



Philosophy and Animal Life

Stanley Cavell, Cora Diamond, John McDowell, Ian Hacking, Cary Wolfe

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In *Philosophy and Animal Life*, Cora Diamond begins with "The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy," in which she accuses analytical philosophy of evading, or deflecting, the responsibility of human beings toward nonhuman animals. Diamond then explores the animal question in the more general problem of philosophical skepticism. Focusing specifically on J. M. Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*, she considers the failure of language to capture the vulnerability of humans and animals.

Stanley Cavell responds to Diamond's argument with his own close reading of Coetzee's work, connecting the human-animal relationship to further themes of morality and philosophy. John McDowell follows with a critique of both Diamond and Cavell, and Ian Hacking explains why Cora Diamond's essay is so deeply perturbing and, paradoxically, favors poetry over philosophy in overcoming her difficulties. Cary Wolfe's introduction situates these arguments within the broader context of contemporary continental philosophy and theory, particularly Jacques Derrida's work on deconstruction and the question of the animal.

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