

Every Life is Sacred: James Herriot's *All Creatures Great and Small* as a Discourse in Animal Studies

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Abstract:

The research paper attempts to study the text *All Creatures Great and Small* (1972) by James Herriot (1890-1918) in the context of “Animal Studies”. The text is a series of episodes that occur in the first two years of the veterinary practice of the protagonist James Herriot. The narrative is told through short anecdotes about training and healing animals, meeting farmers and other clients as well as participating in the culture of the Dales. The main focus of the paper in the context of “Animal Studies Literary Theory” is that to study the animals in various cross-disciplinary ways as represented in the text. The paper elucidates the notion of intersectionality in the context of the text thereby spelling out the analytical framework of interlocking systems of power and the way they impact the marginalized in this world. It illustrates the concept of Anthrozoology which deals with the interactions between humans and other animals thereby focusing on the politics of the species. The paper analyzes the notions of animality or brutality from a particular theoretical and ethical perspective thereby focusing on animal rights, the definition of humanity in relation to animals. The paper establishes that the differences between the species are not naturally arranged into the hierarchy of value. It also posits that the idea of a fixed, essential and definable boundary between the general concepts such as humans and animals is obsolete. Thus, it is proven that ideas such as animality and humanity are cultural concepts. The paper also deals with the aspect of animal welfare and the key role played by human beings in this sphere especially in the context of veterinary science. The paper takes into consideration the representation of animals as they are presented in the text.

Keywords: Animal Studies, Veterinary Science, Intersectionality, Anthrozoology and Animality

Discourse of Animal Studies in *All Creatures Great and Small*:

Discourse is involved in power which reduces political forces, economic forces, ideological control and social control to mere signifying processes (paraphrased from Seldan 100). Michel Foucault (1926-1984) regards discourse as a central human activity. Animal Studies is a nascent field which has emerged by involving the study of animals in cross-disciplinary ways. The fields that are involved in “Animal Studies” are Geography, Art History, Anthropology, Biology, Film Studies, History, Psychology, Literary Studies, Museology, Philosophy, Communication and Sociology (“Animal Studies”). “Animal Studies” is based on the discourse of “politics of species” which foregrounds ethical questions about human-animal relations in literary ways such as through character, theme, narrative and style. It is a mode of inquiry that is inspired by non-human animals and the lives that are lived with them (“Approaching Animals in Literature”).

The discourse embodied in *All Creatures Great and Small* (1972) by James Herriot (1890-1918) is that of “Animal Studies”. It is a part of an eight-book series which is based on the lyrics of an Anglican hymn “All things bright and beautiful” published in *Hymns for Little Children* by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895), an Anglo-Irish hymnodist and poet.

It is partially a fictionalized autobiographical account and a memoir which is set in the fictional town of Darrowby, Yorkshire Dales, England in a span of time from 1930s to 1950s and describes the experiences of a British veterinary surgeon. Hence, being rooted in the discourse of “Animal Studies”. James Herriot provides a first-hand account based on his observations as a veterinarian of the relationship between man and beast as well as humans in the country. Moreover, it also focusses and documents a period of change in the veterinary industry with many ancient treatments being obliterated and new drugs being discovered and put into use. Since 20th century was a period that was well-to-do so more people could afford to keep pets rather than as beasts of burden. The increase in disposable income led to veterinarians shifting focus from working with beasts of burden to pets such as cats and dogs.

“Animal Studies” is the area that can be studied in cross-disciplinary ways involving various fields. The text involves Geography as it describes the topography of Yorkshire Dale in England where James Herriot will operate as a veterinary surgeon. When James Herriot travels in a bus to Dales in Yorkshire county, England for an interview as an assistant to Siegfried Farnon who owns the veterinary practice in Darrowby. He describes the landscape of Yorkshire Dales in England as:

The formless heights were resolving into high, grassy hills and wide valleys.

In the valley bottoms, rivers twisted among the trees and solid grey-stone farmhouses lay among islands of cultivated land which pushed bright promontories up the hillsides into the dark tide of heather which lapped from the summits. (Herriot 15)

James Herriot describes his experiences in his career as a vet of treating animals, meeting farmers and other clients thereby participating in the culture of Yorkshire Dales, England.

The text depicts the involvement of Anthropology through its exploration of human condition of living and human relationships. “Animal Studies” involves Anthropology as humans too are animals and Anthropology as a discipline studies humans, human behaviors and human societies in the past as well as in the present ages. James Herriot emphasizes on the relationships and connections formed between human beings. The family relationships are represented through the family unit of Siegfried Farnon and the bonding in the family on the basis of individual’s happiness and growth. Siegfried Farnon and Tristan Farnon, Siegfried Farnon’s brother, have a close, caring and a bitter sweet relationship. Siegfried becomes more serious when he is in the presence of Tristan. Moreover, when Tristan admits to Siegfried that he has failed in two exams Siegfried is furious and asks him to leave the house. James Herriot is shocked by Siegfried’s decision to evict his brother from the house but Tristan mentions that Siegfried will be fine in the morning (Herriot 48-53). The interpersonal bonding is the essence of their relationship. James Herriot’s friendship with Dick Rudd who invites Herriot to his silver wedding anniversary celebration is based on the fact that James Herriot feels that there is a divide between the country folk and himself except for Dick Rudd who is a poor dairy farmer and is extremely generous. Dick Rudd has many cows of high quality and he helps Dick Rudd by treating one of his cows called Strawberry (Herriot 351-357). It also presents the growing bonding between James Herriot and Helen Alderson which is initiated by James joining the Music Society to become intimate with Helen (293-295). He also takes Helen on a date although it turns out to be a disaster they spend some time together and face the eventualities together. Thus, the author illustrates the important human needs of love and friendship (322-330).

The text posits the involvement of Biology in “Animal Studies” as it begins with a description of James Herriot birthing a calf in the middle of the night in Dinsdale Farm and the struggle that is involved in birthing it as he has been working for hours unsuccessfully. He tries to change the position of the calf while it is still in the womb of its mother, the cow. His entire arm is shown to be inside the cow’s womb while he lies caked in blood and dirt.

He is finally able to birth the calf alive. James Herriot

is shown to pause for a moment and appreciate the miraculously born calf (7-14).

The text chronicles the advances made in the history of Veterinary Science in “Animal Studies”. James Herriot mentions the use of local anesthesia that has made painful operations painless. He gives the example of castrating horses during the period of spring time. Local anesthesia is administered on young horses when they are castrated. James Herriot mentions that there is the danger of getting kicked by the horses when castration is being done as it is a painful process but local anesthesia paralyzes the designated area. He described the procedure in the following way by comparing the way it was done in the past and the way it was done during the time of James Herriot:

I didn't like the job and since there might be up to a hundred to be done, it cast a shadow over this and many subsequent springs. For generations the operation had been done by casting the colt and tying him up very like a trussed chicken. It was a bit laborious but the animal was under complete restraint and it was possible to concentrate entirely on the job; but about the time I qualified, standing castration was coming very much to the fore. It consisted very much of applying a twitch to the colt's upper lip, injecting a shot of local anesthetic into each testicle and going straight ahead. There was no doubt it was a lot quicker. (165)

“Animal Studies” involves Psychology as depicted in the text through the psychology of the veterinarian surgeon James Herriot. James treats a stallion with a tumor and the procedure to remove it was difficult because of the horse's size, strength and stubbornness. Moreover, the vet was scared of the horse. At the time of the procedure the vet was kicked hard in the leg by the horse and the vet got several severe bruises resulting in a massive haematoma at the point of impact and the whole limb blossomed into a range of colors from delicate orange to deepest black thereby learning the lesson that “fear is worse than the reality” (170) and he has never been worried since then.

The text makes a case for “Animal Studies” as it is based on first hand experiences of a British veterinary surgeon. These experiences have been penned in the form of an autobiography or a memoir thereby involving literary studies. These accounts describe the various medical conditions of the animals and the treatment that is provided to them in addition to providing insights into veterinary science and details of the culture of the farming community in Yorkshire Dale, England. James Herriot becomes an inspector of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and is expected to check all the local cattle for tuberculosis through tuberculin testing. He arranges a tightly scheduled day to inspect the cattle for tuberculosis and then vaccinate them. He asks the farmers to assemble the cows indoors for the medical check-up but he realizes that the farmers do not have an urgent sense of timing (268). This example provides insights into the medical condition of cows, the preventive treatment to be provided to them and also the culture of the farming community.

The text has no reference to Museology in relation to “Animal Studies” as the dead animals are not shown to be preserved as exhibits for public viewing and pleasure which could be an issue in the domain of animal rights. The text honors the underlying philosophy on which it is based that all forms of life are sacred. However, a limited reference to Museology may be seen in the display of veterinary tools and medicines in Siegfried Farnon's office. He is shown to have an impressive collection of pharmaceutical remedies in his dispensary where he stores his pre-made medicines and chemicals. He has a number of shiny tools hanging on the walls of a room where he keeps his operating instruments and he also has an operating room for working with small animals (26-29). Thus, his dispensary is more of a museum that is well maintained.

The text has a philosophical foundation which is again related to “Animal Studies” as the title of the text *All Creatures Great and Small* emphasize on the philosophy that all forms of life are sacred and hence should be looked upon

with love, care and compassion. The veterinary science is infused with this philosophy so that animals are treated with love, care and compassion. In the text, James Herriot is sent to see a dog, a cross-bred Labrador Bob, that belongs to an old man Mr. Dean who lives off a small street known as “Dean 3, Thomson’s Yard”. The dog has been the old man’s companion as his wife has died. James Herriot examines the dog which is in pain and finds him to be having a hard, corrugated mass through the thin muscle of his flank which is inoperable cancer, a splenic or hepatic carcinoma. In this scenario, James advises the old man to put the dog to sleep to relieve him from pain. The old man agrees and the drug which is a barbiturate is administered to the dog. An overdose of the anesthetic helps the dog to die peacefully. The release from pain that James Herriot provides to the dog shows his sensitivity towards animals and it is his compassion towards them that makes him undertake this course of action (85-88).

The text involves Communication in the field of “Animal Studies” emphasizing on the fact that non-human animals have a viable way of communicating with human animals or with other non-human animals. James Herriot narrates an experience which refers to the non-verbal communication between a cow and him while he treats the cow who is suffering as a result of facing difficulty in producing milk:

We did two more visits, one to a calf with a cut leg which I stitched, dressed and bandaged, then to the cow with the blocked teat.

Mr. Sharpe was waiting still looking eager. He led us into the byre, and Farnon gestured towards the cow. “See what you can make of it.”

I squatted down and palpated the teat, feeling the mass of thickened tissue half up. It would have to be broken down by a Hudson’s instrument and I began to work the thin metal spiral up the teat. One second later, I was sitting gasping in the dung channel with the neat imprint of a cloven hoof on my shirt front, just over the solar plexus. (32)

The text involves aspects of Sociology at the level of the village in depicting the social life of the farming community and the way in which they socialize with each other and also with the vets such as Siegfried Farnon and James Herriot. The novel offers an insight into the enjoyment of finer qualities in life. The social life of the village revolves around horse races, parties, dances, movies, the performances of the music society and gambling. James Herriot witnesses the farmers going to musical performances and movies. He meets his clients at the performance of *The Messiah* at the church (84) and in the movie theater. James Herriot is invited to high society parties such as the one hosted by Mrs. Pumphrey for her pampered dog Tricki Woo (123-127) and also to the village dances and to the pubs of the working-class people.

Since *All Creatures Great and Small* is based on “Animal Studies” it foregrounds the discourse of “politics of species” that raises ethical questions related to human-animal relations in literary ways such as character, theme, narrative and style. The animals appear in the novel as characters who are primarily the patients of the vet James Herriot. Mrs. Pumphrey’s pampered Pekingese dog Tricki Woo is treated by James Herriot as he was suffering from “flop bott” and “cracker dog”. His ailments are a result of Mrs. Pumphrey’s overfeeding him with human food (95-100). The theme of the novel is to project the sacredness of every life. James Herriot visits the dogs and cats of Miss Stubbs, a poor elderly woman who is very sick and cannot leave her bed. Mrs. Broadwith is her caretaker. Miss Stubbs’ family used to have money but her father lost it all and now, all she can afford is her small cottage, her animals and her caretaker. James Herriot describes her cottage as small and cluttered and Miss Stubbs’ bed has a cardboard sign hanging over it that says “God is Near.” Miss Stubbs’ animals have various ailments and all of them are more than ten years old.

When one of her dogs dies she tells James Herriot that

she will die next. Herriot tells her not to worry but she says that she is not afraid. She is upset because she thinks that she won't be able to see her animals in heaven, since people have told her that animals don't have souls. Herriot comforts her by saying that, if having a soul means being able to love, then animals are better off than most humans. She is greatly comforted. A month later, Herriot finds out that Miss Stubbs has died—a farmer mentions to him that her house is for sale. He worries about her animals, but finds out that they have been taken in by Mrs. Broadwith, who promises she will care for them well (284-292). The novel is written from the first-hand perspective of a British veterinarian James Herriot thereby recording his clinical experiences in the form of a memoir with clinical precision in a pragmatic way. The novel primarily focusses on various medical conditions of animals, their diagnosis, prognosis and treatment. The treating of animals by the veterinary surgeon involves precise medical attention and medical advice coupled with love, care and compassion thereby providing insights into the human-animal relationship. In the novel, it is brought to the fore by the incident that James Herriot goes on a farm call to help a pig give birth to her piglets. The situation in the farm is adverse as there is very little light to see and he is given very cold water to wash up. He is very tired and falls asleep by delivering the piglets. But James Herriot maintains his alertness and delivers the piglets safely thereby marveling at the wonder of new life (127-133). The ethical questions that are raised in the novel are whether animal lives are as sacred or significant as lives of the human animals and do the animals need the same love, care and compassion as the human animals. When James Herriot attends a party at Mrs. Pumphrey's which has been organized by her for Tricki Woo, her dog, he is introduced to the other guests as "Tricki's dear kind uncle" and no one finds the fact to be strange that James Herriot is being referred to as a dog's uncle. In fact, James Herriot advises Mrs. Pumphrey to feed the dog less food and Mrs. Pumphrey complies to his advice (123-127). This beautifully establishes the significance of animal life and puts the human-animal relationship on an equal plane thereby exhibiting the fact that animals are no different from human animals and they too need love, care and compassion.

The German philosopher Nietzsche (1844-1900) states that all knowledge is an expression of the "Will to Power". Thus, there are no absolute truths or objective knowledge. A particular piece of philosophy or scientific theory is considered to be true if it conforms to the descriptions of truth laid down by the intellectual or political authorities or else by the members of the ruling elite or the prevailing ideologues of knowledge (Seldan 100-101). The novel *All Creatures Great and Small* illustrates it through the veterinary surgeon James Herriot's decision to treat the ailments in animals by not only using modern scientific methods but also using old unscientific methods depending on the medical condition, its diagnosis and prognosis. An instance that can be presented from the text to illustrate this aspect is that of a charismatic farmer, Phin Calvert, who calls on James Herriot to attend to his animals. He expects James Herriot, a young vet, to use modern and exciting remedies. However, in both cases, the illness is simple. The first case is a case of calves with lead poisoning, which Herriot is able to cure with only Epsom salts. The next case is a case of his prize bull, who turns out to have sunstroke and James Herriot cures him by spraying him with cold water. This puzzles Phin Calvert, but he is grateful nonetheless. Later on, at a farmer's discussion group, the farmers talk of the new technology and knowledge that vets use to treat animals. Phin Calvert denies this notion, and tells the other farmers about the new vet James Herriot who uses not only modern scientific methods to treat animals but also simple, old, unscientific methods of treatment to treat animals. The novel captures a period in the history of veterinary science when the field was still in the process of evolution. There were many changes that the discipline of veterinary science was undergoing as a result both the old and the unscientific as well as the new and the scientific methods of treating the animal patients

were in currency and the veterinary doctors made use of both the methods of treatments depending on the medical condition of the animal patients. At the same time many ancient treatments were obliterated such as the use of “Marshmallow ointment” (37) which was believed to treat any infection in horses, a remedy suggested by a local farmer, and new drugs were put into use in this field. Another marked change introduced as a preventive measure by the government health standards was the increase in attention to eradicating tuberculosis in cows. The British government paid special attention to this in the 1930s. The agricultural decline after World War I, followed by “The Great Depression” had an effect on the health of cows, leading to milk contamination. This increased attention to tuberculosis is notable in James Herriot’s novel with reference to his work as an inspector which involves testing cows for tuberculosis (268-273).

The new real-world conditions resulting in new knowledge about the relations between humans and animals are seen in exponential rise in pet-keeping, agribusiness and increase in meat consumption, experimental technoscience/transgenic animals (nature/culture breakdown), diversification/massification of animal-related leisure pursuits (zoos/animal display/Disney animal shows/horse racing/gambling), conservation/anti-cruelty (welfare)/environmentalism/animal rights, zoonotic diseases, animal intelligence/sentience (dolphins, elephants, chimpanzees) etcetera (“Approaching Animals in Literature”). It in turn leads to an increased focus on “Anthrozoology” or the human-non-human-animal studies the essence of which lies in quantifying the positive effects of human-animal relationships on either party and the study of their interactions. The novel focuses on pet animals and farm animals or domesticated animals in a farming community in Yorkshire Dales in England and the relationships between humans such as pet keepers/owners, farmers and vets and non-human animals such as dogs and cats as pets as well as cows, pigs, horses and bulls as farm animals in the abovementioned farming community. In an anecdote in the novel, James Herriot mentions the Bramleys, a family of three brothers and one sister, who own a farm in the valley and have minimal contact with the outside world. James Herriot’s heart is warmed by their intense concern for their cats when all the cats begin to die from an infectious disease. James Herriot’s presence of mind saves the prized kittens and as a measure of preventive medication he vaccinates them. Later, James Herriot gets a note of appreciation from Miss Bramley stating that many of the kittens whom James Herriot had vaccinated have grown into big cats (395-398). This instance highlights an aspect of “Anthrozoology” as the relationship between the Bramleys and the pet cats was therapeutic in nature. The family was secluded and led an isolated existence by engaging in minimal interaction or association with the outside world but the members of the family were offered companionship in their isolation by the cats which acted as a psychological therapy. As a result of which the Bramleys were intensely concerned about the well-being of their pet cats.

There is a historical dimension of discursive change. A scientific theory is not accepted in its period of creation if it does not conform to the power consensus of the institutions and official organs of Science. The rules and procedures which determine the ideas which are normal and rational actually silence the ideas which they exclude. The individuals who work within particular discursive practices are conditioned by the unconscious archive of ideas prevailing in the contemporary period and if they disobey the unconscious archive of rules and constraints they will be silenced. The discursive mastery works by exclusion and rarefaction (each practice narrows its content and meaning by thinking only in terms of author and discipline) (Seldan 100-101). The novel projects an instance of James Herriot’s interaction with the Sidlow family which is a very unfriendly family that does not believe in vets or their advanced, modern scientific methods of treating animal patients. They believe that vets are useless creatures, parasites and expensive layabouts. Mr. Sidlow is of the opinion that he can cure

animals using his grandfather's invented remedies and would call the vet if and only if there is an emergency but these remedies do not cure the animal patients but makes their condition worse and they become incurable (312-321). This instance from the novel shows that though veterinary science is evolving but it has a scientific basis that is normal and rational so it does not accept the innovative homemade remedies for treating the animal patients thereby excluding or silencing such remedies which have no history of curing the patients and are extremely dubious and unscientific with no positive effects on the animal patients. If any old and unscientific method of treating patients is in currency then it is only because it has had a history of curing the patients or has had a positive effect on the patients. The phenomenon of rarefaction is witnessed in this case as only those methods of treatment whether simple, old and unscientific or new and scientific are used which are suggested by a qualified veterinary doctor thereby narrowing the content of the history of veterinary medicine by thinking in terms of the qualified vets, their suggestive methods of treatment and the discipline of veterinary science. The methods of treatment which are suggested by laymen and have no efficacy should be discarded.

The social constraints which are operational in the domain of discursive practices function through the formative power of the educational system which defines the rational and the scholarly. The text depicts that since veterinary science is still in an evolutionary phase when the text is written and this fact itself operates as a social constraint in the domain of discursive practices in relation to accepting veterinary science as a valid, rational and scholarly discipline. James Herriot himself thinks of the Obstetrics book which has a picture of a veterinary surgeon birthing a calf but it is very much divorced from reality and pragmatism. The description of the picture is as follows:

My mind went back to that picture in the obstetrics book. A cow standing in the middle of a gleaming floor while a sleek veterinary surgeon in a spotless parturition overall inserted his arm to a polite distance. He was relaxed and smiling, the farmers and his helpers were smiling, even the cow was smiling. There was no dirt or blood or sweat anywhere. (7)

Thus, the incident of recalling the picture from an Obstetrics book shows that the veterinary science was still in a rudimentary phase and any veterinary surgeon could become an expert in his field not only by mastering the techniques of birthing or treatment theoretically but by undertaking the operations and procedures in the practical situations. The other reason being that not all farmers of the farming community are well educated to accept the field of veterinary science as a legitimate discipline. As a result, the public, in this case the Sidlows, are skeptical about the vets and the veterinary science although the profession is useful to the animals and their owners such as the Sidlows.

The historical dimension of discursive change in the domain of "Animal Studies" is presented through the evolution of ideas over a period of time in this domain as presented here. The field is based on the idea of "The Great Chain of Being" as created and advocated by the ancient Greeks that all beings exist on a linear scale and the animals have some human like traits (paraphrased from "Animal Studies"). Aristotle (384-322 BC), a philosopher and a scientist from Greece did distinguish between humans and other animals on the basis of reason. Porphyry of Tyre (c. 234 – c. 305 AD) was a Neoplatonic philosopher who published an early treatise on vegetarianism. René Descartes (1596-1650), a French philosopher, mathematician and scientist in *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641) states in his philosophy of animals that they are machines.

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) a Utilitarian philosopher in *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* states that it is not significant whether animals can think or not but whether they can feel or not thereby subverting René Descartes' postulates related to animals.

Aristotle's ideas were questioned by Charles Robert Darwin's (1809-1882) revolutionary and pathbreaking ideas in relation to evolution which postulated that all species have descended over time from the common ancestors. In a joint publication with Russel Wallace (1823-1913), he introduced his scientific theory that this branching pattern of evolution resulted from a process that he called natural selection in which the struggle for existence has a similar effect to the artificial selection involved in selective breeding. In the decades following Charles Robert Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859), Victorian feminists such as Frances Power Cobbe (1822-1904) who was an Irish writer, social reformer, anti-vivisection activist and leading women's suffrage campaigner not only lobbied for women's suffrage but also advocated compassion for animals by initiating dog shelters and by debating for better animal welfare standards. The Victoria Street Society is founded by animal welfare people to argue against the use of animals for scientific experiments.

John Peter Berger (1926-2017) an English art critic, a Marxist critic, novelist, painter and poet who won the 1972 Booker Prize for his novel *G.* and his essay on art criticism *Ways of Seeing* was written as an accompaniment to a BBC series. His essay titled "Why Look at Animals?" (1980) questioned the relationship of humans with other animals in art as well as in life. He states that humans should not look at animals just because they are adorable.

In 1975, an Australian moral philosopher who is the Ira W De Camp Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University and a Laureate Professor at the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics at the University of Melbourne Peter Albert David Singer's (born 1946-) book *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Liberation of Animals* (1975) advocated for the rights of the animals. Thus, the evolution of "Animal Studies" which followed a trajectory from perceiving humans to be different from animals then perceiving animals compassionately and finally animals being viewed as the possessors of rights which initiates the existence of the "Animal Studies Theory".

Carol J. Adams (born 1951-) is an American writer, feminist and animal rights advocate who is the author of several books such as *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory* (1990) and *The Pornography of Meat* (2004) which focus on the link between the oppression of women and that of non-human animals.

Donna J. Haraway (born 1944-), a distinguished American Professor Emerita in the Department of History of Consciousness and Department of Feminist Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz, United States of America who wrote books such as *Primate Visions: Gender, Race and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (1989), *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) and *When Species Meet* (2008). She through the idea of "Companion Species" posits that the humans and animals "co-shape" one another which is the key to a happy life as it is based on companionship and cooperation.

Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) an Algerian born French philosopher who is known for developing a form of semiotic analysis known as deconstruction which he discussed in numerous texts and developed in the context of phenomenology. He anthologized and published his lectures in *The Animal that Therefore I Am* (1997) and *The Beast and the Sovereign* (2011). He indicated that the human language is abusive to the animals and there are many species of animals on this planet but they are reduced to a single category, that is, of "animals". He posits that the idea of animality only exists in language especially in words.

The theorists such as Giorgio Agamben (born 1942-), an Italian philosopher investigating the ideas of the state of exception, form of life and homo sacer which are informed by the concept of biopolitics, Cary Wolfe (born 1959-), a teacher of English in Rice University, Houston, Texas, United States of America and Mathew Calarco have contributed multiple threads of ideas to "Animal Studies" focusing on the relationship between literature and the lines of thought on the animals in Continental philosophy.

Jonathan Safran Foer (born 1977-) is an American novelist who teaches creative writing at New York University. His best-known novels are *Everything is Illuminated* (2002), *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* (2005) and *Here I Am* (2016). He wrote a non-fictional work *Eating Animals* (2009) which states his theory on vegetarianism which implements innovative strategies to promote conscientious food choices, reduce farm animal suffering and advance sustainable agriculture.

Intersectionality refers to an analytic framework that explores the interlocking system of power which impacts the marginalized in the world in this case the animals in relation to the human animals (“Approaching Animals in Literature”) thereby resulting in “Speciesism” which is a form of discrimination based on the membership of a particular species. It involves treating members of one species as morally more important than members of other species even when their interests are equivalent. It justifies the cruelty to animals. The novel ostensibly subverts speciesism by bringing human animals and non-human animals on the same plane and by treating members of both the categories equally. The power gradient between humans and animals is undone by bringing the animals to the center of the power dynamics either as patients whom the vet who is a human has to take care of with great love, care and compassion or as companions or pets whom the humans have to depend on. James Herriot the veterinary surgeon in question shows the same expertise, alertness, astuteness, love, care and compassion in treating the non-human animal patients as doctors of the medical profession would show in treating their human animal patients. An instance that can be mentioned here in this context is James Herriot’s efforts in treating a cow that has diarrhea whom he examines after getting a call from Sidlows. During the visit James Herriot’s thermometer gets sucked into the cow’s rectum. He ran his fingers round inside the rectum, he pushed his hand inside without success, he panicked and rolled up his sleeve but groped about in vain. In his panic, he discarded all knowledge of Pathology and Anatomy. He could visualize the little glass tube working its way swiftly through the intestinal tract till it pierced some vital organ. There was a hideous image of himself carrying out a major operation, that is, a full-scale laparotomy on the cow to retrieve his thermometer. Finally, he felt the thermometer between his fingers and pulled it out, filthy and dripping (320). James Herriot’s care in treating the cow becomes evident when he is extremely careful in not using any technique to search for the thermometer in the cow’s abdomen which might damage any of the internal organs of the cow.

The matrix of oppression or domination in this case is based on the mapping of intelligence of animals by using human parameters. Language is considered to be a parameter to map the intelligence in animals. The humans have languages in addition to which a few species in the animal world have languages too. On the other hand, many of the species of animals do not have languages. There are many theorists operational in the domain of “Animal Studies” who state that different species of animals do possess languages of their own and are adept at using these languages. The cultural articulations of biological species such as “humanity”, “animality” and “bestiality” are subverted in the domain of intersectionality in “Animal Studies” (“Animal Studies”). In the novel, James Herriot meets a pig-breeder and an inn-owner with a passion for pig farming, Mr. Worley. He has six sows namely Queenie, Princess, Ruby, Marigold, Delilah and Primrose that he breeds. His connection to his pigs is heartwarming as well as unique as he converses with his pigs in a “pig language” and the pigs respond to him. Mr. Worley knelt by Queenie’s head, patted her and crooned into her ear in the “pig language” and the sow responded to him with little, soft grunts (246-253). This instance shows that human-animal connection is bi-directional and animals are as responsive as humans which shows animals to be intelligent thereby subverting the matrix of oppression and domination that is based on the foundation of humans being superior to other animals on the basis of

their intelligence. It also subverts the cultural constructs of “humanity”, “animality” and “bestiality” as the pigs show the same emotional quotient as Mr. Worley.

The differences between various species are not naturally arranged in a hierarchy of value. There might be hierarchies of strength but none of the species can be considered to be better than the other. It renders the fixed, essential and definable boundary between the ideas of “human” and “animal” as obsolete. The text depicts that death brings both human animals and non-human animals on the same plane as death is inevitable for the members of both the categories. Euthanasia is legally acceptable for terminally ill human patients in some countries of the world. A similar kind of mercy killing is shown to be done in the case of Mr. Dean’s old cross-breed Labrador Bob who has splenic or hepatic carcinoma, that is, inoperable cancer and is in pain. James Herriot gives him an overdose of anesthesia which is a barbiturate to release him from the pain. This instance shows that death unites all forms of life as any entity that is born has to die thereby making the fixed, essential and definable boundary between humans and animals obsolete. Moreover, the decision to release Bob from pain is also about animal rights.

The idea of “anthropomorphism” which refers to attributing human form and characteristics to animals is subverted by “theriomorphism” which refers to attributing animal form and characteristics to humans (“Approaching Animals in Literature”). The novel does display “theriomorphism” by projecting the fact that the domesticated animals such as cows or cattle, pigs etcetera live in herds (268) and litters (246) respectively similarly human animals also live in social groups and are basically social animals. Thus, in the novel it is observed that as James Herriot settles down to the life of a veterinarian in Darrowby the locals and farmers accept him as one among them when they realize that he is a competent veterinary surgeon. On the other hand, James Herriot also admires the townspeople and their strong sense of friendship (79). This is an instance of “theriomorphism” as the inherent instinct to belong to a social group in human animals has originally come from animals which live in herds. The human animals or the non-human animals have the herd mentality or the inherent instinct to belong to a group. Similarly, in the case of mating which is the basic instinct seen in both human animals as well as non-human animals. In the novel, it is projected through the courtship and marriage of James Herriot and Helen Alderson (456) although marriage is considered to be a social institution unique to humans.

A strategy suggested by “Animal Studies” is that human cultures should narrate and re-narrate the truth about animals, their value, the treatment that should be meted out to animals by humans (“Approaching Animals in Literature”). The text does narrate the truth about animals. James Herriot remembers a man named Kit Bilton who raises pigs for family consumption but every time he has to kill a pig Kit cries for days. James Herriot thinks an ideal farmer should not be as emotional as Kit, but should still care about the welfare of his farm animals. James Herriot tells Siegfried that he believes that farmers with fewer animals usually do have some sort of affection for the animals as they often give them names (296-304).

The area of “Animal Welfare” received a fillip in the Post-War period (1945-1970) on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. It includes wild prey animal protection (Hunting Regulation), domestic and animal protection (Humane Slaughter Regulation), feral animal and commodity animal protection (Animal Experimentation Regulation) and biodiversity protection (Endangered Species Regulation). In the novel, providing proper medical attention to the farm animals of the farming community in Darrowby, Yorkshire Dales, England is projected as an aspect of animal welfare. In the novel, Dick Rudd who is a poor dairy farmer has a beautiful, high-pedigree dairy cow of a deep roan color named Strawberry. Dick Rudd asks James Herriot to come and take a look at her. During the medical check-up James

Herriot discovers that Strawberry has an abscess in her throat which is worsening but James Herriot is not confident about helping her but finally he takes the decision to drain the abscess in the cow's throat surgically even though it is a risky procedure. He cannot consult his peer Siegfried Farnon as he is away on a conference. James Herriot undertakes the surgery which proves to be successful and the cow recovers (347-357). Thus, this instance of healing the cow's pain and suffering may be considered as an aspect of animal welfare as the timely medical intervention of the veterinary surgeon saves the cow from misery and death. Animal welfare is all about saving precious animal lives.

Discourses are produced within a real world of power struggle. In various disciplines, power is gained through discourse. Discourse is considered to be a violence which is done on things. The claims of objectivity in terms of various discourses are spurious as there are no absolutely "true" discourses only more or less powerful ones (Seldan 102). The text is grounded in the discourse of "Animal Studies" in relation to veterinary science and is set in 1930s during a period of time when veterinary practices were using modern methods of treating animals but before the advent of antibiotics and modern techniques of surgeries. James Herriot and his fellow veterinary surgeons are shown to be well-informed about the advances in animal medicine. They have to counter the old folk methods of treating diseases in livestock such as "worm in the tail", a mythical disease believed to be seen in the cows the remedy to which is cutting the cow's tail. According to the modern corpus of knowledge in the field of veterinary science there is no such disease but James Herriot still finds it difficult to convince the farmers of Yorkshire. This example shows that the modern scientific discourse in the field of veterinary science existing in the contemporary times of James Herriot disputes and rejects the old mythical disease which is an instance of the outdated discourse existing in the past without any scientific basis. James Herriot's text is based on animal medicine of his contemporary times but at the same time James Herriot's resources are limited to the knowledge available to him during those times so sometimes he uses solutions which are simple and unscientific such as using Epsom salts to treat lead poisoning in calves (171-177). So, James Herriot discards a discourse related to a mythical disease and also its unscientific treatment but on the other hand he does subscribe to an unscientific solution in relation to the lead poisoning of the calves which shows that claims to objectivity in terms of various discourses are spurious. There are no absolutely "true" discourses only more or less powerful discourses. Moreover, in this case the power of a discourse in animal medicine derives from its efficacy or effectiveness on the patients. A discourse in animal medicine that has its origin in the past but is effective in providing the diagnosis and prognosis of the ailment as well as in curing the patients in the modern times becomes a powerful discourse but an old discourse from the past that is not helpful in providing a viable diagnosis, prognosis or in curing the animal patients in the modern times is discarded as obsolete. The course to be undertaken is that a coupling of old and current discourses may be useful in the diagnosis of the ailments, their prognosis and in treating the animal patients. The old methods of treatment may be useful as new methods of treatment involving antibiotics may have hazardous side effects. Thus, in the text Siegfried Farnon treats a horse through bloodletting which is considered to be an ancient and unscientific practice (399-406).

The main underlying philosophy of the text *All Creatures Great and Small* is that each and every form of life is sacred and should be treated with love, care and compassion. This idea is brought home in the context of veterinary science and the use of veterinary science in treating the farm animals in the farming community of Darrowby, Yorkshire Dales in England by James Herriot, a veterinary surgeon. He is shown to treat the animals with sincerity, love, care and compassion which focuses on the human-animal connection and his association with the farming community of the place focuses on the human relationships. The novel is autobiographical in nature and is written as a

memoir. The text is rooted in the discourse of “Animal Studies” which can be studied in cross-disciplinary ways. The text foregrounds the idea of “Anthrozoology” through the interactions between the vet James Herriot and his animal patients. The text subverts the matrix of oppression or domination which has been in place in the natural world based on the premise that humans are superior in intelligence compared to animals thereby negating the idea of “intersectionality”. The text also undercuts the cultural constructs of “humanity”, “animality” and “bestiality” by bringing the animals on an equal plane as the humans through “theriomorphism”. The text has been written from the first-hand perspective of the veterinary surgeon, James Herriot, thereby providing insights into the profession of veterinary medicine. It chronicles the developments made in the field of veterinary science. The historical dimension of discursive change is also projected through the chronological developments in “Animal Studies” over a period of time. The text foregrounds its ideas related to animal welfare in the case of farm animals. It focuses on the acceptance and rejection of scientific theories or discourses in the field of veterinary science and animal studies based on the unconscious archive of ideas prevalent in a particular historical period. The text posits that a combination of old unscientific discourses in veterinary medicine may be useful depending on their effectiveness in addition to modern scientific discourses in the same field. The animals are either presented as pets who are companions of their owners or as patients of James Herriot.

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