Université de Genève
Faculté des lettres

The Importance of Emotions in Animal Ethics

Maîtrise en philosophie contemporaine

Mémoire présenté par : Maude Ouellette-Dubé

Directeurs : professeur Julien Deonna, professeur Fabrice Teroni

Déposé le 22 janvier 2017

Content

Foreword

I am glad to present my master thesis. Although there is always room for improvement, I am happy to have finally written this paper, as I feel like its main ideas had been growing in my mind ever since I started my studies in Geneva, perhaps even before. While I have gained philosophical experience during my bachelor, I feel like it is during my master studies that I was confronted to myself, my aspirations and my limits. Writing this text involved a variety of challenges and I need to thank all of those who made it possible for me to finish it. I want to thank my two very dedicated thesis supervisors Professor Julien Deonna and Professor Fabrice Teroni, who always give great advice and full support. I want to thank Carole Berset, François Jaquet, Jessie Poquérusse and Elizabeth Watson, who have reviewed and helped improve this text. I want to thank the De Laguiche family who have warmly welcomed me in their home during the course of my master studies. I want to thank my lovely parents, Lyne Ouellette and Jean-Denis Dubé, who were always supportive of my philosophical endeavors. A special thanks to my partner, Benedikt Fasel, for his ever so precious presence, care and support. Of course, I am most appreciative for all the support from friends, colleagues and my family over the course of the past two and a half years. Lastly, I need to thank Bucky, my long time friend, who has taught me to have profound respect for animals and keeps motivating my dedicated search to find ways for humans and members of other species to coexist with greater harmony and understanding. This master thesis marks the end of an important and intense chapter of my life, for which I will always be grateful.

Abstract and keywords

In this paper it is argued that emotions should play a role in animal ethics because of their epistemic virtues. Namely that emotions can provide us with relevant moral information by making moral values salient to us and by allowing us to understand these values. This thesis lands support to feminist animal care theory, an alternative ethical theory which is critical of rationalist approaches in animal ethics and suggests that emotions need to play a greater role in our moral judgment making process. The first part of the paper contrasts traditional and alternative theories of animal ethics. Then a discussion on the epistemic virtues of emotions is provided. The second part of the paper is meant to show in what ways the epistemic virtues of emotions are important in animal ethics, building on the thesis of feminist animal care theorists, but providing a critical assessment of their notion of empathy. The last section answers different objections.

Keywords: emotions, animal ethics, values, moral judgments, understanding, empathy, compassion

Introduction

Animal ethics is a field of practical ethics which questions the relation between humans and nonhuman animals and tries to establish what obligations and responsibilities humans have towards nonhuman animals. In this text I will use *animal* to mean *nonhuman animals*. This field has greatly expended in the last forty years. While many philosophers have questioned our obligations to animals along the history of philosophy, the field of animal ethics boomed after the publication of Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* in 1975. Singer introduced the idea of speciesism[1]: similar to racism or sexism, speciesism is the idea that humans privilege themselves and their interests over other animals on the simple base of the specie difference. This opened the door to completely rethink our relationships with other animals. Faced with evidence that they are very similar to us in many ways, principally in their capacity to suffer, it became impossible for many to look away when creatures with similar interests were treated differently solely on the basis of their species. Speciesism is the main argument for animal use and exploitation: animals, because they are not humans, can be

[1] Singer (2002), 6

used as commodities. Singer's *Animal Liberation* really opened the door for philosophers to start deeply questioning our relations with animals and our use of them.

Amongst traditional ethical theories, it is utilitarian theory and rights theory which have the most prominent voices in contemporary animal ethics. Peter Singer defends a form of preference utilitarianism and American philosopher Tom Regan, in his work *The Case for Animal Rights,* has formulated what is considered to be the most important philosophical contribution to animal rights theory. It is unquestionable that both the works of Singer and Regan are key contributions to animal questions. Singer succeeded in showing how, because animals can suffer and have interests, they should be included in the moral community and have their interests weigh on the utilitarian balance. Regan fully developed the idea that animals have rights and that they deserve our respect, which implies that we should not use them as means. These principles have great practical implications --namely, they question our use of animals for food, entertainment, or scientific experiment. And while both theories approach animal questions from different angles, they nevertheless reach consensus on the fact that we should not make sentient beings suffer unnecessarily.[2]

Despite their important contribution to the field, Singer and Regan's approaches were rapidly questioned and criticized. Alongside animal rights theory and utilitarianism, a whole alternative domain of theories started reflecting on the animal question. Perspectives from feminist ethic-of-care theory, deep ecology theory, Marxism and phenomenology were formulated about the animal question.[3] In the feminist ethic-of-care tradition, thinkers such as Carol Gilligan and Josephine Donovan were questioning what they call (including Singer's preference utilitarianism) animal rights theory[4] because of its detached, rationalist and mechanistic nature. They formulated an approach to animal ethics more oriented towards attention, dialogue and emotions, today known as feminist animal care theory. Feminist animal care theorists argue that general moral principles render suffering abstract and fail to take into account the context and particulars of a situation which is so important to make an informed moral judgment. They question the prominent role reasoning plays in addressing

[2] Gibert (2015), chapter 1

[3] Donovan & Adams (2007)

[4] Ibid

animal questions. They argue that by focusing on "abstract suffering"[5] --the idea of suffering considered generally, the suffering of animals as a mass, not corresponding to a particular individual or situation-- these normative theories continue to objectify animals, rendering it impossible for the moral agent to consider them with due respect.

Feminist animal care theorists are critical of both Singer and Regan because of their rationalist approach. As Donovan explains, when Singer published his *Animal Liberation*, he insisted on taking an approach which he thought would yield credibility to animal questions, thus allowing them to be recognized in "serious political and moral discussion."[6] Singer wanted to avoid being taken for a "sentimental, emotional, animal lover"[7], with in mind individuals who claim to love animals, while at the same time eating their flesh and wearing their skin (we could think of baby seal defenders, who eat porch chops for diner). Singer wanted to give animal questions the credibility they deserve in the philosophical discourse and this meant, for him, to avoid any implications with emotions in his ethical theory. In a similar vein, Regan, in his preface to *The Case for Animal Rights*, stressed that:

> "since all who work on behalf of the interests of animals are [...] familiar with the tired charge of being 'irrational', 'sentimental', [or] 'emotional' [...] we can give the lie to these accusations only by making a concerted effort not to indulge our emotions or parade our sentiments. And this requires making a sustained commitment to rational inquiry."[8]

As such, the blooming field of animal ethics was increasingly rooting itself in reason, literally with an injunction not to let emotions have any influence in our assessment of these ethical questions.

Amongst the different worries[9] which feminist animal care theorists have towards traditional approaches, they formulate one in direct reaction to this "no emotions" injunction, being concerned that these theories intentionally dispense with emotions to inform the

---

[5] Gruen (2015), 25

[6] Donovan (2007), 59

[7] Ibid

[8] Regan (1983), preface to the first edition, lii

[9] Feminist animal care theorists have five main worries with traditional ethical theories in animal ethics. The first is the roots of rights theory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, reflecting their rationalist roots and reliance on a mechanistic ontology of territorial atomism. The second is that rights theory assumes a similarity between humans and animals thus eliding the differences. The third lies in their ontology, which presumes a society of equal, autonomous agents, which overlooks our relations of interdependence. The fourth problem is that they dispense with emotions. The fifth is they abstract and formalistic approach relying on rules and quantification. In Donovan & Adams (2007), 5-6

questions of animal ethics. Donovan explains that seeing as "the exclusion of the emotional response is a major reason why animal abuse and exploitation continue"[10], it is problematic for animal defense advocates to devalue or deny the emotions as an appropriate basis for ethical treatment. Hence, on the one hand, we have animal ethicists who think that if animal issues are going to have any credibility it is by discussing them as rationally as possible, while on the other hand, alternative approaches are formulated to criticize this precise point, claiming that emotions need to play a part. The assumption, for Regan and Singer, is that emotions are irrational and, as such, cannot inform ethical judgments.

I think the feminist animal care theorists are questioning the epistemology of an ethical theory which dispenses with emotions in the making of moral judgments, especially about matters of animal ethics. It is the idea that traditional ethical theories are flawed because without emotions they miss out on something. Regan's rights theory and Singer's utilitarianism both give no epistemic role to emotions in the way they suggest we should make our moral judgments and, I think, alongside feminist animal care theorists, that this is a problem. That said, I remain puzzled by the fact that these theories, with all the emphasis they place on emotions, do not fully articulate in which ways emotions are important. If the field of animal ethics has bloomed in the past forty years, so did philosophy of emotions, the field of theoretical philosophy which is interested in understanding the nature of emotions, to give a systemic account of phenomena such as 'anger', 'pride', 'guilt', 'amusement' or 'admiration'[11], which we refer to as emotions, and to understand their relationship to other branches of philosophy such as ethics or epistemology.[12]

In recent decades, in contemporary emotion theory, some philosophers and psychologists have made great improvement to show that emotions, far from being irrational, can actually inform us about the world -- that is, emotions can answer to reasons. As such, I think that if we are to articulate an ethics which recognizes the importance of emotions, this ethics will need to be informed by a theory of emotion which can explains why emotions are important to inform us about the world. In this paper, I suggest that emotions should play a greater role in animal ethics because of their epistemic importance. I argue that if emotions

---

[10] Donovan & Adams (2007), 6

[11] Deonna & Teroni (2012)

[12] For introductory readings in contemporary theory of emotion see Deonna & Teroni (2012), Goldie (2000) and Roberts (2003).

can help track values by making them more salient to us and if they can allow for a better understanding of values, then they should play a role in animal ethics because, beyond their important motivational role, they are epistemically important to make informed moral judgments especially in this field.

My hope is that this discussion will give more legitimacy to the role of emotions in animal ethics, thus giving some support to feminist animal care theory and, in general, I wish to make a case in favor of the epistemological virtues of emotions. In §1 I give a survey of four different ethical approaches to animal questions, the first two coming from Singer and Regan, then two alternative ones coming from thinkers in the feminist animal care tradition. In §2 I turn to contemporary emotion theory to explain in which ways emotions are important for ethical questions. In §3 I explain the importance of emotions specific to animal ethics. In §4 I say a word about empathy, to clarify its meaning and its role with respect to emotions and animal ethics. In §5 I discuss a specific emotion, the emotion of compassion and in §6, I answer objections.

§ 1 Animal ethics theory

1. Traditional ethical theories

1.1 Singer's preference utilitarianism

In this section I will present the view defended by Singer: preference utilitarianism. While his view is a common form of utilitarianism, Singer nevertheless defends a rationalist position that need not hold for all types of utilitarianism. As I will discuss, Singer thinks it is reason which is reliable to inform and formulate sound moral judgments and that we should not let our emotions influence these judgments. Nevertheless, other forms of utilitarianism could defend the view that, while we must use our reason to do the utilitarian calculation, still, emotions could inform the calculation. Such a version of utilitarianism would be less criticized, I think, by feminist animal care theorists.

For utilitarianism, the rightness or wrongness of an action is entirely based on consequences: utilitarians weigh, with impartiality, which action will bring about the best consequences.[13] The utilitarian calculation is based on a theory of value. There is something which should be maximized, for instance the good or pleasure, that will vary depending on

[13] Singer (2002)

different versions of utilitarianism. Hence, the best consequence is one where the good or pleasure[14] is maximized. While it need not follow, the idea that pleasure must be maximized often involves, in turn, that suffering be minimized.[15] The same way that some have interest to see their pleasure or well-being maximized, they also have the interest to see their suffering minimized, interest not to suffer. Moreover, the criterion of impartiality is important, each is to count for one and not more than one, without regards for the specifics of each person or party involved.

Singer defends a version of act-utilitarianism, the view that the rightness or wrongness of an action comes from the consequences of that action. Act-utilitarianism is to be contrasted with rule-utilitarianism. The view is that the rightness or wrongness of an action is to be judged based on the consequences of a rule that everyone should perform towards actions in similar circumstances.[16] Preference utilitarianism holds that the best consequences are those that, on balance, further the preferences or interests of those affected. Here an important idea, firstly formulated by Bentham, is that we must include all those who can have enjoyment and can suffer in the utilitarian calculation; Singer reformulates this notion of pleasure and pain in terms of preferences or interests to have enjoyment and not to suffer.

So who should be included in the calculation? Considering the criterion of impartiality and that of the capacity to feel pleasure and to suffer, which we could reformulate as sentience, the capacity for a being to feel, perceive and have a subjective experience of the world[17], we realize, as Singer explains, that all sentient animals must be included in the calculation. All sentient animals have the right to equal consideration of their interests, based on the basic principle of equality.[18] The principle of equality is an impartial principle which states that each is to be given equal consideration. It does not entail that humans and other animals are the same, but it recognizes that all have preferences and interests to fulfill and says that all must be given equal consideration of those interests. Hence, the best

[14] Smart (1973)

[15] Hursthouse (1999)

[16] Smart (1973)

[17] Gibert (2015)

[18] Singer (2002)

consequences are those that, on balance, further the interests of all those involved and that all sentient animals must have their place in the utilitarian calculation.

To illustrate this, we can imagine Tim who is trying to choose between ordering an Angus beef burger or a lentil burger at a restaurant. According to utilitarianism, he must consider which choice brings about the best consequences. Tim needs to think about his preference for the taste of a beef burger and his habit of eating such food, but he needs to recall that his interests weigh the same as all those involved in the situation. As such, Tim needs to think about the interests of the cow which is involved in the process of making this burger. The cow, if she was a male, was raised as a beef cow or, if she was a female, as a milk cow (to become beef cow once she is too old to produce milk) and killed for her flesh. Tim can assume, out of precaution, that based on the standards (whether in America or Europe) of industrial farming practices, this cow was raised in exploitative conditions.[19] The consequence of choosing the Angus burger is that more animals must be exploitatively raised and killed in the future --it encourages these practices. Whereas the consequences of choosing the lentil burger are that Tim might not satisfy his specific gustatory wishes and usual habits.

When we reason in terms of maximizing well-being based on interests, it becomes plain which choice brings about the best consequences: it is the lentil burger. The cow's preferences not to be exploited and killed override those of Tim to satisfy his taste and habits (even if Tim is a foodie[20], and even if this type of burger is a tradition in his family). Hence, utilitarianism includes animals in the moral community by following two basic principles: the principle of equal consideration of interests and the principle that it is wrong to make sentient beings suffer unnecessarily. More precisely, it includes animals in the moral community because it takes all well-being into account, and since animals can fare well or ill, their well-being should also be taken into account.

Utilitarianism, as defended by Singer, suggests using reasoning to assess what will or will not count in the calculation and to calculate, as best as possible, what will bring about the best consequences:

---

[19] For instance, in France, 82% of animal products are produced by intensive farming. (https://www.animal-cross.org/animaux-delevage/elevage-industriel/).

[20] For a more detailed discussion on the 'foodie objection' see Gibert, 2015.

> "According to the act-utilitarian, then, the rational way to decide what to do is to decide to perform that one of those alternative actions open to us (including the null-action, the doing of nothing) which is likely to maximize the probable happiness or well-being of humanity as a whole, or more accurately, of all sentient beings."[21]

As such, utilitarianism is based on moral principles and one should follow these principles with sound philosophical reasoning. It is clear, then, that an ethical decision in utilitarianism is a rational choice. While one could think that habituation sometimes plays a role when faced with familiar situations or in very pressing moments, in most cases, when faced with unfamiliar questions, the agent reasons before choosing what to do.[22] Tim needs to decide what choice brings about the best consequences before ordering his meal and his choice does not spring from a sentiment of kindness for the dead cow or is not informed by a feeling of disgust towards its dead flesh. His moral judgment comes from reasoning.

1.2 Regan's rights theory

Like utilitarianism, deontology recognizes that we have duties towards animals. However, unlike utilitarianism, deontology appeals to the animals' rights to ground these duties[23] and includes animals in the moral community by recognizing that they have rights. Unlike many humans, animals are not moral agents who have rational capacities and moral responsibilities, but are moral patients, who, like young children or psychologically disabled humans, deserve respect and have the right not to be exploited and not to be treated as mere commodities.

This theory departs from the utilitarian one in that it no longer says what is right or wrong based on the consequences, but rather based on the duties we have towards those who have rights. Regan explains that the principle of justice "requires that we give each individual his or her due".[24] Then he makes the case that animals have inherent value because they are the "subjects-of-a-life"[25], that is, they have a subjective experience of life such that their life

---

[21] Smart (1973), 42

[22] Tiberius (2015)

[23] Regan (1983)

[24] Regan (1983), 248, 258, 263, 277

[25] Regan (1983), 243

can fare good or ill for them.[26] That they have inherent value means that they have value in themselves, and, as Regan explains, this value deserves respect.

The respect principle, derived from the principle of justice, says that we are to give equal respect to those individuals who have equal inherent value: this is what each is due.[27] For instance, we will fail to properly respect individuals when we decide to harm them for the sake of the greater good (the best aggregate consequences) because it would imply using them as means to our ends (or the ends of others). When it comes to the treatment of animals, it demands that we do not exploit them for our own purposes and that we do not consider them as property. Going from the respect principle to the notion of rights, we must first see how this principle involves a duty. We said that the principle of justice requires that each individual be given his or her due, which is that equals be treated equally. Thus, all those who deserve respect, by the principle of justice, are due this respect in equal consideration as all those similar others. In this sense, respectful treatment is owed to those who have inherent value. As it is owed, we have a duty to treat them with such respect. As such, those who "have inherent value can claim just treatment as their due, or have this claimed on their behalf, because they have a right to such treatment."[28]

Since animals are subjects-of-a-life, they have inherent value and thus are owed respect and have the right to be respected. This also implies that they have the right not to be treated as a means of production. To come back to Tim, the right choice for him, according to deontology, is to choose the lentil burger, because doing otherwise would disrespect the cow's right to respect. The principles of deontology tell us that it is forbidden to exploit animals for their milk or flesh because this would be using them as means for our ends.

Deontology guides action through rules and establishes those rules in accordance with duty and rights. It tells us what is obligatory, permissible or forbidden and says that the right action follows a rule which is in accordance with a correct moral principle. Moral agents are supposed to make their moral judgments based on those rules and the rules, once established,

---

[26] One is forced to recognize that this subject-of-a-life criterion is contentious because it demands a certain cognitive complexity. One could doubt whether certain animals can fit into this criterion, even if we recognize that they can suffer. Perhaps crustaceans would be a difficult case.

[27] Regan (1983), 264

[28] Regan (1983), 277

are not flexible and will not adjust to the circumstances or context faced. In Kantian versions of deontology, the correct rule will be a categorical imperative.[29]

Regan gives criteria as to what, for theorists like him, consists in good or a bad moral judgments. Some of these criteria will be important to keep in mind later in the discussion to measure how different an approach involving emotions is from Regan's. First, Regan explains that emotions cannot be at the source of a sound ethical judgment. He compares emotions to the expression of preferences and explains that they are not suitable to judge ethical problems because they cannot be justified. As Reagan writes: "It is always appropriate to ask that support be given for a moral judgment. It is not appropriate to ask for support in the case of mere expressions of feeling[(emotions)]."[30] Second, Reagan gives a list of criteria which qualify an ideal moral judgment: it should be conceptually clear; the agent should have in hand all the relevant facts for the problem she is facing; the agent should be logically consistent with her ideas; the moral judgment should be based on valid moral principles; the judgment must be impartial and, lastly, it must be done in a moment of "coolness".[31] This last criterion is important here because it says that one should not be in an emotionally exited state to issue an ethical judgment. While many of these criteria are valid, the point of contention relates to emotions: Regan completely dispenses with emotions in his list of criteria and even warns us that to rely on them would be to fail to make a proper moral judgment.

This section was meant to give an overview of the way traditional ethical theories approach animal questions. Faced with the question: 'should we use chickens for egg production?', both theories will have different things to say. Singer's view will say to assess whose preferences are involved and weigh which choice gives the best consequences. The preference of the chicken not to be exploited will be considered, along with the preference of the farmer to make money by selling the eggs and the consumer to eat the eggs. Regan's view will consider that chickens have a subjective life, that they are sentient beings who have rights, e.g. the right not to be exploited as means. As far as industrial farming goes, they will both say that it is wrong to use chickens for egg production.

---

[29] Hursthouse (1999)

[30] Reagan (1983), 123

[31] Reagan (1983), 129

Now it remains clear that along the years, both theories have had important, even crucial influence, both in theory to consider animals as part of the moral community and in practice to help improve their conditions. Recognizing animal rights can allow them to take part in our juridical system and be protected. Being cognizant of their capacity to suffer allows us to consider them in the utilitarian evaluation and gives them a status that can help improve their welfare. Nevertheless, what seems to be the point of contention is the rationalist nature of these ethical theories.

1.3 A word about rationalism

Rationalism, in a nutshell, describes theories which hold the meta-ethical view that moral judgments are rational judgments that are justified by rational principles --that is, the reasons justifying our moral judgments are given by moral principles, such as the respect principle or the principle of equality. For rationalist theories, it is those principles which determine the truth of our moral judgments.[32] When we ask a deontologist why it is wrong to eat meat, she can answer that it is wrong because it violates animals' right to respect. The reason why it is wrong is that there exists such a principle as the respect principle for those who have inherent value. They also hold the view that moral agents should come to know these reasons by reasoning. In other words, we should reason to reasons. In the utilitarian view, eating meat is wrong because it does not maximize well-being, and a moral agent will know this by calculating the balance of consequences; it is not the agent's emotions, for instance, which will say what will bring about the best consequences.

Now that I presented the rationalist theories defended by Regan and Singer, in the next section I will present alternative theories that were formulated in large part as a result of a dissatisfaction with the traditional ones. Donovan's version of feminist animal care theory and Gruen's entangled empathy were both formulated to provide an approach to animal questions that does not rely solely on reason to assess what to do. Both these theories include emotions when they address animal questions and think emotions have a greater role to play in informing moral judgments than rationalist theories allow.

As we have just seen with Singer's preference utilitarianism and Regan's right theory, there is no place given to emotions to help us decide what is right or wrong to do towards animals. In their view, we cannot rely on emotions to tell whether some properties are morally

[32] Tiberius (2015)

relevant; emotions cannot tell us what counts as reasons to make moral judgments. One worry with such view is that rationalism or, in its strictest form, hyper-rationalism, will "purify ethics of everything contingently human, especially the emotions."[33] It is the idea that a view solely grounded in reasoning risks reducing the moral agent to a robot, obliterating her human nature. As Justin D'Arms and Daniel Jacobson note, in their "Sentimentalism and Scientism" article: "[The] hyper-rationalist alternative mistakenly denies that the emotions illuminate genuine reasons for human agents."[34] Again, as Donovan argues: this "quantification of suffering" which mathematizes moral beings, reduces them to units of sufferance and "falls back into the scientific modality that legitimates animal sacrifice" and "while it recognizes sensibility [...] as the basis for treatment as a moral entity, the utilitarian position remains locked in a rationalist, calculative mode of moral reasoning that distances the moral entities from the decision-making subject, reifying them in terms of quantified suffering."[35] As such, some philosophers think emotions can help us recognize morally relevant properties that we would otherwise miss and which are essential to make a right moral judgment. I will turn to these theories in the next section.

2. Alternative ethical theories

In the 1980s, after Singer and Regan's works were published and had a dominant influence in the field of animal ethics, some philosophers worked to develop a new approach to the animal question that aimed to overcome problems they saw with the traditional ones. Thinkers like Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams developed what was to become a feminist animal care theory, a branch of animal ethics theory which does not privilege reason and calculation, but attention, empathy and certain emotions to guide us through events of our moral lives.[36] More recently, Lori Gruen formulated her *entangled empathy*, a theory which aligns with the ethics of care tradition and articulates an account of empathy which is inherently sensitive to our relations to animals. I will first present Donovan's account of feminist animal care theory and then Gruen's entangled empathy.

2.1 Feminist animal care theory

---

[33] D'Arms & Jacobson (2014), 2

[34] D'Arms & Jacobson (2014), 3

[35] Donovan (2007), 64

[36] For more information on feminist animal care theory see Donovan & Adams (1996) and (2007).

Feminist animal care theory developed precisely in reaction to the animal rights and utilitarian theories, mostly because some philosophers were critical of their way of privileging an epistemology based on reasoning. Donovan explains that feminist animal care theory is ethic-of-care theory applied to animal questions with a feminist political outlook.[37] Ethic-of-care theory was firstly developed by psychologist Carol Gilligan, in *In a Different Voice,* as a reaction to the work of psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg on moral development.[38] She considered the approach too abstract and construing ethical problems too narrowly, as in the famous Heinz case, where a man needs to decide whether he will steel from a pharmaceutical company to save his wife's life.[39] Gilligan thought the rights and rules approach used to analyze this case did not account for the moral responsibility and relationship involved, e.g.: that Heinz had a responsibility to his wife, to save her from death, which could override the rule not to steal.

Feminist animal care theory aligns with the principles of ethic-of-care, which privilege relationships, responsibility and attention to context to allow for "a narrative understanding of the particulars of a situation."[40] As such, feminist ethic-of-care theory considers animals as subjects, who have feelings, which they can communicate. It recognizes that humans have moral obligations towards animals and does not consider 'animals' as a mass, but as a highly diversified group of beings whose particularities must be paid attention to for any ethical reflection concerning them.

The main message, Donovan explains, is that in order to gain knowledge and make judgments about our way to treat animals, we should listen to them and pay emotional attention to them. Donovan suggests a shift in the epistemological source of theorizing to the animals themselves and thinks that emotions are legitimate sources of knowledge to do so. She especially thinks that emotions such as sympathy or compassion, which are dispensed with in traditional theories, will allow us to better understand the needs of animals and, as such, the way we should behave towards them.

---

[37] Donovan & Adams (2007)

[38] Gilligan (1982)

[39] Gruen (2015)

[40] Donovan & Adams (2008), 2

Feminist animal care theorists do not think we can do without reasoning when addressing our relation to animals, but they think reason and emotions can be mutually informing and they do not think we can do away with emotions. They want to "restore [the] emotional responses to the philosophical debate and to validate them as authentic modes of knowledge."[41] It is thought that by paying attention to other animals, one can gain knowledge about their standpoint and better know what they need, such that one can ethically answer to those needs. While utilitarianism recognizes that animals can suffer and, as such, have interests not to suffer, Donovan explains that this approach reduces animals to a general group, thus obliterating their particularities which continues to objectify them. She also explains that Singer's approach asks to quantify the suffering of animals, a "mathematization of moral beings"[42] and that this can allow their suffering can be legitimized -- the way it is currently legitimized in animal use for testing.

The epistemology of feminist animal care theory rejects the idea that we should reason with either / or scenarios (either I steal or she dies) because those dead-end situations hardly represent situations we usually face in real life, which is why paying attention to particular situations, as we encounter them, will be essential and listening to animals, taking their point of view, understanding their needs in different situations will prove effective to understand how to treat them. Accordingly, feminist animal care theory rejects the killing of animals for clothing or amusement. It rejects rodeos, circuses, factory farming and most types of laboratory testing, such as those for beauty and cleaning products or for military equipment and so on. This theory rejects any human activity which prevents us from caring for the animals' needs, the needs they have and not those we conveniently think they do. As Donovan writes : "Natural rights and utilitarianism present impressive and useful philosophical arguments for the ethical treatment of animals. Yet, it is also possible --indeed, necessary-- to ground that ethic in an emotional [...] conversation with nonhuman life-forms. [...] We should not kill, eat, torture, and exploit animals because they do not want to be so treated, and we [(can)] know that. If we listen, we can hear them."[43]

2.2 Entangled Empathy

---

[41] Donovan (2008), 50

[42] Donovan (2007), 64

[43] Donovan (2007) 76

In recent years, ethicist Lori Gruen published her work *Entangled Empathy,* which is an alternative ethics to answer her growing dissatisfaction with traditional ethical theories. She argues that traditional ethical theories, such as Singer's utilitarianism and Regan's rights theory, are dissatisfying because "as it is usually practiced, ethical theorizing detaches us from our actual moral experiences and practices through abstract reasoning".[44] She is worried that the rationalist nature of these theories – that is, theories which are grounded in reason and based on abstract moral principles, themselves deduced through detached reasoning – fails to view ethical problems in their entirety and issue commends on moral agents that are too demanding or alienating. She calls it "the failure of ethical theories".[45]

Gruen argues that rather than focusing on animal rights or calculations, we ought to work on making our relationships with animals right by responding to them with empathy. It is the idea that to make informed moral judgments, we need to pay attention to the context of the situation and develop our attention towards those involved in the situation. By empathetically taking the other's perspective, we will be informed both by emotions and reason about the other's needs. Her entangled empathy is a "type of caring perception focused on attending to another's experience of wellbeing. An experiential process involving a blend of emotion and cognition in which we recognize we are in relationships with others and are called upon to be responsive and responsible in these relationships by attending to another's needs, interests, desires, vulnerabilities, hopes and sensitivities."[46]

While Donovan recognizes that empathy (or what she chooses to call, after Max Scheler, *sympathy*) must play an essential role in feminist animal care theory[47], it is Gruen who formulates the most empathy-oriented view. Gruen explains that any compelling moral theory has to recognize that reason and emotions cannot be disentangled. That emotions are present in our moral lives whether it be for moral knowledge or moral motivation. In this sense, Gruen rejects the traditional rights theory in favor of an ethics based on empathy. As she sees it, empathy is a moral perception which helps us see which features of a particular situation are relevant to make moral judgments. Empathy here, is a "specific perceptual way

[44] Gruen (2015), 13

[45] Gruen (2015), 8

[46] Gruen (2015), 3

[47] Donovan (1996)

of understanding the world and others in it"[48], a reflective act of imagination that puts one into the perspective of the other. As such, for Gruen, empathy is essential to understand others.

The notion of entanglement in *entangled* empathy is following the ethic-of-care tradition and is important to highlight our relationships with others and our responsibility to others; we are not isolated individuals living our lives and, on occasion, stumbling upon moral dilemma, we are at all times related to others, whether it be our family, friends, fellow humans or other fellow creatures which we choose to raise, kill, buy, eat, wear, ride, hunt or take care of. Animals are involved in our lives, but we hardly recognize it and have difficulty understanding them and understanding that we are in a relation with them on a day to day basis. We are all already in relationship with animals, though whether it is oppressive or respectful remains a choice. In this sense, Gruen thinks we need to take their perspective, in order to understand how they are faring. While, as she says, there can be failures in the empathic process, it nevertheless can be reviewed and corrected. As it is, there seems to be an assumption made by Gruen that when we empathize correctly with others, we will be moved to treat them how they ethically need to be treated.

I think the strength of these alternative theories is that they allow for more flexibility in our ethical responses. They do not think we can rely on rights and rules because these will often not fit the situation. Instead of giving rules or calculation templates, these theories invite us to approach a situation in a certain way. Perhaps they cannot give a straight answer to the Trolley problem (see section 6.3), but they can guide people when faced with real life situations which involve multiple parties, multiple interests and multiple people (including animals).

While these theories do not offer precise guidelines, I think they are better suited to help us address animal questions because these questions are especially difficult, they are not black or white. For instance, when a person decides not to encourage animal cruelty and to respect animals' right to respect, they often say that they are vegan. In theory veganism entails no consumption of animal products and no taking part in animal exploitation practices. These are the rules. I think a vegan deontologist would experience difficulties to fully implement these rules in practice because rights theory gives one no flexibility to approach such an ethical life change: the rules are plain and say that no animal products are permissible. To say the least, a

[48] Gruen (2015), 43

strict vegan lifestyle involves social challenges, a great deal of discussion and explanation with family and friends and the overwhelming realization that animal abuse and exploitation goes far beyond industrial farming and scientific testing. Utilitarianism gets us in conflictual calculations, for instance, that of trying to see if our dear grandma's interest to cook a turkey counts more than the turkey's interest no to be raised and killed and so on. Whereas, it is clearly both wrong to disrespect our grandmother's traditions and to raise and kill the turkey. Here, I think that feminist animal care theory or entangled empathy are helpful. They would suggest paying attention to the situation, noticing how it is not all black or white, feeling in with the situation, and figuring out what can be done, both to respect our grandma and not support animal abuse. It will be instructive to take both the grandmother's perspective and the turkey's, perhaps leading to an interesting, informative discussion with the grandmother, both easing out the situation and offering her with a new informed worldview.

Now, while I am sympathetic to alternative approaches in animal ethics, I think their view on emotions needs to be reinforced because hardly a word is said about the nature of emotions and how their nature explains why they are so important for ethical questions. I agree with feminist animal care theorists (and Gruen which I will count amongst the feminist animal care theorists for the remaining of this paper) that emotions, attention and empathy need to play a greater role in animal ethics. However, I find it unfortunate that the discussion about the importance of emotions, that is, the epistemic importance of emotions, remains shallow. Donovan, in her 1990 foundational article "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory", discusses at length that rationalist theories are flawed because they dispense with emotions, thus leaving us "frozen", that emotions need to play a role in the discourse, however, she does not a say a single word as to why that is.[49]

In the remaining of this paper I want to provide an account which explains why, in virtue of their nature, emotions are important for ethical discourse and, in this case, for animal ethics questions. Contemporary emotion theory will be helpful to provide such an account to specify in what ways emotions can inform moral judgments. Moreover, while I agree with Donovan and Gruen that both empathy and emotions are important, I think they give too great an importance to empathy. I will try to show this by contrasting empathy with a specific emotion which I think is key to animal ethics. Hence, after having explained why emotions

[49] Donovan (2007)

are important for animal ethics, I will contrast empathy with compassion, which should serve both as a case study to show the role of a specific emotion and to nuance the role of empathy. Lastly, I will answer different objections that can arise against my view.

§ 2 The importance of emotions

The role of emotions in morality, while it has often been the subject of controversy, was also recognized by influential philosophers such as Hume, long before care theorists were questioning the capacity of reason to do the work alone in morality. Hume thought that reason, while it could process information, still needed sentiments to inform us and motivate us.[50] The feminist animal care theorists are mostly critical of Singer and Regan because they both posit that it is through reasoning that people should make their moral judgments. Their criterion for a procedure of decision making leaves emotions outside the judgment making process. This thesis should nevertheless be distinguished from the meta-ethical one that it is reason which establishes what is the good, also Singer and Regan's stance. While feminist animal care theorists argue that reason alone is not sufficient as a procedure for decision making, that emotions must also play a role in the making of our moral judgments, it is not clear which meta-ethical stance they have and this is not the point of contention here. What they are mostly critical of is that Singer and Regan dispense with emotions as an epistemological source for making moral judgments. In this paper, I will remain silent about the debate as to what, after all, fixes the good, even though, as I will suggest, emotions can inform us of the presence of properties relevant to judge of the overall goodness or badness of a situation.

It is clear that moral judgments are judgments of a particular nature, that we seek to justify, unlike, for instance, judgments of taste. If a friend judges on the one hand that drinking milk is wrong and, on the other, that she dislikes the taste of milk, you will expect back up justification for the former judgment and not for the latter. When it comes to moral judgments, the contention between those who talk of rational principles and those who talk of emotions, is about the reasons that justify those judgments; what counts as reasons and how we come to know those reasons. As such, one can wonder what is wrong, after all, with

[50] Tappolet (1996)

reasoning our way to moral principles or calculating the outcomes of a situation to try to maximize the good? Aren't our reasoning capacities the most reliable ones?

In contemporary philosophy and cognitive and social psychology, much work has been done to show that reason alone has limits and to reintroduce emotions as legitimate actors in our moral lives.[51] There are many ways one can recognize that emotions can play a role in morality. Some suggest that emotions help one understand the world in a way that cannot be done by reasoning, that they offer a lens on the world that is not accessible to a well programmed robot or someone with serious emotional deficiencies. As such, here my project is to legitimize the role of emotions in our moral lives by highlighting their epistemic virtues: that emotions are sensitive to reasons and can, in different ways, give us information about the world.

1. Emotions and moral judgments

To say that emotions should play a role in an ethical theory is to say something normative, but also perhaps, to simply recognize that emotions are present in our moral lives. When we fail to fulfill a promise, we feel guilty. When we see that a person receives an unjust treatment at work, we feel anger. In this sense, it is only natural that care theorists are suspicious of theories which disregard emotions in their discourse. It is clear that emotions have an influence on our decisions and actions, but what remains difficult to show is that emotions are reliable sources of information to assess a situation -- that they do not merely bind us to sentimental, frivolous responses. So the question remains: what relation do emotions have with moral judgments? If emotions are related to our moral lives because they follow from our moral judgments, then they will have a very different role, than if moral judgments are expressions of emotions themselves or if moral judgments are dependent both on an affective system and a normative theory[52], as opposed to a normative theory alone.

To better understand the relation of emotions to our moral judgments, we can consider whether we can make moral judgments without emotions. We can think, for instance, of a well-tuned robot, call it Serge, who has learned all the basic moral principles and knows that certain values are relevant to morality, like suffering or injustice. But Serge does not have

[51] To read more on this topic see Haidt, 2001, where he explains how emotions cause our moral judgments or Lerner & all, 2015, who discuss of the role of emotions in decision making.

[52] Nichols (2004)

emotions. When Serge sees a starving kitten, he does not feel compassion. When a woman receives less respect for her work, because she is a woman, Serge does not feel indignation. He does not feel anything. He sees a situation, considers it according to different moral principles, and makes a judgment. If he makes the wrong judgment or acts wrongly, Serge does not feel guilty. So, can Serge know that this kitten is suffering and, if he can, does he understand it? And without emotions, what is the worth of Serge's moral evaluations?

Intuition suggests that Serge is not a fully competent moral agent. Serge can issue correct moral judgments, but we could think that something is missing about his understanding of the situation. This is where things become interesting. As far as we can tell, Serge could be a competent utilitarian or deontologist, but he could not be a competent feminist animal care theorist. This is the important point here: if Serge is rationally competent but emotionally inert, and if it seems that Serge, despite the moral judgments he issues, is still missing something important about the situation, then it must be because he does not have emotions.

2. Emotions and values

To defend the idea that emotions have epistemic value and that they can contribute to moral judgments, I must first say a few words about what emotions are, what values are and the way values are relevant to moral judgments. Emotions are mental states, part of the greater category of affects, and must be distinguished from moods, passions or sentiments. In contemporary emotion theory, the consensus is that emotions are phenomenological and intentional states. That is, there is a way it feels like to have an emotional experience: there is something it feels like to feel fear, which will be different, for instance, from that of feeling sadness. That is the phenomenology of emotions. We also say that emotions are intentional, in that they are directed at an object in the world. They are directed towards something: Paul is afraid of the Rottweiler, Julie is sad because of the death of her grandmother. Emotions are about something, unlike, for instance, moods which do not have objects. That is why it makes sense to ask 'what are you afraid of ?' or 'what makes you sad ?'.

Emotions, then, are about the world like other mental states such as beliefs or perceptions, and like these mental states, we also say that emotions can be assessed as correct or incorrect in virtue of the object towards which they are directed. To assess my belief that 'it is raining outside' is correct, I will need to verify whether it is raining outside. Or again, my

perception of the white horse is correct if the horse is white. Similarly, emotions have conditions of correctness in virtue of the object towards which they are directed. That said, these conditions of correctness cannot be specified merely by stating the material object towards which the emotion is directed. It will not suffice, for instance, to state that Paul's fear is directed at the Rottweiler to say whether his fear is correct or incorrect.[53] This is why philosophers introduce the notion of formal object, in this case, an evaluative property towards which the emotion is also directed.

It has been long acknowledged that emotions are, in one way or another, related to evaluative properties. Values or evaluative properties are not to be understood in the common sense as when people say that 'something has value for me' or that 'these are my family values'. Values are properties of objects, events or situations, which we can also call axiological properties. There are thin axiological properties which are limited to 'good', 'bad', 'better than', 'worse than'. There are also what we call thick axiological properties, a variety of more specific properties which entail thin ones.[54] There are all kinds of thick axiological properties: aesthetic (the admirable), epistemic (truth), hedonic (the pleasant), moral (injustice) and so on. We can also distinguish between positive values, like the beautiful, and negative ones, like the ugly.[55]

While I will explain the way emotions are related to values in general, what will be of importance is how some emotions are related to moral values. As I said, there are thin and thick evaluative properties and we can say that the latter entails the application of the former: for instance, to say that something is ugly or unjust is also to say, other things begin equal, that these are bad things. For something to be admirable or generous is, other things being equal, to be a good thing.[56] The thin moral values 'good' and 'evil/morally bad' -- that deserve praise or blame -- are to be contrasted with the strict normative properties 'right' and 'wrong'. Whereas we will say of a person that she is good or that a state of affairs is evil, most of our moral judgments will be about actions and will be judged right or wrong, not allowing of degrees. An action cannot more wrong than another, however, it can be better than another.

---

[53] Deonna & Teroni (2008)

[54] Mulligan (1998)

[55] Deonna & Teroni (2012)

[56] Mulligan (1998)

In this paper, what we could call thick moral values -- values that are relevant to morality, although these might not be considered moral values in the strict sense because good/evil are the usual basic moral values -- will be important, because according to the account which will follow, emotions can inform us on the presence of these evaluative properties, properties such as suffering, injustice, moral offense, moral fault, perhaps the morally disgusting and so on. And these properties, when carried by an action or a state of affairs, will, in most cases, allow us say that such an action is right/wrong. We often see that evaluative judgments are made as a result of the emotions: as when Paul sees the Rottweiler, is afraid, and thinks he is dangerous. In this sense, if emotions can justify our judgments that thick moral values are instantiated, like I will suggest below, then they can inform our moral judgments.

Therefore, the idea is that emotions are closely linked to evaluative properties. To the question 'why are you afraid of the dog?', Paul will answer that it is because the dog is or looks dangerous. To the question 'why are you laughing?', one will answer that the joke is funny. Or again, we will say of a painting which we admire that it is admirable. And it is because emotions are related to evaluative properties that we will be able to specify their correctness conditions. In this sense, philosophers will say that Paul's fear is about the dangerous Rottweiler. They will distinguish between the material or particular object towards which emotions are directed (the Rottweiler, the grandmother's death) and the formal object (value) towards which it is directed. Emotions present their material object in a specific way: the Rottweiler as dangerous, the joke as funny, the work of art as admirable. We will be able to assess an emotion as correct if its formal object is instantiated by the particular object; Paul's fear of the Rottweiler will be correct only if the Rottweiler is dangerous.

Note, however, that if this assessment of correction is to have any grounds, it must be the case that "the apprehension of a given value and the actual exemplification of this value must be to some extent independent from one another."[57] In other words, it cannot be the case that the Rottweiler is dangerous because Paul is afraid. The Rottweiler can be dangerous without Paul experiencing fear, and, conversely, Paul can be afraid without the Rottweiler really being dangerous. It is also important to note that if emotions are or involve evaluations then we need to account for how they do so -- that is, how they represent their object. While

[57] Deonna & Teroni (2012)

this question is outside the scope of this paper, we can note that some philosophers suggest that emotions represent values because they are evaluative judgments, while others suggest that they are perceptions or construals of value and others suggest that each emotion is an attitude itself.[58]

Formal objects are equally important to state the conditions under which emotions are said to be justified. We often ask someone who is sad why she is sad or ask our partner reasons for her anger. And to discuss the justification conditions of emotions, along with their conditions of correctness, will allow the introduction of the notion of cognitive bases: the emotions' dependence on cognitive bases. We have said that emotions are directed towards both a material object (the Rottweiler) and a formal object (danger) and that they can be correct (if the formal object is really instantiated) and justified (if there are reasons for having the emotion). But it remains difficult to specify how it is that we can tell that danger really is instantiated or what counts as good reasons to justify the emotion.

The idea is that we both need something independent of the emotions to assess whether the formal object is instantiated and to appeal to something other then the evaluative property to justify the emotion. To the question 'Paul, why are you afraid?', it will not suffice that he says 'The Rottweiler is dangerous'. It cannot be the evaluative judgment itself which justifies the emotional experience. The intuition is that, unlike perceptions, emotions need justificatory reasons that go beyond the experience of the evaluative property. Unlike the perception of whiteness, which could be explained by saying that 'I see white and I have no reasons to doubt that I see white', it seems that we will need to say more than 'I emote danger and I have no reasons to doubt that there is danger' to justify emotional experiences.

As such, some philosophers suggest that emotions, unlike perceptions, are dependent on cognitive bases to access their objects.[59] These cognitive bases are mental states like perceptions, beliefs or memories that provide the emotion with its object. For instance, Paul's fear latches on a perception of the Rottweiler or Liz's nostalgia comes from a memory of her childhood. In this sense, it is with the content of these cognitive bases that we will be able to justify the emotions. The perception of the Rottweiler allows Paul to explain that he is afraid

---

[58] For a introductory discussion of emotions are judgments, perceptions or attitudes see Deonna & Teroni (2012). For a discussion of emotions as construals see Roberts (2003).

[59] Deonna & Teroni (2012)

because the dog is large and barking at him. He might even add that he knows the dog and saw him bite a neighbor the week before. The content of these cognitive bases – that the dog is big, barking and has a history of violent attacks – will provide the reasons to justify Paul's emotion.

By the same token, the content of the cognitive bases also provides the reasons to assess whether the dog is, in fact, dangerous. The evaluative property will supervene on the natural properties of the situation. The Rottweiler is dangerous because he is big, barking and has a history of violent attacks. Another Rottweiler, friendly looking, with a wagging tail and known for its gentleness would not be dangerous and Paul's fear would not be correct, although it might be justified if Paul argued that he now believes all Rottweilers are dangerous. For the purpose of this text, I will assume a relation of strong supervenience between evaluative and non-evaluative properties. That is, I will assume that an object (the dog) exemplifies an evaluative property at a given time and context (danger) in virtue of some non-evaluative properties (size, barking, history of violence). Thus, one can see that the dog is big, barking and has an history of violence without being afraid and these non-evaluative properties are also those with which we can assess, independently of our emotional experience, that danger is instantiated.[60]

A strong point in favor of traditional ethical theories is that they can give justification for moral judgments and some, like Singer and Regan, are worried that this will not be possible with emotions because one cannot ask for reasons for another's emotional response. However, as we have seen, emotions are strongly related to evaluative properties and they can be justified because they answer to reasons; reasons that are constituted of non-evaluative properties and that are given by the content of the states that function as their cognitive bases. They can also be assessed as correct or incorrect depending on whether the content given by their cognitive bases answers conditions of correctness: that there is danger for fear or offense for anger and so on. In this sense, we can see that emotions are rational because they can be evaluated, corrected, justified – they answer to reasons. This seems to be good news for emotions with regards to moral judgments. We can, after all, give reasons for our emotions; they are not blind, irrational responses.

3. The epistemic value of emotions

[60] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 49-50, 96-97

When, after a meeting, your feel angry at your boss, you often think that she has offended you; your anger makes you think that her comment was offensive. Our emotions often give rise to evaluative judgments – that the comment was offensive, that the dog is dangerous and so on. The question, then, is whether emotions can count as reasons for our evaluative judgments: can emotions constitute sufficient grounds for making justified evaluative judgments? In this section, I will first present how emotions can provide reasons for making our evaluative judgments, then try to show how they can constitute a privileged route to do so. Lastly, I will discuss whether and how emotions can constitute a route for our understanding of values, with the assumption that if they do, then they will prove important, even essential, to the making of moral judgments in animal ethics.

3.1 Justified evaluative judgments with emotions

We have seen that emotions can be justified when they answer reasons given by the content of their cognitive bases and that they can be correct if the formal object (the value), with which we can specify their correctness conditions, is exemplified by the content of their cognitive bases, e.g.: the fear is correct if the dog is dangerous. We have also seen that emotions are not only linked to evaluative properties, but that they often give rise to evaluative judgments. Tim judges that the joke is funny because he is amused or Sarah thinks her boyfriend's comment is offensive because she is angry. If emotions often give rise to evaluative judgments, if they can explain them, can they justify them? Can emotions count as reasons to make those types of judgments and how are they to count as reasons?

It seems clear, in everyday life, that emotions have some practical value, and perhaps part of this practical value is due to their epistemic value, if they can enhance our standing towards our beliefs or judgments and give us information about the world. As we have seen, if emotions are to inform us about the world, it will be through evaluative properties. My fear to do a logic exam tells me that failure to this exam represents a danger for my academic pursuits. My dad's sadness at the death of his father tells him that it is a great loss. My admiration of a Hodler painting tells me that his work is admirable, and so on. However, we should not rush too fast into the assumption that our mere emotional responses can warrant our evaluative judgments.

Deonna and Teroni remind us that there are precautions to take to secure the validity of those responses. For one thing, as they explain, we must "rule out any involvement of the

kinds of distorting factors which can influence the response."[61] While our different motivational states (moods, temperaments, desires, character traits, sentiments) can often serve to explain our emotional experiences, they hardly suffice to justify them and can skew our evaluative judgments. Moods or temperaments often appear to blur our emotional responses in that they make us sensitive to the wrong reasons. If André is known for his morning grumpiness, then he should be careful not to take his anger at his wife's comment at face value before checking that he is justified to be angry. And while sentiments, character traits or desires are better candidates than moods or temperaments to issue emotions that are sensitive to the right reasons, still we should be wary that they are not distorting factors. A mother's love for her son might distort her sensitivity to reasons she has to be ashamed of him or angry at him.

In addition, we can doubt whether the mere occurrence of emotions can be sufficient to justify an evaluative judgment. In fact, only justified emotions will be sufficient for justified evaluative judgments. How can this be so? Our judgment that a value is exemplified by the content given by the cognitive base of the emotion will not be justified simply because we have that emotion. The emotion will need to be itself justified for it to count as a reason for there being the value exemplified. So what kind of emotional experience can count as a justified one? It seems hardly viable that we spend our time checking that certain non-evaluative properties are exemplified, this is precisely why emotions are practical, they spare us the cognitive energy of consciously tracking certain properties. As Deonna and Teroni explain, the conditions of justification of emotions are "that there are good and undefeated reasons to take the facts as these emotions do"[62] -- that is, once we have made sure that there is no reason to doubt our emotional reaction towards the content given by our cognitive bases, then we have no reason to doubt that our emotions are answering to the non-evaluative properties which make it that a certain evaluative property is the case. In other words, André, once he has put his grumpiness aside and has no more reasons to doubt his anger, is justified to make the judgment that his wife's comment was offensive. We can conclude, then, that justified emotions can count as reasons for our evaluative judgments.

3.2 Salience

[61] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 119

[62] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 120

If our emotions can justify our evaluative judgments because they are themselves sensitive to non-evaluative properties, properties which, if need be, we can non-emotionally ascertain as present to see that our emotions are justified, it means that there is a route to values that is independent of our emotions. After all, the emotion and the evaluative judgment are justified by the same reasons. As Deonna and Teroni tell us :

> "the existence of two routes to justify evaluative judgments, an emotional one and a route bypassing emotions altogether, is, in our opinion, beyond dispute. [The concern rather is that because of these two routes, emotions be considered] epistemologically superfluous."[63]

If the reasons why it is the case that a certain value is exemplified are accessible without emotions, what is the use of emotions in making justified evaluative judgments?

Luckily for emotions, we have reasons to think that we cannot dispense with them for our value judgments. As it turns out, to detect the properties which make up values would be quite difficult and demanding without our emotions. To detect these properties, people must be sensitive to them and we can question just how we could access them without our emotional sensitivity. Given the complexity of the environment we live in, we can be thankful that our emotions are sensitive to those properties which can justify our evaluative judgments. Think of just how demanding it would be to constantly have to look out for properties which make up danger or properties which make up enjoyableness. The idea is that emotions engender patterns of salience among the objects in our environment which make it easier for us to track those properties important to our lives.

To make this clearer, we can contrast how Serge, the emotionless robot, comes to make justified evaluative judgments and how we do. Serge is programmed to track values via the non-emotional route, he knows there is danger because a sophisticated algorithm allows him to be sensitive to the relevant properties in his environment. And, if Serge is as well-tuned as I suggest he is, then he most likely is very reliable in tracking those properties and making justified evaluative judgments. However, we are not robots and it would show quite demanding for us if we needed to be sensitive to the relevant properties without our emotions. The idea is that our emotions are sensitive to these subtle cues which we often have to be sensitive to in order to judge what is going on around us. True, we are not robots built with sophisticated algorithms, but we have emotions which still give us remarkable sensitivity to

[63] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 121

properties of our environment. Emotions will be especially epistemologically practical when faced with new situations, where we have not habituated ourselves to the properties present. Think how important it is for us to realize we have just trespassed the safety part of New York city, as we feel a sense of fear growing in us, fear which answers to subtle cues of Downtown Brooklyn's dangers.

Moreover, it is often the case that we have difficulty articulating the reasons to which our emotions are responding. Perhaps, if I am walking Downtown Brooklyn with an especially emotionally inert friend, I will feel fear and urge us to leave, without being able to articulate why, merely stating that I am afraid. Still there is danger present, while my emotionally inert friend fails to see it, I see it (or feel it) thanks to my fear. This shows that our emotions can give us different evaluative verdicts than the ones reached in moments of coolness, but that can be because they are more sensitive to certain reasons. As Deonna and Teroni explain, our emotions can make us more "emotionally attuned to the relevant reasons"[64], whereas we might be blind to these reasons in moments of cool reflection. This is a very important point for our discussion because, whereas philosophers like Regan tell us that a moral judgment should always be done in emotionally neutral moments, our emotions' epistemic virtues cast this into question. Our emotions' sensitivity can allow us to detect important reasons that we would have otherwise missed. In this sense, our emotions are not epistemologically superfluous. While there is a non-emotional route to notice good reasons for making justified evaluative judgments, some of these reasons might nevertheless remain hidden from us without our emotions.

3.3 Understanding values

Until now, then, we have seen that emotions can be justified and when justified, they offer a privileged epistemic route to make justified evaluative judgments. Yet, this does not exhaust the epistemological virtues of emotions. Some philosophers suggest that another epistemologically fundamental role of emotions is that of understanding values. In their view, to be a competent user of evaluative concepts, for instance, to be a competent user of the concept of danger, one needs more than the mere ability to apply the concept in the correct circumstances because to competently characterize a situation as dangerous is tied to the

[64] Deonna and Teroni (2012), 122

understanding that the making properties of that situation give one reasons to favor or reject it.[65]

Understanding is an ability to grasp or draw connections, that is more complex than knowing because it allows of degrees.[66] One cannot learn to know better that it is raining outside or that Paris is the capital of France. However, one can come to understand epistemology better or understand Rilke's poetry better. Understanding, then, involves a grasp or awareness of connections between various items and, as such, we can often explain what we understand. As Michael S. Brady argues, in his work *Emotional Insight*: "our ultimate epistemic goal with emotional experiences is to understand our emotional-evaluative situation, rather than merely attain justified evaluative knowledge."[67] So there is more to our emotional experiences than knowing that a certain value is present. Emotions provide us with a certain quality of understanding of values.

To understand values is to come to grasp the connections between our application of evaluative concepts and our life. It is the idea that with our emotions we experience what the values entail for our lives. To fully take the measure of what this means we need to ask ourselves if a person without emotions really understands the point of our evaluative practices -- that is, the way they matter to us. We need to ask what it is that Serge, the robot, understands of the evaluative concepts he uses? Without feeling anger, does he really understand what offense means? Without feeling compassion does he really understand the suffering of a friend? Or, rather, what is it that is missing for Serge in his understanding of values because he does not feel emotions?

While Serge, could have learned to apply the correct evaluative concepts to the right situations, we can think that his understanding of those concepts is radically different from ours. If he understands something, it will be different from our understanding of these concepts and the practices which ensue from them. Serge could have a handle of our evaluative practices, if he modeled his practices on our emotional responses, but this would only enable him to recognize that an object or a situation's properties justify certain answers like fear, amusement or anger in other (emotional) creatures. As Deonna and Teroni highlight:

---

[65] Deonna & Teroni (2012)

[66] Roberts & Wood (2007)

[67] Brady (2013), 13

"being deprived of the capacity to experience situations as offensive, shameful, or amusing for [himself (Serge)], the sense in which we may think of [him] as animated by concerns, such as staying decent, acting honorably, or cultivating [his] sense of humor, is elusive to say the least."[68] Serge cannot experience the world as giving him reasons to act in distinct ways, the way it gives us reasons to act. We feel guilt and apologize. We feel fear and try to search for safety. Our emotions are linked to values in such a way that they allow us to understand the way they relate to our lives, the importance they have for our relationships with others. Serge cannot understand that.

But then again, this might not fully illustrate the importance of emotions to understand values. After all Serge is able to track values and he might be sufficiently well formatted to react appropriately to the presence of those values. For instance, when witnessing an instance of injustice Serge might know that retribution is in order or faced with an admirable painting, Serge might mimic our way for contemplating it. Nevertheless, this would remain at a somewhat superficial level, because, for Serge, attributing values to objects is like playing a game or it remains purely descriptive. For instance, for him saying: 'this painting is admirable', is like saying: 'this stone is made of silica'. Faced with certain non-evaluative properties (say the physical properties of a painting) he knows how to plug in the right value: admirable painting, pitiful painting, but his evaluative practices are far from having the same meaning they have for us. While ascribing evaluative properties is like playing a game for Serge, a game he plays to blend in with us, when we ascribe evaluative properties it gives a whole world of meaning to our lives. Values are important for our lives. They mean something to us individually, and they also have normative force.

At some point it might be even difficult to articulate the kind of quality of understanding which Serge misses because he does not have emotions, I think, this is specifically because this understanding is experiential. Recall that emotions have a salient experiential dimension: they have a salient phenomenology. And the kind of understanding of values which emotions provide us, I think, fully comes to light when we consider that "it is in virtue of their phenomenology that emotions relate to evaluative properties."[69] With emotions we experience objects or situations as having certain evaluative properties: we experience the

---

[68] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 123

[69] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 79

dog as dangerous, the painting as admirable. The importance of the phenomenology of emotions in capturing their nature, allows some philosophers to suggest that emotions are experiential evaluative attitudes which "involve the awareness of one's body adopting a specific stance towards an object or being poised to act in given ways in relation to that object."[70] Emotions phenomenologically apprehend the world in evaluative terms through these types of felt action readiness which position us towards the world, when we feel fear, it is our entire self which takes a stance towards an object, presenting this object as dangerous, providing us with a readiness to act in a way which will neutralize the danger we face. Phenomenologically apprehending the world in evaluative terms is, indeed, very different from merely describing it and this way to experience values with emotions, the way it positions us towards values, plays an essential part in understanding them: indeed, the way emotions position us imbues the world with significance. No longer having a neutral stance, we see the dog as dangerous, in other words, we see the situation as disvaluable, to be rejected or avoided, as giving us reasons to flee or confront.

Emotions make us experience the world in a way which gives it meaning and provides us with reasons to act. It is this quality of understanding which is unavailable to non-emotional creatures and we might wonder what remains at all of their understanding of values if they cannot be experienced this way. As far as human evaluative practices go, because humans are emotional creatures, it would be safe to say that the kind of evaluative understanding which matters to us is entangled with emotional experience. One cannot understand values if one does not have emotions and, in this sense, emotions are necessary for our understanding of values. They are necessary for us to experience objects and situations in certain ways which gives us reasons to position ourselves towards those objects. How else than by experiencing a painting of Monet as admirable would one be moved to travel to Paris to take a close look at it in the Museum? What would be the meaning of a generous action if one could not feel gratitude towards it? If evaluative practices are like playing a game for Serge, to blend in the human life game, they are far from being a game for us, they are at the base of the meaning of our human lives and this meaning, this importance, is tangible because we experience values with our emotions. This is how we understand them as meaningful.

---

[70] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 79-80

In this section, then, I have tried to show the importance of the different epistemic virtues of emotions. To fully understand the importance of emotions for our moral lives, we can keep in mind that emotions provide a privileged epistemic route to our knowledge and understanding of a large scope of evaluative properties, including those important to the moral sphere. As Deonna and Teroni tell us:

> "[those values are] disclosed to us through the emotional attitudes of compassion, shame, guilt, indignation, resentment, perhaps disgust, etc. A further question, then, concerns the links between the disclosures of these specific evaluative properties and the judgments as to the overall goodness or badness of the situations we confront -- [that is, the need to better understand], the ways in which these all-things-considered moral judgments are informed by, and perhaps partly grounded in, our specific emotional responses [...]"[71]

In line with this idea, in will turn, in the next section, to a discussion about the way the epistemic virtues of emotions can contribute to question of animal ethics. I hope to show that if we can better become aware and understand values relevant to the moral sphere, even more so, values specifically relevant to animal questions, then we will be better informed to make sound moral judgments within this field.

While question of animal ethics are in many ways similar to other questions of practical ethics, they have an important difference in that they are about our relationships and obligations to members of other species. Animal ethics is about our relations with other animals: a large and heterogenous group of animals. While there is an agreement that we should not make sentient beings suffer unnecessarily, I think this principle is very general and leaves us considering animals as a mass, all to be considered as a whole and leaves us epistemically limited towards their situation. For instance, because of an history of carnism[72] -- the idea that it is morally permissible to eat certain animal -- we have legitimized the consumption of the flesh of certain animals and not others. There are, like this example, a variety of biases and limitations which play in disfavor of our moral assessment of animal questions and I think that a better awareness and understanding of the values pertaining to these questions will be especially important to reduce the influence of such biases and limitations. I have in mind values such as suffering, injustice, the morally disgusting, perhaps also moral fault, which are respectively displayed by compassion, indignation, moral disgust

[71] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 124

[72] Desaulniers (2013), 110

and guilt. In the next section, I will try to explain the way emotions are important for animal ethics, having these values and emotions in mind.

§ 3 The importance of emotions in animal ethics

Up until this point, I have discussed two different approaches to questions of animal ethics. One from traditional ethical theories, the main voices being those of Singer and Regan who defend a rationalist position. The other, from the feminist animal care tradition, is critical of rationalist theories and argues that emotions need to play a role in animal ethics. Feminist animal care theorists argue that it is a problem for Singer and Regan to dispense with emotions as an epistemological source to make moral judgments. As much as I sympathize with feminist animal care theorists, I explained how I remain somewhat puzzled that they hardly say a word about the nature of emotions to explain why they are so important. This is why I have appealed to contemporary emotion theory to give further support to the claim that emotions are epistemologically important for ethical questions. I have explained that this importance is in virtue of their relation to values. First, emotions are epistemologically important because, when justified, they offer a privileged epistemic route for making justified evaluative judgments. Second, I have argued that emotions are necessary for our understanding of values. In this section, I give further support to the claim that, in virtue of their epistemic virtues, emotions have an important, even necessary, role to play in animal ethics. I also hope this discussion will provide some support to the views of feminist animal care theorists.

1. Noticing all the relevant reasons

The conditions in which animals are kept in our current society are questionable to say the least. There are a variety of examples, pertaining to very diverse spheres of our lives, which can illustrate this: eating meat and consuming dairy products encourages the use of animals as means and supports industrial farming practices; equestrian sports encourage the use of horses as means for human entertainment; animals are used in laboratories to test the quality of house cleaning products or make-up. These practices, not only use animals as means, but also cause great amounts of suffering. As I have explained, according to Singer, "the capacity for suffering [is] the vital characteristic that gives a being the right to equal

consideration [of interests]."[73] As such, it is a consensus, amongst traditional ethical theories that it is wrong to make animals suffer unnecessarily.

The question of whether an animal suffers under human use is morally relevant because it is heavily tied to the fact that they are harmed in morally unjust ways. Their suffering is directly tied to them being wronged. As such, while many other values do relate to these questions, I think the key values in animal ethics are suffering and injustice. As I explained above, emotions have a sensitivity which engages us with the world and allows us to notice values that we might otherwise miss. For instance, indignation can allow us to recognize an instance of injustice. Emotions make us sensitive to properties pertaining to the moral sphere (the moral values) which count as reasons to make a moral assessment; our emotions make us sensitive to these values because they are sensitive to the subtle cues of a situation that count as reasons in favor of our evaluative judgment. Then, the first way emotions can help in animal ethics is by improving our responsiveness to values; values which count as reasons to make our moral judgments.

Moreover, although there is a non-emotional route to access these values, as I have explained above, we have good reasons to think that we hardly can dispense with emotions to track values. The non-emotional route to make a justified evaluative judgment entails that one be sensitive to properties of an object which make it such that we can judge that a value is exemplified. And precisely, our emotional sensitivity provides us with what we need to track those properties, seeing how complex our environment is, we could question how apt we would be to non-emotionally track values, we are, after all, not programmed robots, who can rely on sophisticated algorithms to detect the values. But precisely, we have emotions which can make us sensitive to the right properties.

This will prove especially handy in animal ethics because it is a very complex ethical environment. Animal questions are not habitual scenarios which ask us to decide, for instance, between lying or not lying to a friend. As I tried to explain above, our outlook on animal questions is prone to limitations and biases, which can often misinform us with regards to these questions. While feminist animal care theorists are not fans of the utilitarian calculation, because it reduces those involved to numbers, still, their claim about emotions is that even an utilitarian theory should be informed by emotions, because emotions make us sensitive to

[73] Singer (2002), 7

moral information that is relevant to most types of judgment making. Whereas a rationalist approach encourages us to take the non-emotional route to track values and inform our judgments, what I have argued is that we have reasons to rather trust the emotional one.

A discussion from Nomy Arpaly, on the case of Huckleberry Finn, should help illustrate this.[74] Huckleberry Finn is Mark Twain's famous character, a boy who grew up in southern United States before the abolition of slavery and who befriends Jim, a runaway slave. Arpaly explains that we (moral agents) can be responsive or fail to be responsive to moral reasons and she argues that Huckleberry is responsive to the wrong reasons when he reasons, but to the right reasons viscerally. Huck thinks that it is wrong not to turn Jim in because this amounts to stealing the property of Miss Watson, Jim's owner, and he is quite convinced of that. Upon deliberation, he reaches the conclusion that he is a bad boy and that he should turn Jim in. However, when the opportunity arises, he doesn't.

What Arpaly explains, and is relevant here, is that Huckleberry is sensitive to the right reasons, which is showed by the fact that he refrains from turning Jim in, even though, upon deliberation, he answered to the wrong reasons: his society's racist standards. Arpaly explains that Huckleberry undergoes a perceptual shift -- that is, Huckleberry perceives data about Jim (or the situation) which he does not take into account in his deliberation, but which nevertheless bring him to see Jim differently: as a person. Arpaly says that while Huck is not aware that he is acting for the right reasons, he nevertheless is.[75]

This story is relevant for our discussion, because it shows how one can be sensitive to aspects of a situation (in this case that Jim is a human, very similar to Huckleberry in most aspects, that he is a person) that count as moral reasons and which are missed by reasoning. This example casts doubt on our rational capacities' ability to respond to all the morally relevant reasons. In other words, it casts doubt on the reliability of our non-emotional route to track all the relevant values. Regan suggests that emotions cannot be at the source of a sound ethical judgment because he considers that they cannot be justified. However, as we have seen in § 2.2, they can. Emotions answer to reasons, reasons that count in favor of making certain evaluative judgments: for instance, the judgment that one deserves respect, is treated unjustly or that one suffers.

---

[74] See Arpaly (2002)

[75] Ibid

In the end, the informed moral choice for Huckleberry was to listen to his emotions because they are sensitive to certain cues. The agent, as Regan tells us, should have all the relevant facts pertaining to the problem at hand to make an informed moral judgment. It seems, then, that only Huckleberry's emotions were allowing him to appreciate certain facts: that Jim is a person, that he deserves respect and not to be considered an object of property. I think, as I hope my discussion on compassion in §5 will show, that emotions will serve questions of animal ethics in just that way.

To see this clearly, we need to consider how normal it is for our society to own and raise animals the way we do. Quite similarly to how Huckleberry thought about slaves. For many people, the facts that the dairy industry implies that female cows to be raised inside a stall, with limited or no access to grazing pastures and be pregnant and separated from their calfs at birth yearly to maintain continuous milk production[76], do not count as reasons to judge that consuming dairy products is wrong. Cows, similar to slaves, are property and objects of production, and we consider that it is permissible to treat them this way.

The worry is that these facts do not count sufficiently in the calculation, because we are not sensitive enough to their moral importance since these are normal practices in our societies. However, those of us who can feel are usually quite moved or made uncomfortable by the idea that a cow must let go of her calf or be pregnant year after year to produce milk for us. As I discuss in §5.2, these cows suffer in these conditions, perhaps not as obviously to us as if they were openly beaten up with a crowbar, or starved to death, but they do. These conditions, considered normal in our societies, just do not meet their natural interests and are oppressive. I think emotional sensitivity will be better apt to respond to these facts, than reason, the same way it is for Huckleberry. Because this emotional sensitivity allows for a shift in perspective, if we see the cow as a means of production, then we cannot consider these non-moral properties as morally relevant, but if we can feel compassion or respect for the cow, then we will come to see her differently and see how these facts are relevant.

As such, this is the first way I think emotions can contribute to questions of animal ethics. The same way that Huckleberry's emotions allow him to change his perspective by making important moral reasons salient to him, so emotions will make important moral information salient to us and inform our ordinary moral judgments. Moral judgments

[76] DeGrazia (2002)

pertaining to animal questions are not easy and we are often oblivious to important aspects of the situations. That is why I think emotional sensitivity will be helpful if it is given a louder voice in our ethical theories.

It is difficult to see how a theory which does without emotions could reliably have all the relevant information in hand when making a moral judgment, specifically because emotions provide us with a privilege epistemological route for making justified evaluative judgments. True, Singer certainly accounts for these facts in *Animal Liberation*, making them count in the utilitarian balance. However the problem with his welfarist view is that it does not invite a change in perspective. The utilitarian view considers animals as carriers of units of suffering which count in the calculation. As long as we see animals as an anonymous mass which can suffer we cannot change our perspective about them, to see them as beings deserving respect who should not be held as property. Emotions could inform a utilitarian calculation, but they can do more than that, because the way they make certain values salient to us it tied to the ways we come to see animals, not as carriers of units of suffering, but as suffering individuals. As long as we see animals as objects we cannot come to count their suffering with due respect in the balance and our emotions can help us notice this injustice. As such, rather than merely sweeping our emotions under the carpet and continuing business as usual, perhaps we should listen to them.

2. Understanding values the way it matters

In the last section I suggested that one of the reasons why emotions should play a role in animal ethics is because they are sensitive to properties which justify the making of evaluative judgments, like the properties that make a situation an injustice or an instance of suffering, thus providing us with a privileged epistemic route to make justified evaluative judgments. This privileged route will be helpful to notice the presence of values which would otherwise go unnoticed. As far as some of these values are moral values, then our emotions play an important role in providing us with relevant moral information and contribute to our making informed and correct moral judgments. In this section, I suggest that the second reason why emotions should play a role in animal ethics is because they are necessary to our understanding of values -- that is, they are necessary to understand values the way it matters.

As I have mentioned above, understanding is more complex than knowing. When one understands, one grasps connections between different parts because understanding is

relational. Understanding is seeing how different things fit together and how their relation conveys meaning: to grasp connections is to grasp meaning.[77] We could say that understanding, when it comes to morality is doing the right action for the right reasons. It is not only succeeding in doing the right action, but it is to understand why it is important that this action be done, why this action matters. As such, understanding moral values is part of our understanding the right reasons: the moral reasons. As Arpaly explains: "An important truth about moral worth seems to be [that] the reasons for which [the agent] acts are identical to the reasons for which the action is right."[78] This is the difference between one who comes to do the right moral action, not for the right reasons (perhaps by accident, or as a calculation in a selfish endeavor) and a good person, who does the right action for the right reasons because she understands which considerations constitute moral reasons. For our purposes here, we are not only trying to see why understanding values is important for moral knowledge, but specifically to address animal questions.

Understanding values (understanding the shameful, an offense, injustice, generosity, suffering) involves more than merely knowing that they are instantiated in the world. Understanding a moral value suggests that one cannot only apply the evaluative concept, but that she understands the relation between the value and our moral practices. The person who understands values grasps that there are properties which give one reasons to favor or reject the situation which instantiates the value. The person who not merely states that sexism is an injustice, but understands that sexism is an injustice fully grasping the implications of her statement: that sexism is wrong, that it is blamable, that it asks for certain responses. Injustice is a value which involves disvaluing the situation which instantiates it, if a situation is unjust, it gives us reasons to reject it. If paying a woman less than a man, because she is a woman, is an injustice, then paying a woman less than a man, because she is a woman, is a problem.

As such, considering the importance of emotions to understand values the way it matters, one can wonder what worth there is in assessing a situation as an injustice without feeling indignation because precisely indignation presents us the situation in a disvaluable light, it positions us towards the situation as an injustice. How worthy are Serge's moral practices if he merely knows when to plug in the right values, what is the worth of saying

---

[77] Deniau (2008)

[78] Arpaly (2002), 6 (In the Oxford online version)

'here is an injustice', if he is left unmoved by his judgment? Can Serge fully grasp the importance of his judgment without indignation?

And this seems to be a similar problem with psychopaths or sociopaths, who not only are recognized to have a deficient emotionality, but also to lack full proficiency in their moral practices.[79] As much as they can utter the right moral judgment, their judgments seems to lack sincerity. Sociopaths and psychopaths, same as Serge (although we would not say of Serge that he is a psychopath), are using moral rules like the rules of a game or the rules of etiquette. Their moral practices are only relevant to them because it helps them fit in the society, but they do not feel compelled by their evaluative judgments. These judgments are not meaningful to their lives. It is no wonder why our evaluative practices are so tightly intertwined with our emotional nature, because our emotional experiences make us aware of the "canonical conditions of application pertaining to [our evaluative concepts]."[80]

The idea is that being a competent user of evaluative concepts "may after all require more than the mere ability to apply them in the correct circumstances."[81] Once again, as Deonna and Teroni explain:

> "Categorizing an object as funny or shameful is indeed hardly detachable from the understanding that its properties give one reasons to favor or reject it. And we might wonder what sort of understanding of there being reasons to favor or reject an object we would preserve, were we deprived of the relevant emotions."[82]

Another way to put it is what Roberts and Wood call having an acquaintance of values through emotions, that acquaintance provides a kind of appreciation of the values, which allows one to understand "things in relation to one another, a grasp of the significance of an entire [...] situation."[83]

Again, for our purposes here, we can think how important understanding certain values is in our moral practices. In fact, Brady tells us that "the ultimate goal of thinking about emotional objects is that of understanding evaluative properties [because] understanding

---

[79] Nichols (2004)

[80] Deonna & Teroni (2012),123

[81] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 122-123

[82] Deonna & Teroni (2012), 123

[83] Roberts & Wood (2007a), 23

values has a special value [pertaining to moral practices]."[84] For instance, understanding the suffering of others is both closely tied to making moral judgments and to some emotions. It is because we are compassionate that others' suffering means something and drives us to help. Serge can assess, via the non-emotional route, that a person is suffering, but it remains difficult to believe that he *cares* about it. At best, he has aptly registered our social practices and knows that towards suffering someone usually answers with care and solicitude. However, seeing as this last answer is tightly tied to emotions, we might wonder if Serge can even have solicitude.

This lack of understanding questions Serge's moral practices. It questions the worth of his moral judgments if he cannot understand suffering, injustice, moral fault, generosity and so on. It also questions whether Serge can respond to these values appropriately. How apt is Serge to answer to the suffering of a friend, if the judgment 'my friend is suffering' is equally meaningful to him as saying that 'this stone is made of silica'. While Serge can learn to mimic our responses to suffering, there is a sincerity or quality in these responses which will remain missing. If emotions, as I argued above, are necessary to understand values, to understand them the way it matters, then emotions are important, even necessary, to make moral judgments for the right reasons.

As such, emotions will prove indispensable for questions of animal ethics which involve our understanding that animal suffer, that they are being wronged, that we are committing moral faults towards them and so on. As Brady says, understanding values, is understanding why such values are instantiated, to understand the interconnectedness of different elements. As Gruen notes, we often fail to see the way that we are already in relation with other animals, by our consumer habits, the practices we encourage and so on.[85] Understanding why a cow suffers will help see how things are related, why she suffers and to recognize our role in that suffering and to feel compelled to help relieve that suffering. And understanding suffering is tied to emotions which answer to suffering: it is necessary for us to experience the other as a sufferer to take full measure of what it means. Then, emotions have a necessary role to play in animal ethics because they allow us to grasp the meaning of animal suffering or of the injustice of which they are victims. They can help us take full measure of

[84] Brady (2013a), 13

[85] Gruen (2015), chap.3

the implication of those values regarding these questions and can hopefully help us recognize our part of responsibility in these problems.

§ 4 A word about empathy

So far, I explained that feminist animal care theorists are critical of traditional ethical theories because they do away with emotions in their approach. I have argued, to give support to feminist animal care theory, that emotions must play a role in animal ethics because of their epistemic virtues. Before I describe how this can manifest itself with a specific emotion, I need to say a word about empathy. As I have explained above, empathy is central to Gruen's theory of entangled empathy and feminist animal care theorists give great importance to empathy to pay proper attention to animals. Empathy is central to their theories, as much, if not more, than emotions are and, for these theorists, the importance of emotions is tied to empathy.

I agree with feminist animal care theorists about the importance of emotions in animal ethics; however I am uneasy about the importance they give to empathy and the way they tend to use this concept as all encompassing. While I think empathy needs to play a role in their approach, I do not think it can play a central role. Here I will argue that while empathy has the potential to help us understand animals better, thus perhaps making us sensitive to the right reasons, it is not empathy which motivates us: if anything, emotions will motivate us when faced with others' distress. To fully put that in light, I will contrast empathy with the emotion of compassion. This comparison should show the importance of emotions with regards to animal ethics, while clarifying what I think is the real potential of empathy. My claim is that empathy is not the same as compassion and while the former is important to take the perspective of animals and understand how they are faring, it is the latter which does the heavy lifting: the understanding of suffering and the moral motivation.

It is important to note that these theories, while they give a central role to empathy and emotions in their theory, nevertheless, think that both need to be accompanied by the right kind of attention to yield reliable moral understanding. While it is outside the scope of this paper to discuss the importance of attention, I think it is a strength of their approach to recognize that empathy or emotions cannot help us navigate the world without proper attention. Attention, understood as a cognitive process by which we devote ourselves to an

object or situation is, in British philosopher Iris Murdoch's words, a form of "attentive love"[86], where one is present to the other, pays attention to the other and her needs in specific situations. [87]

While I think Gruen is right to suggest that we need to consider new routes in ethical theorizing, I think that to place empathy at its core is overly optimistic. Let me explain why. There are, I think, two central reasons why emotions are important to ethics in general and in animal ethics in particular. I have discussed their epistemic virtues, that they can inform us about moral properties -- the suffering of others, the unjustness of a treatment, perhaps even the moral disgustingness of an action. I have also argued that they are important, even essential to understand moral values. Alongside their epistemic virtues, emotions are highly motivational. This is why they have long been considered as part of our moral life, if anything, because they can motivate.

There is an implicit component in the ethic-of-care tradition that once one is attentive and empathetic towards suffering, then one will act accordingly: one will be motivated to help relieve it. In feminist animal care theory, it seems like it is empathy which is supposed to motivate the agent to act. It even seems like the mere act of empathizing with the suffering of others will bring one to help. As Gruen describes: "How do you look into the eyes of a chimpanzee in a barren cage with a cement floor, rocking herself for comfort, and not empathize and thus try to figure out what to do to ease her distress?"[88] Since feminist animal care theorists build a large part of their account of moral motivation on empathy, they seem to consider it as an emotion. This is where I disagree with them. And while emotions, empathy and moral motivation could be the topic of an entire other paper, here I suggest that empathy should not be considered an emotion and I want to highlight that empathy is not always the golden ticket because it can lead us far in the wrong direction, namely because it has the potential to drive us to anti-social behavior and withdrawal.

1. Empathy

The term 'empathy', being considerably young, goes back to the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century and was coined in English from the German word 'Einfühlung'

---

[86] Murdoch (2002)

[87] Donovan (1996)

[88] Gruen (2015), 59

by psychologist Edward Titchener, as a translation mostly used in aesthetics at the time.[89] Today, empathy is understood in many different ways: sometimes as an emotion, sometimes as a cognitive process. Some equate it with compassion or sympathy. While there are a variety of ways empathy has been understood, it seems that the basic common root is the idea of recognizing the mental state of others and taking the perspective of others. The usual expression 'putting oneself in the other's shoes' sums it up well. Moreover, I think it is important to understand that empathy is a cognitive process which interacts constantly with emotions and not an emotion itself. This should help show how, depending on the emotions with which it interacts, it will guide moral action more or less successfully.

Empathy is often used interchangeably with sympathy and sometimes confused with altruism, however, these are three different phenomena. When Donovan uses the word 'sympathy' to discuss of the process by which we can better understand animals, I think she is rather describing what we know as empathy. Sympathy is an emotion, not a cognitive process, by which one responds to another's misfortune or suffering. It does not involve perspective taking or trying to feel with or understand the other. One feels sympathy for someone as an observer -- from a third-person perspective. Sympathy can be felt even if the person does not deserve it.[90] While some equate sympathy with the emotion of compassion[91], as I hope the discussion in §4.2 will show, this is not helpful; sympathy has as its object the misfortune or distress of another, but does not imply a motivation to actively relieve this distress; whereas compassion does.

While empathy can play a role in acting altruistically, as it is suggested by psychologist Daniel Batson in his influential work on the "empathy-altruism hypothesis"[92], altruism and empathy are not equivalent. Altruism, more precisely, psychological altruism, is not an emotion, and it is not empathy either. It is the disposition to act on motives directed at the needs and well-being of others at our own cost. In this sense, altruism is the quintessence of moral motivation.[93] It is being motivated to help those in need for their own sake, not aiming

---

[89] Goldie (2000), 194

[90] Gruen (2015) 44-45

[91] Roberts (2003) 295, Tappolet (1996)

[92] See Batson (1991)

[93] See Tiberius (2015), chapter 3

to gain anything from it and despite its cost. It does not involve strictly speaking, to take another's perspective or feel with another.[94]

While it is difficult to find a concise and unified definition of empathy in the literature, perhaps the most basic one provided by contemporary psychology and neuroscience, is that empathy is "the capacity to share the feelings of others."[95] That said, it would be quite an optimistic jump to think that by merely sharing the feelings of others, we would be motivated to act and to act for the right reasons. Batson was one of the first to suggest, based on empirical studies, that empathy and moral motivation are related. To be clear, for Batson, empathy involves "a relatively elaborated exercise in conceptualizing how others think and feel" and he understands it as involving or perhaps eliciting "vicarious other-focused emotions, including feelings of sympathy, compassion, tenderness and the like."[96] For Batson, then, the phenomenon which he studies and calls empathy aligns with the idea of putting oneself in the other's shoes, both at the cognitive and affective level -- including mindreading and perspective-taking skills. Also, his view of empathy is one where, once we come to know what is the other's state of mind, we will feel emotions towards her, for instance, compassion if the other is suffering.

Batson's studies are important because they seem to illuminate the idea that "as empathic feeling for a person in need increases, altruistic motivation to have that person's need relieved increases."[97] It is the idea that when we understand better how the other feels or thinks, we will have more motivation to help that person, for that person's interest. This, at first, can appear as good news for the topic at hand. According to Batson's findings, empathy plays a great deal in moving us to help others, even if it is costly for us. However, what I suggest is that empathy cannot close the deal that easily. The mere act of taking another's perspective hardly seems sufficient to motivate someone. So what do philosophers and psychologists have in mind when they say that empathy has a role to play in moral motivation ?

---

[94] For a full discussion on altruism see : Clavien C. (2011) "Trois sortes d'altruisme et leur rapport à la morale." In J. Ravat & A. Masala (éds), La morale humaine et les sciences. Editions Matériologiques, pp. 141-168. Or Stich, S., J.M. Doris and E. Roedder. (2010) "Altruism." In The Moral Psychology Handbook,
J. Doris (ed), Oxford University Press, pp.147-206

[95] Singer (2014), 875

[96] Tiberius (2015), 40

[97] Tiberius (2015), 40

Empathy is misguiding because this concept is used to point to many different psychological phenomena, and as Alison Denham[98] explains, there are different ways empathy can be understood. I think that what is important to understand is that the four kinds of empathy I will now discuss all point to different psychological phenomena and it seems that only some of them will play a role in moral motivation. Empathic resonance (or "emotional contagion or affective resonance"[99]) is the most basic phenomenon called empathy. It is when one mimics the behavior of another, often the facial expressions or the experiential states of others. Young children or other animals have this kind of empathy, for instance, when a dog becomes anxious because her person is anxious. However, this kind of empathy is quite automatic and non-reflective. In contact with another, this empathic response to her state often seems unavoidable, even for adults. This basic form of empathy hardly seems to be what is necessary to motivate people facing moral questions or witnessing others' state of distress because it is a passive state that merely mimics the state of the other, without perspective taking, as the word 'contagion' shows, it puts one in the *same* state as the other. While it can move one to act, we can doubt whether those actions will be informed and going in the right direction.

What Denham calls "empathic attunement" is what most people have in mind when they think of empathy. It is feeling what one assumes the other person to be feeling and requires that a person represents to herself the mental state of the other. Then the person taking the perspective of the other somewhat comes to feel the same content and phenomenological experience of the other's state. The perspective taker knows this state refers to and informs her about the state of the other; she does not confuse herself for the other. An example would be when we come home from work to find our partner exhausted, we can see it, we attune ourselves to her exhaustion and we can tell that this state is hers, that it is not our state, although we can share in that state. It gives us a first-person perspective of another's state of mind (including her emotional state).

Now, empathic attunement is not either what philosopher must have in mind when they say that empathy plays an important role in moral motivation. A detail is important to grasp here: this empathic attunement makes one feel what another feels. This empathy "makes it

---

[98] Denham (forthcoming)

[99] Gruen (2015), 46

possible to resonate with other's positive and negative feelings alike."[100] For instance, Maria is empathically attuned with Tim when she feels his sadness at the loss of his grandmother. Maria feels the sadness with him. And the premature jump people tend to make is to think that because Maria feels the sadness with Tim, that she will be motivated to help him. However, nothing in what was just described allows us to think that feeling someone's sadness or sharing someone's sadness motivates. It is not yet the motivational state we are looking for. It merely makes you understand that the other is sad. Perhaps Maria holds a long time grudge towards Tim, and she is rejoicing that he is sad. Nothing in that kind of empathy draws a direct route to moral motivation, more will be needed.

2. Empathic concern or compassion?

Psychologist and neuroscientist Olga Klimecki explains that "when it comes to the suffering of others, an interesting distinction can be made between two different empathy-related responses, namely, empathic distress and compassion."[101] She associates these two empathy-related responses to two kind of emotions that can, in turn, be associated with two fundamental neural systems that both shape our feelings, brain functions and social behaviors. One system is associated with positive emotions and activates the ventral medial prefrontal cortex and the ventral striatum in the brain. The system processes events related to social connectedness, feelings of reward, and favors positive social and helping behaviors. The other system favors behaviors of aggression or withdrawal and it is associated with threat, social disconnection and negative emotions. It activates the insula and anterior middle cingulate cortex in the brain. Again, as she notes, these are two different emotional responses, which activate these two different systems *following* empathy with the distress of others.

Interestingly, Denham makes very similar distinctions when she discusses what are, for her, more complex forms of empathy. Denham explains that, beyond the empathic attunement, two types of responses can arise: one is empathic distress, the other is what she calls empathic concern. Empathic distress or personal distress is when the empathic response overwhelms the empathizer to the point where she becomes over-aroused by the emotions of

[100] Singer (2014), 875

[101] Klimecki (2015), 2. See also Klimecki, O., & Singer, T. (2013). "Empathy from the perspective of social neuroscience". In: J. Armony & P. Vuilleumier (Eds.), Handbook of Human Affective Neuroscience. New York: Cambridge University Press.

others. However, there is a consensus that this kind of response is antagonist to moral motivation.

What is interesting is that both Denham's empathic concern and Klimecki's compassion seem to point to the same phenomenon. What I want to highlight is that this phenomenon is not empathy *per se*, rather, it is what can follow empathy; it is a response following the act of empathizing with someone. I think this distinction is important, especially to fully understand what motivates. Here it seems not to be empathy itself, but a response which follows it. So, according to Denham, empathic concern is a kind of concern where an agent has the desire to promote the welfare of another for that other's sake. Empathy plays a role here because this concern for others emerges from the attunement with the state of others. As Denham puts it: "the [empathic concern] occurs contiguously or concurrently with the [empathic attunement], and its content is informed by it. In this sense, empathy plays an epistemic role because it informs us of how the other is doing and from this we can develop this concern to help the other. Moreover, I think Klimecki is right to call this phenomenon *compassion*, that is, "an emotion of concern toward a suffering person accompanied by the motivation to help."[102] For it is clear, from the discussion given by Batson, Denham or Klimecki, that what really is at play here is an emotion, an emotion that develops towards an another's distress. It is this emotion which motivates us to help.

Again, Denham writes: "Batson's claim that empathy evokes altruistic motivation harmonizes well with the common assumption that empathy moves us to do the right thing, and is a force for the moral good."[103] However, I think this claim rests on a confusion: a mistake as to what empathy has the potential to do when it comes to moral motivation. I think this mistake is in part based on a conceptual blurriness, one we often witness in folk psychology. Ideas such as "empathy moves us to do the right thing" or "the contributions of empathy to moral conduct" let us think that it is empathy, the very cognitive process of empathizing, which motivates.[104] However, as we have seen, empathy is a cognitive process by which one can come to be acquainted with another's mental state: one comes to know what one is thinking, or perhaps, for what interests us here, one comes to know how another feels.

---

[102] Klimecki (2015), 3

[103] Denham (forthcoming), 2

[104] Denham (forthcoming)

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to equate this with a necessary contribution to moral motivation. Namely, it is not because one shares with another's distress, that one becomes instantly moved to help.

The case of psychopaths will help understand the point here. They are people who show normal reasoning capacities and who understand moral rules and principles, but who are nevertheless not moved to act on them. Moreover, research on psychopaths has shown that they are especially lacking in emotional capacities: while they can see that a person is in distress, they nevertheless do not feel anything about it, no urge to help, no guilt if they do not help.[105] Psychopaths can empathize with others, but they do not care about what they see or, worst yet, sadistic people, such as Alex in *Clockwork Orange*, can empathize with others' suffering, but take pleasure in it, a typical case of the emotion of *Schadenfreude* -- rejoicing about the suffering of others. These cases of empathy are only relevant to moral motivation insofar as they are enemies to it.

What is important to understand is that it is not empathy itself which will give rise to moral motivation, but the emotions which arise out of our empathy for others. Empathy can allow us to see that we have reasons to act, for instance, it helps us see when another is in need, but unless we feel compassion for the other's suffering, we might just get up and go. This is the constructive criticism I wanted to make towards pro-empathy ethical theories and this helps nuance which phenomenon is important here.

Again, I think one should be cautious not to use the term empathy to refer to a variety of phenomena. For instance, when Donovan cites Nobel Prize winner Coetzee, for his outlook on the animal question, as he writes that "the horror of the [slaughterhouses] is that the killers refuse to think themselves into the place of their victims[...] In other words, they closed their hearts"[106], she says he calls for a visceral empathy to the suffering of others to allow the awakening of moral awareness. However, as I mentioned above, this, strictly speaking, would not help. As Klimecki explained, to be empathic to the suffering of others can go in two directions and especially this kind of visceral empathy could rapidly lead to empathic distress.[107] Becoming engulfed in the emotional state of the other can lead to exhaustion, even

---

[105] Nichols (2004)

[106] Donovan & Adams (2007), 15

[107] Klimecki (2015)

aggressive behavior and, eventually, withdrawal. This empathic distress overwhelms the one who is empathic and eventually leads her to anti-social behavior. Considering the massive amount of suffering involved, for instance, in industrial farming and the little control we have over it, besides boycott and protests, if one were to viscerally feel the suffering of those animals, it is easy to see how one would become overwhelmed to the point of not wanting to help at all. In this sense, while empathy can prove to be helpful, even necessary to take the perspective of others, we should be careful to call on empathy to do all the ethical heavy lifting, in the words of Goldie, we should not assume that empathy is "the high road to an ethical outlook."[108]

§ 5 Taking compassion on the road

Before I answer objections, I want to fully illustrate the ideas I have defended here with a study of a particular emotion. For the purposes of this paper, I will only discuss one moral emotion. It would, however, be interesting to have in the future an account surveying the epistemological importance of many moral emotions such as anger, indignation, moral disgust or guilt, and to compare and contrast them. For now, I will discuss compassion because I think it is a fascinating emotion and central to feminist animal care theory. Compassion is directed at the suffering of others and has altruistic motivation built into it; it answers to suffering with a motivation to help the other for her sake. For this reason alone, it is interesting to discuss this emotion. However, while the motivational component itself is of great relevance, I will spend more time here discussing the epistemology of compassion: how it allows us to become aware of an instance of suffering and to understand that suffering.

Notably, there remains a step between judging that one suffers and judging that a situation is wrong. While compassion can inform us on suffering, this evaluative judgment alone does not necessarily lend itself to the judgment that a situation is morally wrong. That said, there is a consensus among theories of animal ethics that it is wrong to make animals suffer unnecessarily, and that we have the obligation to prevent their unnecessary suffering.[109] An instance of unnecessary suffering -- that is, suffering inflicted for other purposes than survival -- is wrong. So if compassion can allow us to recognize one's suffering, understand it

[108] Goldie (2000), 180

[109] Gibert (2015)

and recognize that it is unnecessary, then it is not only essential to alternative ethical theories, but also to traditional ones.

Suffering is not only central to the ethics-of-care tradition, but it is also key in utilitarianism and, as far as rights theory agrees that animals have the right not to suffer unnecessarily, it is also important for them. Again, perhaps we should note the difference between 'pain' and 'suffering'. Whereas the French word *souffrance* can be contrasted with *douleur*, both these words are often translated into the English 'pain'. However, 'pain' should not be equated with 'suffering'; pain is a physiological response which can be scientifically assessed and studied: knee pain, hearth pain. Suffering, unlike pain, is a value: it is a property which can qualify the state of a person/being. To illustrate this we can think of a marathon runner who, at kilometer 39, is in great pain, but we would not say that she suffers. Whereas, as I will try to show, the milk cow, because she is a milk cow, is not only sometimes in pain, she also suffers.

1. Compassion

Compassion can sometimes be understood as a character trait, characterized by the disposition to be compassionate, also called benevolence; it is usually understood as an emotion. Compassion, from the Latin root *compati* -- to suffer with -- is the "construal of a person or an other sentient being in distress or having some significant deficiency."[110] Compassion construes the other as being in an instance of suffering. More specifically, compassion's intentionality is towards the suffering of another, seeing the other as a fellow sufferer. It sees the other in terms of fellowship, this is why we say that it is a form of love, but a love that is impartial. As Roberts explains, compassion considers the fellow sufferer as a fellow because of a common "vulnerability to suffering, weakness, and death [...] When I perceive someone compassionately, the weakness or suffering or dysfunction I see in him is a quality I see also in myself."[111] Compassion, then, is a form of love which can go out to any creature capable of suffering, to all vulnerable creatures. It gives the one who is compassionate a motivation to alleviate the suffering, to take the means to alleviate it,

[110] Roberts (2003), 295

[111] Roberts (2007), 180

whether it is physical or psychological suffering. It is not an emotional answer prone to idiotic sentimentality, as, for instance, when one is moved only by the suffering of cute animals.

While it is directed at the suffering of others, it is not to be mistaken with other closely related emotions which also answer the suffering of others. In the literature, compassion is often used interchangeably with pity, empathy or sympathy. However, I think it is important to maintain a certain rigor in our use of these terms to remain fully aware of the phenomenon which we find important for morality. As I hope the above discussion made clear, compassion is not to be equated with empathy, even if it can follow it. Pity, another emotion towards others' suffering is different from compassion because, as Nietzsche notes, this emotion can involve contempt for and condescendence to others.[112] Compassion is to be understood as the German word *Mitgefühl* as opposed to *Mitleid* which is the emotion Nietzsche criticizes.

Most importantly, compassion is characterized not only as an emotional answer towards another's suffering, but also a willingness to help that person. Such willingness to help which is not characteristic of pity or, for that matter, of sympathy.[113] I do not think it is useful to use sympathy and compassion interchangeably. While they are both positive emotions towards the suffering of others, sympathy remains an acknowledgment of the other's unfortunate situation which need not motivate to help the other. For instance, when we offers our sympathies at a funeral, we might sincerely recognize the sadness of those to who we give our sympathies, we understand that they are going through a hard time, but it would be a stretch to say that we have a keen inclination to help them. In fact, we might well feel all three of compassion, sympathy and pity at a funeral. While it is true that some writers such as Hume[114] or Scheler[115] called 'sympathy' the key moral emotion, it might be that what they call 'sympathy' is what I have in mind with 'compassion'.

While compassion is thought to be an important moral emotion, I think there remains confusion as to why that is. As I explained above, there is confusion between empathy, sympathy, compassion and between the idea that we come to feel the other's emotion, to take

---

[112] Tappolet (1996)

[113] Armstrong (2011), Tappolet (1996), Cléro (1996)

[114] See Hume, D. (1967) *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Clarendon Press, Oxford and Hume D. (1975) *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Clarendon Press, New York.

[115] See Scheler, M. (1950) *Nature et formes de la sympathie*. Payot, Paris.

the perspective of the other or to feel an emotion for the other. Even Schopenhauer, who was adamant that compassion is the key moral emotion, still describes it as a suffering with the other.[116] However, as I hope the discussion above showed, to be compassionate for someone is not to literally suffer with the other. This would not help anyone. If your partner has a severe anxiety crisis and you are compassionate for her, you will not also suffer from anxiety, otherwise you would be just as much in agony. The idea of 'suffering with' needs clarification.

To fully understand the force of compassion, I think we need to follow the account given by Klimecki and neuroscientist Tania Singer. While it remains clear that compassion is a form of 'sharing' with the other person, they explain that it is a response to the suffering of the other where one is feeling *for* the other as opposed to feeling *with* the other.[117] It is an other-related emotion where one does not confuse oneself for the other and can maintain the necessary distance not to become assimilated in the other's suffering which could quickly lead to discouragement and withdrawal. "Compassion does not mean sharing the suffering of the other: rather, it is characterized by feelings of warmth, concern and care for the other, as well as a strong motivation to improve the other's wellbeing."[118] It gives one pro-social motivation in the face of suffering. As I mentioned above, it is problematic if the boundaries of the suffering become blurred because we can become overwhelmed or exhausted by the sharing of the other's distress. On the contrary, compassion is an emotion that is uplifting and gives one, so to say, the courage to help.

2. Epistemology of compassion

With a clearer account of compassion in hand, I can now turn to its epistemology. As I have argued above, emotions are important for animal ethics not only because they can motivate, but also because of their epistemological virtues. Emotions are important because they allow for a privileged epistemological route to make justified evaluative judgments and are necessary for our understanding of values. This is no small claim. The view defended here is really trying to show how it is that we can come to see, affectively, animals for what they are. That by recognizing and fully understanding certain values, for instance, that they suffer,

---

[116] Donovan (1996), Schopenhauer (1991), Tappolet (1996)

[117] Singer & Klimecki (2014)

[118] Singer & Klimecki (2014), 875

that they are victims of injustice, that we commit moral faults towards them, we can come to see animals as beings who deserve respect, a fair treatment and attention to their needs when they are in our care. The importance of emotions here is that it can allow one to see animals with due respect, to afford animals the same respect we easily afford humans and to see that we are all worthy of this respect. To recognize certain moral values and to understand their implications for our moral lives, will prove essential to make informed moral judgments towards the situation of animals and to acknowledge our role in alleviating their suffering or rectifying the injustice they live.

In this sense, what I have to show here, is how compassion allows us to recognize suffering and understand it. Again, it is the idea that when faced with a variety of non-evaluative facts, compassion will allow us to notice that these facts instantiate suffering, to make it salient for us and allow us to understand suffering and in doing so, I suggest that it will allow us to realize when this suffering is unnecessary. To see this I will invite us to imagine Danny. Danny is nineteen years old, she was raised on a small scale dairy farm and has always helped with the chores on the farm. Her family raises milk cows and produces milk along, what are considered traditional, as opposed to industrial, farming standards. Danny goes to college for a year and comes back home the following summer. One day, her father asks her to come help with a new born calf: one of their milk cows, Holstein 63, gave birth during the night, and it is time to separate her from her baby. This is something Danny has done all her life, except for the past year. This time something changes, when she holds Holstein 63 in her enclosure while her dad takes the calf away, Danny feels uneasy. The cow, as usual, is screaming and mooing desperately as the separation occurs. The calf, similarly moos loudly as he is brought to his separate stall. Danny feels for the cow as she realizes the emotional distress the latter is undergoing, and she really feels an urge to help. For the first time, Danny sees the cow as a being, who, as she was caring for her new born, got it stolen from her and is in distress. Danny feels compassion for Holstein 63's suffering.

This scenario illustrates, as philosopher and jurist Gary Francione explains, that there is more suffering in a glass of milk, than a steak[119] and to illustrate how difficult it is for most of us to recognize that dairy cows undergo a vast amount of unsuspected suffering. This scenario is to show how someone can work with cows her whole life without realizing the distress the

[119] Desaulniers (2013)

milk industry, even in traditional farming, puts them through. The idea is that Danny, after a year away, was allowed a change in perspective, she was no longer fully immersed in the dairy farm life and was capable of feeling differently towards the cow. She was able to feel compassion for, what undeniably is, an instance of suffering. Danny's compassion makes her aware that the cow is suffering, it makes her sensitive to the seriousness of the separation she is undergoing. Something she has witnessed her whole life, but had reasoned herself that these are normal, harmless, practices.

I specifically chose to discuss of the milk cow because, among the different animal questions, this one remains largely misunderstood. Cows do not produce milk for humans naturally. They are forced to do it for the first four or five years of their lives, then go on to become beef cows (to be killed and made into meat). Cows produce milk for their babies, for calves. To obtain milk for human consumption farmers have to inseminate the cow yearly, remove her calf from her at birth and collect the milk for humans. This practice involves many problems which vary from one country to another depending on the laws, and it is outside the scope of this paper to discuss them. Nevertheless, the scenario I just presented illustrates the very basic fact that cows undergo serious psychological distress every time their calf is taken from them, that is, every year. This separation makes cows undergo severe anxiety. Danny, as she came back home for the summer, was now, so to say, hit by this fact, that the cow is in distress when she is separated from her calf. [120]

It is Danny's compassion for this vulnerable being which informed her that she is in distress. And, for our second epistemological concern, which opened her up to take full measure of what was happening, to experience the cow as a fellow sufferer and to seek to further understand what was happening. As I explained above, understanding a value is understanding that the making properties of the situation which instantiates the value give us reasons to favor or reject the situation. For Danny, it gives her reasons to judge that it is a problem for the cow to undergo severe anxiety year after year for human purposes. Understanding suffering implies grasping its full implications and compassion will allow Danny to take full measure of the situation the cow is undergoing and try to understand why she is suffering and what she can do to help. It can allow her to understand that the cow is capable of psychological as well as physical distress. That she is capable of recognizing her

[120] Desaulniers (2013), https://www.asso-pea.ch/fr/campagnes/la-vache-qui-pleure/

calf as hers and to be devastated when he is taken away. To recall that if it was not for humans, then the calf would take his mother's milk for the first year of his life all the while maintaining a close relationship with her.

If understanding is to grasp connections and understanding a value is to grasp its full connection to our lives as we experience an object or situation as carrying the value, then when we evaluate someone as being in a situation of suffering, we are not just saying that someone is in pain, we are labeling the physical or psychological reaction as having a negative value. To understand that someone suffers is important for our lives because it is the paradigmatic state we seek to avoid, for us and for others. Suffering is the value we want to, as much as possible, minimize. Danny's compassion can allow her to understand that it is bad that the calf is taken from his mother and to also question why the calf needs to be taken away: because the cow needs to produce milk for humans. In twenty-first century, for a large part of the world population, it is not necessary to drink cow milk, seeing all the alternative products available.[121] Drinking cow milk (and consuming all related dairy products) is not for our survival, but because it is a business, a tradition and a habit. In this sense, Danny can realize that this cow suffers unnecessarily because of human practices and that it is wrong to encourage the dairy industry. While Danny could have referred to certain principles to establish this, I think it remains true that only her compassion could have allowed her to consider the cow for what she is: a vulnerable, sensitive being whose child is taken away at birth year after year, a being who is being disrespected and not cared for and this change in perspective allows her to do the right action for the right reasons and to fully experience the importance of this moral judgment.

§ 6 Objections

In this section, I will give answers to what I think are three serious objections that can come up against the view I have defended here. I will answer, in turn, the action guiding objection, the projection objection and the relativism vs hyper-rationalism dilemma objection. Before I turn to these objections, let me say a word about other, I think less problematic, worries that can arise against my view. Some question whether we can empathize with animals at all. This question springs from the worry that animals do not have emotions and

[121] Desaulniers (2013)

that, for this reason, we cannot empathize with them. I will simply dismiss this worry on the basis that we have sufficient empirical evidence to the effect that animals have emotions, from the complex chimpanzee to the tiny house mouse.[122] So, if animals have emotions, we can, at least in theory, empathize with them.

Another worry is based on a distinction made by Peter Goldie between empathizing with someone, feeling sympathy or compassion (for Goldie compassion is a kind of sympathy[123]) for someone and understanding how someone feels. It is the idea that, to empathize or feel compassion, one first needs to understand, to some extend, what someone feels. We need some information about the other to empathize with her: to gain "a deeper understanding of what it is like for [her], not what it would be like for a person with some mixture of [hers] and my characterization"[124] or sympathize with her. The worry is that we have too little knowledge about animals to accurately empathize with them or feel the right emotions for them. I do not think this worry is too problematic. For one thing, information about the nature of different animals, their needs and natural behavior, is an empirical question mostly to be answered by the field of animal ethology[125], as such, anyone interested could have access to this information. This is also what feminist animal care theorists invite us to do: to gain accurate information on the different animals with who we are in relation to better answer their specific needs. A dog, a chicken and a fish will have different needs, to fully take their perspective, it is likely that we need to be aware of those needs.

Moreover, some might be worried that humans will have difficulty feeling for animals. while many humans are scarcely in contact with animals other than with the food they eat or the clothing they wear, they can learn to feel for other creatures than humans. We have sufficient examples of humans who cultivate close ties with animals to show that it is possible[126], it is just a matter of opening one's horizon. The same could be said of our ability to feel for far away strangers even if they are humans. These worries, I think, can be easily

---

[122] De Waal (2010)

[123] Goldie (2000), 180, 213

[124] Goldie (2000), 179

[125] Donovan (2008)

[126] De Waal (2010)

answered and are not threatening my view. The problem I am worried about, concerning our ability to have emotions towards situations involving animals, is that we might project ourselves onto their situation, thus misreading it and issuing a misinformed judgment. I answer this worry below, but first I will turn to the action guiding objection.

1. The action guiding objection

It is plain that emotions have an influence on our judgments and actions; their motivational powers precede them.[127] What remains difficult to show is that emotions are reliable guides to action in that they can provide reasons to act; the action guiding objection worries that emotions will not be action guiding. A theory is action guiding when it can provide clear guidelines about what to do. In this sense, utilitarianism and rights theory are action guiding because they rely on clear rules or principles. The worry is that emotions, while they can inform us about moral reasons, still do not offer clear guidelines when faced with ethical questions. This worry is similar to the worry offered to feminist animal care theorists that their more complex notion of *care* [128] is not action guiding or to virtue ethicists that virtues [129] are not action guiding. It is, after all, a strong point in favor of rights theory or utilitarianism that they provide us with clear rules or guidelines to know what to do.

I will answer this worry by highlighting the fact that, while I argued that emotions must play a role in making our moral judgments, I did not commit to the view that our emotions themselves are our moral judgments or that "evaluative concepts or properties depend essentially upon the emotions"[130], the way some sentimentalist theories [131] hold. A view which, as we will see below, leads to forms of moral relativism. I said that emotions can inform our moral judgments by allowing us to notice and understand relevant values and, as I explained in § 2.3.2, there is a non-emotional route one can take to access values. While I have argued that they are essential to make informed moral judgments, it does not need to imply that emotions are the only guides. Feminist animal care theorists, while they think

---

[127] On the motivational component of emotions see Scarantino (2014). See also Tiberius (2015), chapter 5.

[128] Donovan (2008)

[129] Hursthouse (1999)

[130] D'Arms & Jacobson (2014), 12

[131] See Haidt (2001)

emotions are essential to the process of moral judgment making, also think that critical thinking is important. As Donovan writes: "if one feels sympathy toward a suffering animal, one is moved to ask the question, Why is the animal suffering? The answer can lead into a political analysis of the reasons for the animal's distress."[132]

I should also add, the way I think a virtue ethicist would, that learning to act with the guidance of our emotions, same as with the virtues, is a process.[133] It does not give an instant answer, but is something which we develop, throughout our moral development and as Brady reminds us, understanding values, a process which requires the assistance of our emotions, is essential to our moral development.[134] We can develop our capacities to empathize with others, thus improving the way we assess their situation and feel towards them. We can also train our emotions. As I mentioned, compassion is a key emotion to the present topic, and it is known to be an emotion which we can cultivate, learn to feel more and to feel impartially: compassion for all vulnerable beings.[135]

2. The projection objection

What I call the projection objection is coming from those who think that when we feel emotions for animals, we are actually projecting our point of view onto them and feeling what we would feel in their situation thus defeating the whole point of understanding them better. This objection is also skeptic of the contribution of empathy to better understand animals because it suspects that we cannot take the animal's perspective without imposing ours. This would cast skepticism on our ability to correctly feel for other animals. For instance, one could say that Danny, in my example above, is projecting her maternal feelings onto Holstein 63; she is exaggerating the cow's distress because she does not think like the cow, but of how she would feel if she had her child taken away. This would be bad news indeed, if we were to constantly project our own view onto animals; it would be epistemologically limiting and our emotions would often be out of place, that is to say, incorrect.

---

[132] Donovan (2008), 52

[133] Hursthouse (1999)

[134] Brady (2013a)

[135] Armstrong (2011), Donovan (2008), Gruen (2015)

Besides the obvious observation that we cannot put ourselves in other animals' shoes, because they don't have shoes, we can see how difficult it can be, seeing as we often have a hard time not projecting ourselves onto other humans, not to do it for animals. Nevertheless, feminist animal care theory asks for a "dialogical" approach to animal ethics, an approach where one takes seriously what animals are telling us which involves "learning to read and attend to their language."[136] As such, one is right to "raise the epistemological question of how one can know what an animal is feeling or thinking," that is, without imposing our point of view.[137] There are two things to say to answer this worry. The first one is tied to attention and this is why I think attention is very important for such an ethical approach. If one is to feel towards other animals, their situation and our relation with them, then one needs to pay attention to the situation. This attention asks one to take a step outside herself, that is, outside her personal concerns, to look into the situation, to respond, so to say, correctly to the situation. Attention would help avoid cases of projection because it asks that you do not put yourself forward, but you are open to the situation.

Another way projection can be problematic is not so much if you feel an emotion towards the situation because this is how it would feel for you, but to project your own biases onto the situation. Like for the case of Huckleberry Finn, we can be mistaken about the status of another because of the way we were brought to see them, as slaves, as property, as commodity. In this case, if our emotions are to inform us about values relevant to morally assessing the situation, then, often, a change of perspective will be necessary. This can be done plainly with the emotions themselves, as the change of perspective which Huckleberry undergoes, or as a process which follows the emotions and takes into account understanding the value at hand, like with Danny and how she came to see the cow with a new respect, seeing her as a mother, no longer as an object for milk production.

3. The relativism versus hyper-rationalism dilemma objection

What I call the relativism vs hyper-rationalism dilemma objection is, I believe, the most serious worry for the view I defend here. It is the worry based on the descriptive claim that emotions are, most of the time, the cause of our moral judgments, but that emotions, unlike

---

[136] Donovan (2008), 52

[137] Donovan (2008), 50

what I argued, do not answer to the right reasons or perhaps do not answer to reasons at all. As Singer writes, in a 2005 article:

> "In light of the best scientific understanding of ethics, we face a choice. We can take the view that our moral intuitions and judgments are and always will be emotionally based intuitive responses, and reason can do no more than build the best possible case for a decision already made on nonrational grounds. That approach leads to a form of moral skepticism...Alternatively, we might attempt the ambitious task of separating those moral judgments that we owe to our evolutionary cultural history, from those that have a rational basis."[138]

In other words, it is the worry that emotions do not answer to reasons pertaining to the moral sphere, or worse yet, emotions do not answer to reasons at all. In both cases emotional responses are not a good guide for ethical judgment. I call it the relativism versus hyper-rationalism dilemma objection following Singer's claim that "the science of ethics presents a dilemma between relativism (or some other form of skepticism) and a morality denatured of anything contingently human [hyper-rationalism]."[139]

Singer is pointing to what has become, thanks to many empirical studies, an acknowledged fact in moral psychology that emotions exert a profound influence on the making of our moral judgments, even that they cause most of our moral judgments.[140] However, many theorists, like Singer, do not think emotionally tainted moral judgments can be rationally justified. This, Singer thinks, leaves us with a choice. One the one hand, we can, like psychologist Jonathan Haidt, bite the bullet and endorse a form of moral relativism agreeing that moral judgments are emotionally based and that we cannot ask justification for them – Haidt's view is social intuitionism: the view that "moral judgment is caused by quick moral intuitions [(emotions)]" and that actions or persons are held right / wrong and good / bad with respect to a culture's set of values.[141] On the other hand, as Singer says, we can work harder to establish moral judgments on rational basis[142], endorsing a form of hyper-rationalism.

---

[138] Singer (2005), 351

[139] D'Arms & Jacobson (2014), 1

[140] Haidt (2001) or Greene (2010)

[141] Haidt (2001), 817

[142] Singer (2005)

Rationalists like Singer or Joshua Greene, in his paper "The Secret Joke of Kant's Soul", think that emotions are alarm-like signals which answer properties that are not morally relevant. The force of their view is supposed to rest on empirical data. For instance, Greene says our anger gives us a taste for retribution that has to do with a "blunt biological instrument"[143], rather than a sensitivity to morally good reasons, because we want to punish even though it is morally irrelevant (that is from Greene's consequentialist point of view). The empirical data put forth by Greene are supposed to support the idea that emotions are not epistemologically commendable because they are sensitive to morally irrelevant factors.

Another example of the emotions' deficient sensitivity to relevant reasons is the proximity bias -- that is, emotions are sensitive to factors of proximity: when are personally involved. Greene illustrates this with the Trolley problem. He says that when we are asked if it is okay to push a large sized person (let's call her Big Person) on the rails to stop a trolley from killing five persons, our emotions are sensitive to the fact that we are personally involved and issue the judgment that it is wrong to push Big Person. Greene contrasts this to the scenario where one must pull a lever which deviates the train onto another rail, thus killing only one and sparing five lives. For the second scenario, most people judge that it is right to pull the lever, even if, like in the first scenario, one person dies as a result. For Greene these different answers can be explained by our emotions' biases. The right answer, according to Greene, is in both cases to do what is necessary to save the five lives, even if it means the sacrifice of one. People are sensitive to the wrong reasons, according to Greene, when they say that it is wrong to push Big Person. Thus, in Greene's view, most ordinary moral judgments, because they are based on emotions, must be discarded in favor of judgments that are not influenced by emotions.

This is a serious objection to my view because if these claims are correct and emotions fail to answer morally relevant reasons and cannot serve as support to justified evaluative judgments, then it casts serious doubt on the epistemological contribution of emotions to animal questions. If these theorists are right that emotions, while they highly influence moral judgments, still cannot be justified, then it remains true that emotions can have influence on judgments of animal ethics, but it casts doubt on the rational legitimacy I worked to recognize them. In this paper, I wanted to offer arguments in favor of accounts that put forward

[143] Greene (2010), 71

emotions while wanting to preserve rational justification for their moral judgments. That is possible only in so far as emotions do answer to legitimate reasons. If the empirical data put forth by Greene (and his analysis of the data) is valid, then my project is threatened. As such, to avoid this dilemma and secure the view I have defended in this paper, I need to show how we can navigate between relativism and a denatured rationalism.

Justin D'Arms and Daniel Jacobson formulated a convincing response to Singer and Greene, to show that we are, after all, not stuck between the two horns of a dilemma.[144] D'Arms and Jacobson first explain that the studies presented by Greene do not make the important distinction between incidental and integral emotions. As research in cognitive and social psychology[145] tell us, there are emotions called incidental emotions which are sensitive to irrelevant factors. They can carry over from past situations to influence how we respond in new situations. For instance, having an argument in the morning with your spouse can leave you angry, and this anger can carry over to situations at work which do not deserve anger. Incidental emotions can also be triggered by factors irrelevant to the situation, for instance by moods or even the weather.[146] These incidental emotions are to be contrasted with integral ones, emotions that are appropriate to the situation and, if justified, can be trusted in the process of making moral judgments. Thus, unlike what Greene suggests, cases where people make harsh moral judgments under the influence of incidental disgust[147], do not prove that emotions are sensitive to irrelevant reasons, but show that one should be wary of distorting factors such as incidental emotions.

Second, D'Arms and Jacobson remind us that emotions can be corrected and regulated. They explain that people are wary not to let distorting factors influence their evaluative judgment, especially when they know that they will be asked justification for that judgment.[148] These are ways that reasoning can mediate the emotional influence and, as we saw above, distorting factors aside, when the emotion is justified it can land justification for an evaluative judgment.

---

[144] D'arms & Jacobson (2014)

[145] See Lerner & All (2015)

[146] Lerner & All (2015)

[147] D'arms & Jacobson (2014), 3

[148] D'arms & Jacobson (2014), 4

Third, D'Arms and Jacobson criticize these rationalist views, in a similar way I think Gruen does[149], for their way of leaving anything humane outside their approach. A key scenario used by Haidt to show how emotions cause moral judgments but cannot give support for those judgments is an incest scenario which is offensive, but harmless. The scenario portrays a brother and a sister who decide to make love during a summer vacation. They do it once, with appropriate protection and keep that experience as a secret between them, and Haidt explains that there is no harm for the brother and sister in that scenario.[150] The idea is that if there was no harm, then it is not wrong. However, people are often left, as we say, "dumbfounded" by such scenarios, because they judge that it is wrong for the brother and sister to make love, but they cannot explain why. These people's judgments are based on emotional responses (they usually are disgusted or made uncomfortable by the scenario). This is supposed to land support to the idea that emotional responses cause the moral judgment while not answering reasons. D'Arms and Jacobson explain that this reasoning rests on a narrow definition of harm, which, for instance, does not account for long term psychic harm, and does not control for sensitivity to reasons which are deeply ingrained in human nature and are also morally significant. This narrows down what can count as wrong: the way theorists like Haidt or Greene construe relevant moral reasons "mistakenly denies that the emotions illuminate genuine reasons for human agents."[151] What is more, these scenarios do not control for the difference between dumbfounding and inarticulateness: people might have been (emotionally) sensitive to reasons while not being able to articulate them.

Theorists like Greene[152] construe what counts as a moral reason narrowly, establishing what counts as 'good' reasons on "facts about the number of lives saved, or about harm and benefit construed narrowly so as to be empirical concepts."[153] This narrow definition of reasons, as D'Arms and Jacobson explain, commits them to holding unattractive (and unintuitive) views, such as the view that "someone's innocence does not provide reason not to

---

[149] Gruen (2015), chapter 1

[150] Haidt (2001)

[151] D'arms & Jacobson (2014), 3

[152] D'Arms and Jacobson note that (early) Haidt and Paul Rozin also contrue moral reasons this way. D'Arms and Jacobson (2014), 6

[153] D'Arms and Jacobson (2014), 6

punish her."[154] In this sense, even for situations where emotions are integral (but sensitive to factors such as cruelty or injustice), still Greene does not think that they answer to relevant reasons. As he explains in the Trolley example: our emotions are sensitive to irrelevant reasons when they make us judge that it is wrong to push Big Person on the rails.[155] However, while it does sound absurd to say that the factor of distance (being personally involved) counts as a moral reason, we can tell the story otherwise. The reason, to which our emotions are sensitive when we are personally involved, is that Big Person, *is a person* and, as such, she has rights, for one, the right not to be used as an object.

The only factors which Greene think matter to moral questions are precisely the kind of abstract, robotic, reasons which feminist care ethicists are critical of. In the consequentialist calculation, our emotions are not involved, and we can decide to sacrifice one to save five, but precisely, by the same process, we stop seeing these humans as persons, they become numbers, numbers we need to manipulate according to the rules. For consequentialists, saving five to the cost of one counts as a reason and by remaining sufficiently uninvolved in the problem we can perhaps see only that reason. However, when we can see that all those involved are persons, not numbers, and that which ever way you put it, it remains wrong to use an innocent person to save the lives of five other persons it will, indeed, be difficult to decide what to do. Precisely, this is a difficult dilemma. Big Person is a *person* and not an object, and this counts as a reason not to push her, a reason to which our emotions are sensitive.

Greene seems to forget that at the base of his consequentialist reasons -- that it is better to save five and sacrifice one to maximize utility -- is the idea that it is better to save five *persons*, not five rocks or pieces of wood. The value of the maximization here is in virtue of the fact that these are vulnerable people, with interests, with, as Regan says, inherent value. It is because they all have interests not to die that the calculation says that it is better to save five, to maximize the number of lives saved. But before this can be recognized, we need to recognize these entities as persons, to know that they have the right to equal consideration of their interest and try to do an impartial calculation. As such, that emotions are sensitive to the fact that an entity is a person, like with Big Person, does not show that emotions are biased, it

---

[154] D'Arms and Jacobson (2014), 10

[155] Greene (2010)

shows that they are at the root of our moral lives, enabling us to recognize who deserve moral respect at all. They perhaps are not helpful to decide how to solve the dilemma in the end, there are, after all, innocent persons who have to die in both cases, but emotions are nevertheless sensitive to relevant reasons, which is what we wanted to show.

In this sense, once we are aware of distorting factors, including incidental emotions, once we realize that emotions can be assessed and regulated and once we reject a narrow conception of moral reasons, to endorse a wider scope of reasons, perhaps reasons which are "anthropocentric", but nevertheless "genuine"[156], then we can safely say that we do not need to take emotions for self-justifying and thereby endorsing a form of moral relativism, and we can let go of the hyper-rationalist position. We can work to formulate views which recognize the importance of our emotions in the making of our moral judgments while maintaining a healthy critical outlook towards these emotional responses.

The way ahead

In this paper I argued that emotions need to play a greater role in animal ethics. While it is true that emotions have motivational virtues, I wanted to put forward their epistemic virtues. I suggested that it is because of their epistemic virtues that emotions must play a role in our judgments making process related to questions of animal ethics. I chose to focus specifically on animal ethics, because it is a fertile ground to discuss of the importance of emotions. After all, a whole spectrum of ethical theories have reacted with questions and criticism towards the prominent voices of animal ethics who defend a rationalist position. Especially in this field, then, as we can see with feminist animal care theory, it is meaningful to discuss the importance of emotions.

It is important to understand that feminist animal care theorists do not think that traditional ethical theories are worthless, all the contrary, they recognize the important, even capital, contributions which the theories of Singer and Regan have made to the field. They nevertheless question how an ethical theory can manage without the unique stance which emotions provide to address ethical questions, especially animal questions. My goal here was to strengthen this idea with the progress that was made in recent decades in contemporary

[156] D'Arms and Jacobson (2014), 20

emotion theory, which, because they recognize the relation between emotions and values, illuminate the idea that emotions can inform us about the world.

In the end, I wanted to make the point that in virtue of their nature, then emotions need to be given a louder voice in our assessment of ethical problems. In animal ethics of course, but also, I think it is safe to say, in ethics more generally. Practically speaking, this idea needs to be well understood, it does not mean to put up posters of carcasses of animals on the streets to provoke just any emotional reaction in people. No, the intelligence of emotions is much more nuanced and fine grained and, as I hope was made clear in this text, only certain emotional responses will be important to make the right judgment and take the right action. But I do not think this is a problem, as long as we know that emotions have an important epistemic role to play in animal ethics, we will be able to work to give their epistemic virtues full possibility to thrive, in theory and in the practical sphere.

References

- Armstrong, K. (2011) *Compassion*. Éditions Belfond, Paris.
- Armstrong, S.J. And Botzler, G.R. (2008) *The Animal Ethics Reader*. Routledge. London, New York.
- Arpaly, N. (2002) "Moral Worth". The Journal of Philosophy, 99, 5, 223-245
- Batson, C.D. (1991) "The Altruism Question: Toward a Social-Psychological Answer". Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Brady, M.S. (2013) *Emotional Insight: The Epistemic Role of Emotional Experience*. Oxford University Press, New York
- Brady, M.S. (2013a) "Emotion and Understanding". In *Emotional Insight: The Epistemic Role of Emotional Experience.* Oxford University Press, New York
- Cléro, J-P. (1996) "Sympathie" in Canto-Sperber M. *Dictionnaire d'éthique et de philosophie morale*. Presses universitaire de France, Paris, 1904-1910
- D'Arms, J. & Jacobson, D. (2014) "Sentimentalism and Scientism". In J. D'Arms et D. Jacobson (dir.), *Moral Psychology and Human Agency: Philosophical Essays on the Science of Ethics*, Oxford University Press, New York
- DeGrazia, D. (2002) "Meat-Eating" in Armstrong, J.S., Botzler, R.G. *The Animal Ethics Reader*. Routledge, London, New York 219-224
- Denham, A. (forthcoming) "Empathy and Moral Motivation", in H. Maibom (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Empathy*,
- Deonna, J.A. & Teroni, F. (2008) *Qu'est-ce qu'une émotion?* Librairie Philosophique J.Vrin, Paris,
- Deonna, J.A. & Teroni F. (2012) *The Emotions*, Routledge, Oxon.
- Deniau, G. (2008) *Qu'est-ce que comprendre*. Librairie philosophieque J.Vrin, Paris
- Desaulniers, E. (2013) *Vache à lait*. Éditions Stanké, Montréal.
- De Waal, F. (2010) *L'Âge de l'empathie*. Éditions Actes Sud, Arles, France.
- Donovan, J. & Adams, C.J., eds. (1996) *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethic for the Treatment of Animals*. Continuum, New York
- Donovan, J. & Adams, C.J., eds. (2007) *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*. Columbia University Press, New York

- Donovan, J. (1996), "Attention to Suffering, *Sympathy as a basis for Ethical Treatment of Animals*" in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 27, no.1
- Donovan, J. (2007) "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory", in *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*. Donovan, J. & Adams, C.J., eds.Columbia University Press, New York (First published in Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 1990, vol.15, no.2 by The University of Chicago)
- Donovan, J. (2008) "Feminism and the Treatment of Animals : From Care to Dialogue" in Armstrong, J.S., Botzler, R.G. *The Animal Ethics Reader*. Routledge, London, New York, 47-52
- Gibert, M. (2015) *Voir son steak comme un animal mort*. Lux Éditeur, Montréal
- Gilligan, C. (1982) *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass
- Goldie, P. (2000) *The Emotions*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Greene, J. (2010) "The Secret Joke of Kant's Soul". In T. Nadelhoffer, E. Nahmias & S. Nichols (dir.), *Moral Psychology : Historical and Contemporary Readings,* Blackwell Publishers*,* Oxford, 359-372
- Gruen, L. (2015) *Entangled Empathy*. Lantern Books, New York
- Haidt, J. (2001), "The Emotional Dog and its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment", *Psychological Review* 108.4, 814-83
- Hursthouse, R. (1999) *On virtue Ethics*. Oxford University Press, New York
- Klimecki, O.M. (2015) "The plasticity of social emotions". Social Neuroscience, 10(5), 466-473
- Lerner, J. S., Li, Y., Valdesolo, P., & Kassam, K. S. (2015). "Emotion and Decision making". *Annual Review of Psychology, 66*, 799-823
- Mulligan, K. (1998) "From Appropriate Emotions to Values" in *The Monist*, 81(1), 161-188.
- Murdoch, I. (2002) *The Sovereignty of Good*. Routledge Classics, London / New York.
- Nichols, S. (2004) *Sentimental Rules*. Oxford University Press, New York
- Ogien, R. & Tappolet, C. (2009) *Les concepts de l'éthique*. Hermann Éditeurs, Paris.
- Reagan, T. (1983) *The Case for Animal Rights*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.
- Ricard, M. (2014) *Plaidoyer pour les animaux*. Éditions Allary, Paris.
- Roberts, C.R. (2003) *Emotions*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Roberts, C.R. (2007) *Spiritual Emotions*. Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan / Cambridge.
- Roberts, C.R. & Wood, W.J. (2007) *Intellectual Virtues : An Essay in Regulative Epistemology*. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Roberts, C.R. & Wood, W.J. (2007a) "Goods" in *Intellectual Virtues : An Essay in Regulative Epistemology*. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Scarantino, A. (2014) "The Motivational Theory of Emotions". in *Moral Psychology and Human Agency*, Daniel Jacobson and Justin D'Arms, eds. Cambridge University Press, 156-185.
- Schopenhauer, A. (1991) *Le Fondement de la morale*. Le livre de Poche, Paris
- Singer, P. (2002) *Animal Liberation*. Ecco, Harpercollins Publishers, New York
- Singer, P. (2005). "Ethics and intuitions". In Journal of Ethics, 9, 331-52
- Singer, T., & Klimecki, O. M. (2014). "Empathy and Compassion". Current Biology : 875-878
- Smart, J.J.C., Williams B. (1973) *Utilitarianism*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Tappolet, C. (1996) "La pitié et la compassion" in Canto-Sperber M. *Dictionnaire d'éthique et de philosophie morale*. Presses universitaire de France, Paris, 1471-1476
- Tiberius, V. (2015) *Moral Psychology*. Routledge, New York