *Frontiers in Climate* 3(1): 1–22. https://doi.org/10.3389/fclim.2021.738154
Pihkala, P., and E. Aaltola. 2025. "Animal Ethical Mourning: Types of Loss and Grief in Relation to Non-Human Animals," *Frontiers in Veterinary Science* 12 (April): 1526302. https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2025.1526302
Pribac, T. B. 2013. "Animal Grief," *Animal Studies Journal* 2(2): 67–90.
Pribac, T. B. 2021. *Enter the Animal: Cross-species Perspectives on Grief and Spirituality*. Sydney: Sydney University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1dv0vz1
Radden, J. 2000. *The Nature of Melancholy: From Aristotle to Kristeva*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Radomska, M. 2023. "Ecologies of Death, Ecologies of Mourning: A Biophilosophy of Non/Living Arts," *Research in Arts and Education*(2). https://doi.org/10.54916/rae.127532
Rose, D. B. 2011. *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
Stanescu, J. 2012. "Species Trouble: Judith Butler, Mourning, and the Precarious Lives of Animals," *Hypatia* 27(3): 567–582. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2012.01280.x
Turner, V. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.
van Dooren, T. 2014. *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction*. New York: Columbia University Press. https://doi.org/10.7312/vand16618