

Chapter 9

Two Arguments for Animal Immortality

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BACKGROUND

I will here defend several claims, the first of which is that a certain large group of nonhuman animals are immortal. Call that thesis the Immortality Thesis, and let it be represented as follows:

Immortality Thesis: All sentient, agentless animals are immortal.

By sentient, I mean that the animals are *conscious* or *subjectively aware*; that they experience the world from a perspective that is theirs. For the sake of simplicity, I assume that all nonhuman mammals are sentient, which encompasses a host of animals. Whether other, non-mammalian animal lives (e.g., insects) are sentient is a matter I leave open.¹ However, should these animals turn out to be sentient, my argument entails that they too are immortal.

Why should we assume that nonhuman mammals are sentient? And why should we assume that sentience grounds direct moral status? The evidence typically marshaled for the former claim is empirical and moral. Commenting on the empirical evidence noted long ago by Darwin and confirmed increasingly thereafter, Tom Regan remarks,

In all essential respects, these animals are physiologically like us, and we, like them. Now, in our case, an intact, functioning central nervous system is associated with our capacity for subjective experience. For example, injuries to our brain or spinal cord can diminish our sense of sight or touch, or impair our ability to feel pain or remember. By analogy, Darwin thinks it is reasonable to infer that the same is true of animals that are most physiologically similar to us. Because our central nervous system provides the physical basis for our subjective awareness of the world, and because the central nervous system of other

mammals resembles ours in all the relevant respects, it is reasonable to believe that their central nervous systems provide the physical basis for their subjective awareness.²

The empirical evidence, then, is grounded in inference to the best explanation. What explains human sentience is a central nervous system, and nonhuman mammals possess comparable central nervous systems. Consequently, it's likely they too are sentient.³ The moral evidence is that when it comes to nonhuman mammals, we act with a seemingly reasonable moral hesitation that we don't show with (for example) plants. As Mylan Engel puts it,

You walk on grass, mow your lawn, and trim your hedges without any concern that you might be causing plants pain. But you would never walk on your dog or trim your dog's legs, because you are certain that doing so would cause your dog terrible pain.⁴

Engel's conclusion seems exactly right to me. When horses or dogs are beaten, they cry, attempt to evade the lashes, and so on. We infer from these behaviors that they are experiencing pain, and thus that they are *capable* of experiencing pain (i.e., that they are sentient). The chief alternative to this position, known as Neo-Cartesianism, is the view that these behaviors are mere reactive behaviors not accompanied by any internal mental states, including pain states. Instead, nonhuman animals are much like amoeba fleeing a paramecium predator. I lack the space to argue fully against Neo-Cartesianism here, but the aforementioned arguments serve as arguments against it, and others have offered thorough and powerful assaults against Neo-Cartesianism.⁵ But I will note that it remains unclear to me how, if Neo-Cartesianism is true, we can have sufficiently strong evidence to render reasonable belief in other *human* mental lives, including the widespread belief that other human beings are sentient.

If, as I just argued, animals *are* sentient, what follows about their moral status? It follows that animals are individuals *to whom things can matter*, and in many cases to whom things *do* matter. What seems wrong about needlessly kicking a dog in the face is how it subjectively affects the dog. While there are other views about what grounds direct moral status, it seems to me that the subjective experience of a dog—a dog's misery upon being vivisected, for example—cannot be a matter of *moral indifference*. Thus, it must be the case that their suffering matters, and so (by implication) *they* matter, even if indirectly.

By agentless, I merely mean that the animals are not moral agents in the sense that most human beings are often assumed to be. Thus, these animals are broadly unaware of the moral significance (or lack thereof) of their

behaviors; they are not praiseworthy or blameworthy for behaving as they do; and they do not engage in moral deliberation. We need not endorse any particular theory of moral responsibility here, however. It is sufficient to say this: if there is a property (or set of properties) whose possession implies that an individual deserves good treatment, and whose absence implies that the individual does not deserve good treatment (or deserves harmful treatment), agentless animals are always of the former kind. Even if we assume that animals are moral agents, they are not the kind of robust moral agents who can plausibly make morally responsible decisions about their own eternal destinies.⁶ Unless otherwise noted, all references to animals refer to animals who are not moral agents.

It is important to exclude animals who are moral agents for the following reason: because my arguments appeal to faultlessness and fair compensation for unjust harm. If it turns out that some animals have a sufficiently strong moral agency, then they might act wrongly in ways that makes it not unjust to permit their deaths or fail to compensate them for harms they suffer. For example, if a chimpanzee with robust moral agency attempts to wrongfully kill someone but is killed in justified self-defense, then it is far less plausible to suppose that the chimpanzee is owed compensation for his death. Those cases are difficult and interesting in their own right, but I do not consider them here.

The claim that such animals are immortal is just the claim that they never permanently⁷ cease to exist. The central claim of animal immortalism, then, is that if nonexistence is ever a property of animals, it is never an *enduring* property: that is, a property which is such that, if one has it, then one always has it.⁸ Said another way, if animals ever die, they do not remain dead forever.⁹

My arguments for animal immortalism will assume the existence of an omnipotent, omniscient, and unfailingly good¹⁰ divinity, which I shall call Gaia.¹¹ This conception of divinity, and particularly an emphasis on divine goodness, is endorsed by all classic western theistic traditions, as well as some non-Western traditions:

In the major religions of the West—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—the dominant theological tradition has long held that among the attributes constituting the nature of God are to be counted his unlimited power (omnipotence), perfect goodness, and unlimited knowledge (omniscience).¹²

Throughout the history of western theology, divine goodness has been explicated in a number of ways. Central among these is the important religious claim that God is morally good. This form of divine goodness usually is thought to consist in God's acting always in accordance with universal moral principles, satisfying without fail moral duties such as truth-telling and promise-keeping, and engaging in acts of gracious supererogation.¹³

This chapter, then, argues that the truth of Anselmian theism furnishes support for animal immortalism.¹⁴ In one sense, this is not surprising: Absent theism, it is not obvious whether *anyone* is immortal. But animal immortalism does not come by its theistic support so cheaply. Not all theists have endorsed animal immortalism, and little has been said about *why* theism makes animal immortalism more likely. Indeed, my arguments, if they succeed, utilize theism to do better than make animal immortalism more likely: They make animal immortalism plausibly true.¹⁵ The project is therefore a conditional one: If Anselmian theism is true, then plausibly so is animal immortalism.¹⁶

As my arguments show, animals are not only *immortal*, but *immortal in a good way*. There are possibly bad ways to be immortal. For example, an eternal existence in Hell would be a horrific kind of immortality. Because my arguments imply that animals are immortal in a good way, they defend more than animal immortalism. They also defend the following thesis, which I simply call the Goodness Thesis:

Goodness Thesis: If there is some sentient, agentless animal who is immortal, then immortality is good for them.

Let the conjunction of the Immortality Thesis and the Goodness Thesis be Animal Immortalism, and let it be represented as follows:

Animal Immortalism: All sentient, agentless animals are immortal in a way that is good for them.

As it stands, animal immortalism is merely the claim that these animals will enjoy good afterlives. It says nothing about *how* good those afterlives will be. Animal immortalism is therefore weaker than animal *universalism*, the thesis that all “sentient animals will be brought into heaven and remain there for eternity,”¹⁷ since it doesn’t contend that animals will occupy heaven or enjoy an incomparably good existence, but only a good immortal existence. It is weaker than animal *survivalism*, “the thesis that animals survive death,”¹⁸ since it maintains that animals do more than survive death. They survive it forever, and blessedly so.

I offer two arguments for animal immortalism. The first is that there are three possibilities for animals upon death: perpetual nonexistence, existence in a harmful afterlife, or existence in a good afterlife. Both perpetual nonexistence and existence in a harmful afterlife are harms to animals, and they are harms they would suffer through no fault of their own. This is true since animals *could* exist in a world in which they are immortal, but (by assumption) they do not, and their lack of agency entails that they are not at fault for any harms they suffer. Thus, mortal animals are, in a word, *unlucky*, and, as Larry

Temkin says, “It is bad—unjust and unfair—for some to be worse off than others through no fault of their own.”¹⁹ Because a perfectly just Gaia would perpetrate no injustices, she would therefore choose a world in which animals are immortal. The second argument is that many animals are owed compensation because they have, as a contingent fact, been unjustly harmed in this life. It is unlikely that all such animals are sufficiently compensated in this life, and therefore at least some of them still require compensation. Thus, it is accidentally necessary that animals be compensated in the afterlife, which requires a good afterlife. And because they would be unjustly harmed *again* if they were brought to a good afterlife and then sent to a harmful afterlife or perpetual nonexistence, the good afterlife must be a perpetual one. Animals who have not been treated unjustly are captured by this argument, as well, since it would be unfair to restrict an escape from death (or, worse, a harmful afterlife) to animals who have been unjustly harmed. Moreover, that extends not only to animals within the actual world, but within all possible worlds. Thus, animal immortalism is true in every world in which there are animals. I conclude by raising and responding to objections and offering some final thoughts.

THE FAULTLESS HARM ARGUMENT

One of three things will happen to animals when they die. Either they will fail to exist altogether, or they will exist in a (post-death) state that is good for them, or they will exist in a (post-death) state that is bad for them.²⁰

Let us first suppose that an animal exists in a post-death state that is bad for her. As an example, suppose that Kona, a young puppy, dies and becomes a resident of Hell, wherein he is tortured. Here, Kona’s fate is clearly unjust, since his fate is clearly harmful to him and he never did anything to deserve his fate. The latter fact follows from Kona’s lacking the status of a moral agent. Because Kona is not responsible for his behavior, he cannot be responsible for any behavior that would, if he were responsible for that behavior, justify his placement in Hell. Kona’s situation, therefore, is morally equivalent to the following:

Sassy is a kitten wandering through the woods when she is caught by a group of teenagers looking for entertainment. They douse her in kerosene and set her on fire. She suffers intensely for several minutes before dying.

If it is wrong to treat Sassy this way on the grounds that (a) Sassy is harmed by the torture and (b) Sassy has done nothing to justify such treatment, then the same is true for Kona. Moreover, if it is true that it would be wrong to

subject Kona or Sassy to such treatment even for a moment, then it is also true that it would be wrong to subject them to continuous treatment of the same sort.

Milder bad states are likewise impermissible. Imagine that Sassy is subjected not to immolation, but to the following:

Sassy is again captured by a group of teenagers looking for entertainment. They inject her with a drug that causes intense anxiety in cats, making them very anxious.

Plausibly, being very anxious is far less bad than immolation. But it is nevertheless bad, and it is wrong for Sassy to be subjected to such treatment. The reasons why are again because (a) Sassy is harmed by the torture and (b) Sassy has done nothing to justify such treatment. Thus, for animals to exist in a bad state—whether severely bad or mildly bad or anywhere in between—either temporarily or continuously is unjust.

A second possibility is that animals permanently cease to exist. Is that bad for animals? Consider the following case:

Sadie is a happy puppy who loves visiting Arcadia Beach in Oregon. She has developed a keen sense of when a visit is imminent, and she realizes she's headed there tomorrow. She sleeps for most of the car ride to the beach, exhausted by her own excitement. When she gets to the beach, she jumps out of the car and flies down the stairs to the beach.

If Sadie were to die at the moment of arriving at the beach, her death would be bad for her. We need not accept any particular view on what makes death bad in order to accept the view that it *is*, itself, bad. This is not to say that *nonexistence* is a bad thing; rather, it's to say that *existing and then ceasing to exist* is a bad thing.

What of animals whose lives would have been *bad* for them if they had *not* died? Consider a variation of the Sadie example in which Sadie, if she had made it to the beach, would have been swept away by a sneaker wave, suffered for several days on the ocean, and then died. There, it is less clear that Sadie's sudden death—from a painless aneurysm, say—was bad for her, since it prevented her from several additional days of life which would have made her miserable. Thus, it might appear that death, and therefore also continuous death, is not always bad for animals.

Appearances can be misleading, however, and they are in this case. First, death might simply be *less* harmful than some other harms. We accept this in other cases: The pain of a vaccination is harmful, but it's less harmful than the thing vaccinated against. Similarly, it's plausible to think that although suffering from a debilitating and momentarily painful illness is worse than

death, it remains true that death is also harmful. After all, we can compare three patients across possible worlds: the patient who suffers forever without dying, the patient who suffers but dies, and the patient who suffers but recovers. The second patient seems less badly off (i.e., more well off) than the first, but the third seems less badly off than the second. But if that's true, then it seems that death is a harm after all.

Moreover, it is very plausible that all animals exist in other possible worlds. The argument is straightforward: Propositions like "Kona could have eaten more tonight," "Sassy could have been a little nicer to that puppy," and "Sadie would have enjoyed Arcadia Beach more than Cannon Beach" are all true, and that means that there are possible worlds in which those Kona *does* eat more, Sassy *is* a little nicer, etc.²¹ Thus, there are Konas, Sassys, and Sadies in other possible worlds. Among the possible worlds there are, some of them are such that Kona, Sassy, and Sadie are biologically immortal.²² Different species have different lifespans, and there is nothing metaphysically impossible about dogs and cats living forever. For example, there is nothing impossible about evolution developing biologically immortal beings, or Gaia sustaining certain beings in existence forever, and the like. Thus, Kona, Sassy, and Sadie are immortal in some possible worlds.

It is also true that Kona, Sassy, and Sadie are happily immortal in other possible worlds—that is, their immortality is good for them. Using the same reasoning, we can infer that for *any* animal there is a feasible world in which she is happily immortal. In addition, the claim that all theists would accept is that Gaia can create any feasible world²³ and also can create a world in which all animals are happily immortal.²⁴ Now consider any possible animal who dies in world *W*, and suppose that animal is mortal in *W*. If the animal dies in *W*, there is a possible world *W** in which that animal was happily immortal. What's more, Gaia could actualize *W* or *W**. It follows that every possible animal is such that they *would* not be badly off if Gaia actualized *W** instead of *W*. And they would avoid being badly off in the same sense that Sadie would avoid being badly off *if* she had not died before getting to Arcadia Beach in the first example. Thus, every animal in *W* who could be in *W** is *harmed* by being in *W* instead of *W**.²⁵ This harm is unjust, and thus Gaia would not actualize *W*.²⁶ And if Gaia would not actualize *W* because it is unjust, then any world in which any animal permanently ceases to exist is an unjust world.

What about existing in a *neutral* state? We have seen that it would unjustly harm animals to deprive them of good lives, and thus their good lives will continue in the afterlife. But what of animals whose lives have been bad or neither good nor bad? Of course, an animal whose life was neither good nor bad would be harmed if their afterlife was a bad one, and this is ruled out as unjust under the Faultless Harm Argument. But that leaves two further

possibilities. The first is an animal whose life was bad but then they permanently cease to exist. For that animal, death is a *positive* thing since their welfare goes from bad to neutral, which is a morally preferable change. The second is an animal whose life was neither good nor bad and then permanently ceases to exist. For that animal, death is a *neutral* change since their welfare doesn't change. The existence of either type of animal seems to pose a problem for the Faultless Harm Argument for animal immortalism, since it's possible for animals to exist who would not be harmed by permanently ceasing to exist. Indeed, it's possible for some of them to be *helped* by endless nonexistence.

I consider a similar objection below concerning the Just Compensation Argument. According to that objection, which I call the Compensation Only View, only unjustly harmed animals are made immortal in order to compensate them for their suffering. What this means is that animals who have enjoyed *good* existences are not brought into the afterlife on the grounds that Gaia owes them nothing. But, as I have just shown, that's false: Gaia owes them something since if Gaia permits them to die when their lives are good, they are deprived of good lives and are thus (unjustly) harmed. What Gaia owes them, then, is an *ongoing* good existence—an immortal existence.

The opposite problem arises concerning neutral and harmful existences: If they are not harmed by permanently ceasing to exist or by existing in an eternally neutral state in the afterlife, then it appears Gaia doesn't owe them good, immortal lives. Here, it might be helpful to appeal to the Just Compensation Argument below, according to which animals whose existences were bad are owed compensation for their unjust suffering. But this approach has two problems. First, it makes the success of the Faultless Harm Argument dependent on the success of the Just Compensation Argument.²⁷ Second, it doesn't explain why animals whose existences have been *neutral* should receive immortally good existences.

A distinct reply is available. It seems unfair to enact an afterlife policy in which animals whose lives are already good are privileged over those whose lives are bad or neutral. Those who are already well off should not be privileged over those who aren't. Just as it would be unfair to leave those with privileged lives to suffer or die because they had never suffered, so also it would be unfair to privilege animals who have already been lucky in their welfare. Animals whose existences have been neutral, therefore, should not be subjected to neutral immortal existences while their luckier companions continue in immortal happiness. Thus, animals whose earthly existences were good will not be deprived of such good existences since doing so would unjustly harm them, which is unjust, and animals whose earthly existences were bad or neutral will not be given less than them. This means that all animals, regardless of the state of their earthly existences, will lead good, immortal lives.

If no animal suffers a harmful afterlife or permanently ceases to exist, and if every animal must either suffer a harmful afterlife or permanently cease to exist or participate in a good afterlife, it follows that every animal participates in a good afterlife. More formally:

The Faultless Harm Argument

(P1) For every particular animal: Either (i) that animal will be in a good afterlife, or (ii) that animal will be in a bad afterlife, or (iii) that animal will permanently cease to exist.

(P2) Not (ii) or (iii), since it would be unjust for any animal to be in a bad afterlife through no fault of its own.

(C) Therefore, for every particular animal: That animal will be in a good afterlife.

Only a small addition is necessary for the conclusion to entail animal immortality. It is possible for an animal to exist in a good afterlife only temporarily, which is incompatible with animal immortalism. Thus, (C) does not strictly entail animal immortalism. However, because the post-death states represented in (i)–(iii) are logically exhaustive, they apply to any animal's state at any time.²⁸ Because states (ii) and (iii) are unjust for any animal at any time, it follows that, given Anselmian theism, they are *never* true descriptive states for animals. Thus, the only remaining possible state is *always* the true descriptive state. Thus, a good afterlife is always the true descriptive state of every post-death animal, which is equivalent to animal immortalism.

What is true of the actual world is also true across possible worlds. Every animal is in one of the descriptive states expressed in (i)–(iii). If any of them are in (ii) or (iii), they are in an unjust world—a world Gaia would not actualize. Thus, the only worlds Gaia would actualize are worlds in which (i) is always descriptive of every animal—that is, a world in which every animal is immortal. Moreover, an Anselmian Gaia is omnipotent and omniscient, and therefore no world is created without Gaia's concurrence. Since Gaia would necessarily reject any world in which any animal is mortal, no such world could be actualized if Gaia were in that world. Assuming the further Anselmian thesis that Gaia's existence is metaphysically necessary, it follows that Gaia exists in every world, and thus every world is such that every animal is immortal in that world if there are any animals in that world. Thus, animal immortalism is a strong modal claim. It implies that every possible animal would, if created, be immortal.

THE JUST COMPENSATION ARGUMENT

The second argument for animal immortalism gets its grounding in the real but presumably contingent fact of animal suffering. From there, I show that animal immortalism is more than merely contingently true, and is in fact necessarily true.

To begin, consider that the world as it is contains unspeakable amounts of animal suffering. As Trent Dougherty plainly puts it,

Since nearly the beginning of sentient life on Earth, there has been a profusion of intense animal suffering. That is, *almost everywhere* there has been sentient life *very significant* levels of suffering have been *quite common* (and there has been a lot of sentient life).²⁹

Such considerations extend not merely to the present time, but also to an extensive evolutionary history in which animals faced unspeakable horrors from both sentient and natural aggressors. Daniel Howard-Snyder offers a sampling of the bloody history:

And what about nonhuman animals? We in the enlightened West like to think we are more civilized than our predecessors in our relations to the beasts. We regard the once common practice of beating animals as barbaric, for example. Nevertheless, we don't think twice about hunting for sport, or how the livestock and poultry we don't need to eat got on our plates, or how the musk got into our perfumes. But that's nothing compared to the suffering doled out by Nature. It boggles the mind to consider the billions upon billions of animals stalked and killed or eaten alive by predators or who died slowly and painfully, decimated by disease, famine, or drought.³⁰

William Rowe observes that this sort of animal suffering is frequent, intense, and evidence against theism:

In developing the argument for atheism based on the existence of evil, it will be useful to focus on some particular evil that our world contains in considerable abundance. Intense human and animal suffering, for example, occurs daily and in great plenitude in our world. Such intense suffering is a clear case of evil.³¹

Michael Murray likewise contends that the problem of animal suffering is problematic for theism and suggests that animals ought to be compensated for their suffering:

Wesley and others are of the opinion that since nonhuman animals are subject to pain, suffering, and corruption in this life, there must be some future state in which they can be compensated for that suffering, perhaps by being made the recipients of eternal bliss. It is certainly reasonable to think that were animals to be victimized in this way they would need to be so compensated.³²

Why ought animals to be compensated for their unjust suffering? One possible answer is broadly retributivist: because doing so gives to animals what they deserve. Another answer is that of Karen Emmerman who writes:

Extending the ethical impetus to rectify past wrongs through restitution to non-humans is an important signifier of taking animals' interests seriously because it shows respect for their moral worth.³³

Whatever our theory for *why* animals should be compensated for unjust suffering, it is far clearer *that* they should be compensated. To see why, consider the following case:

Yogi, an older dog, is severely beaten by his human family and left to die on the street, bleeding and whimpering. You have some veterinary knowledge and can help Yogi.

Are you obligated to help Yogi if you can reasonably do so? It seems so, as the alternative is to leave Yogi to suffer and die, which is plausibly wrong.³⁴ Thus, you *should* help Yogi, which in this case means providing veterinary care. What is less obvious is the view that Yogi should receive benefits *beyond* those sufficient for his recovery. For example, should you provide Yogi an above-average life, filled with special treats and dog massages? Maybe, but not obviously. And some might think that it is *those* kinds of benefits that constitute compensation, as opposed, say, to mere assistance.

Is this a problem for animal immortalism? No, and for two reasons. First, because it is not clear that *mere assistance* is not compensation. After all, if compensation for Yogi *were* required, that would clearly entail assistance, but then assistance is plausibly part of compensation.³⁵ Second, because existence is a necessary condition not only for compensation, but for assistance. If Yogi dies, he cannot be assisted. The same is true with other animals who have suffered: If Gaia should *at least* assist them, then Gaia must make them live again, and must keep them in existence to avoid harming them further. Thus, Gaia must make them immortal.

But a case can nevertheless be made for the conclusion that more than mere assistance is required. Consider the following addition to the above example:

Local authorities have identified Yogi's prior family and charge them with egregious animal abuse. The family fights the charge in court and loses. The judge is deciding their punishment and determines that they should certainly pay for Yogi's veterinary costs.

Should the judge require Yogi's family to do more than pay for the veterinary costs? Should they, for example, also be *fined* for their wrongdoing? An affirmative answer is obvious. If I accidentally drive my car through your mailbox, then I should cover the cost of replacing it. But if I *intentionally* drive my car through your mailbox for no good reason, then I should do more than cover the cost of replacing it. Similarly, when I wrongfully injure you, I

should do more than cover the cost of your healthcare. To do otherwise is to tacitly endorse the view that *intentional* perpetrators owe *precisely* as much as *accidental* perpetrators do, which is false.³⁶ We can therefore plausibly suppose that if animals suffer harms for which they are not at fault, they ought to be compensated for those harms.

What should be noted is that while not all animals *have* suffered extreme harm resulting from sentient predation or natural evil, each animal *would* suffer harm for which they were not responsible *if* Gaia failed to secure their eternity in paradise, since eternal death and eternal existence in a bad state are great harms. Because justice would require Gaia to compensate animals who missed out on paradise, the requirement of justice is preemptive rather than strictly compensatory.³⁷ So it is left to show how animals unharmed by sentient predation or natural evil are captured in the requirement to compensate harmed animals.

If, among animals, only unjustly harmed animals are made immortal in order to compensate them for their suffering, then unharmed animals are not made immortal. Moreover, unharmed animals are denied immortality purely on the grounds that they have not suffered.³⁸ Call this the Compensation Only View.

The view has the odd implication that animals will come to be *worse off* on the grounds that they have *not* suffered egregious harm. It is not the case that these animals will simply be less well off as a result of having not suffered, but that they will be *badly off*. (They are, after all, destined either to everlasting death or everlasting life in bad states.) To see why, consider the following example.

Parminder was abused by his parents for thirty years. Hadassah, by contrast, has lived a very happy life with loving parents. Now they are trapped atop the same hotel during a tsunami. A helicopter circling overhead lowers a rope and tells Parminder and Hadassah that while they can easily carry both of them to safety, they intend to take only Parminder, given his history of being abused.

This decision should strike each of us as morally absurd. Being egregiously harmed in the past cannot be a moral prerequisite for avoiding future harm,³⁹ such a requirement would be manifestly unjust.⁴⁰ Yet that is precisely what the Compensation Only View would have us believe.⁴¹ Thus, we should reject the Compensation Only View.

We can infer from this that not only that victims should be compensated for their suffering, but that their compensation should be such that non-victims are not badly off as a result of their non-victim status. Thus, for each harmed animal, it is a requirement of justice that the animal be compensated for having been harmed, which requires life after death. And a further requirement

of justice is that each non-harmed not be declined entrance to paradise on grounds that its history lacks the requisite sort of victimization. We thus have the following argument for animal immortalism:

The Just Compensation Argument

(P1) For every particular animal: Either that animal has suffered unjust harm, or that animal has not suffered unjust harm.

(P2) If that animal has suffered unjust harm, then that animal should be compensated with immortality.

(P3) If that animal has not suffered unjust harm, then that animal should not be permitted to be worse off on grounds of having not suffered unjust harm, and should therefore share the same fate as other animals (i.e., immortality).

(C) Therefore, it is matter of justice that every animal be immortal.

This argument, like the Faultless Harm Argument in section 2, explicitly entails normative animal immortalism. That is to say, it entails that animal immortalism *should* be true. When conjoined with the premise that Gaia fulfills each of Gaia's duties, it follows that animal immortalism is true.

One apparent implication of this argument is *modal* in nature. If it is unjust to exclude some animals from immortality on the grounds that they did not suffer unjust harms, then animal immortalism is true in all possible worlds in which animals exist. The argument for this is straightforward: There is no moral difference between denying immortality to unharmed animals *within* worlds and denying immortality to unharmed animals *across* worlds. Thus, because no matter the possible world in which animals exist, it will be true in some possible world that harmed animals are compensated for their harm by possessing immortality, and if animals *not* in that possible world are denied immortality on grounds that they have not wrongly suffered, this too would be unjust. The reason for the wrongness is the same in both cases.

OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

I shall now raise and reply to objections against animal immortalism.

The Gappy Existence Objection

One possible objection to my arguments is that they do not establish animal immortalism, or at least not one worth its salt. In the first argument, animal immortalism is guaranteed by ruling out bad afterlives and no afterlives (i.e., continuous nonexistence), implying that a continuous good existence will occur. But there is another possibility: what Trent Dougherty calls "gappy" existence.⁴²

What is “gappy” existence? In short, it is what it sounds like: existence that contains “gaps”; in this case, gaps in existence. Assuming that anything either exists at a given time or fails to exist at that time, gappy existences are ones where individuals exist and then cease to exist. In a word, individuals with gappy existences live and then die, and then live again, and then die again, and so on. Because gappy existences are possible, it is not necessary that animals enjoy eternal and *continuous* existence. The implications undermine the second argument further by showing the *valueless nature* of mere immortality: Gappy immortality is not immortality worth having, and certainly not much by way of compensation.

Given what gappy existence is, it follows that if an animal is gappy-immortal, then that animal ceases to exist. But ceasing to exist is just death, and death is a harm to animals who would be better off if they were alive.⁴³ Because all animals would be less badly off in the afterlife if they were alive, since they would be in heaven, it follows that gappy existence is precisely the sort of harm ruled out under my first argument.

The second argument, too, offers reason to reject gappy immortality. Gaia must compensate animals for the unjust harms they have suffered, and thus must provide them with good lives. If an immortal life’s being gappy drains it of goodness, then gappy immortality is not what animals will receive. Instead, they will receive non-gappy immortality, which is just the sort of immortality theists have traditionally envisioned as constitutive of the afterlife. Because my arguments motivate a denial of gappy existence, the Gappy Existence Objection fails.

The Transworld Unluckiness Objection

A central assumption of my arguments is that there is at least one feasible world in which all animals are immortal. To say that a world is feasible is to say that the counterfactuals of that world are such that Gaia can create it. Suppose, for example, that if Peter were to be free in any world, then Peter would freely walk around the park. If Gaia wants to create Peter free, therefore, it is infeasible for Gaia to create a world in which Peter is both free and freely refrains from walking around the park.⁴⁴ By extension, if Gaia creates a world in which all animals are immortal, then the counterfactuals must have been compatible with animal immortalism. In a word, all animals have “lucky” counterfactuals.

But now consider the following counterfactual, which I call Transworld Unluckiness (or TU):⁴⁵

(TU) Every world with at least one animal is such that at least one animal in that world would be mortal if created.

There is no obvious reason to believe that TU is true. But, so the objection goes, there is also no reason to think it is *false*. For all we know, TU is true. If it is true, then no matter what world Gaia creates, it will be such that at least one animal will not be immortal. Perhaps there is some animal in every world who is *transworld unlucky*—that is, has unlucky counterfactuals. Such a conclusion is incompatible with animal immortalism. To show that animal universalism is true, it is necessary (at the very least) to show that TU is false.

Contrary to what the objection claims, however, there *is* reason to think that TU is false. A world in which animals suffer or die through no fault of their own is a world in which those animals go uncompensated for injustices they suffer. Moreover, Gaia could have avoided these injustices by avoiding creating a world with animals, or by creating nothing at all. Thus, if any mortal animal exists, that animal has been treated unjustly by Gaia—a conclusion plainly incompatible with divine goodness. Thus, the following counterfactual is true, and true necessarily:

(DG) If Gaia creates animals, then Gaia herself does no injustice to any animal.

This does not imply that Gaia would not *permit* an injustice to befall any animal. Rather, it implies that Gaia would herself commit an injustice against any animal if that animal were created mortal. Because there are animals and because it is up to Gaia how the universe is structured, it follows that Gaia herself does no injustice to any animal, from which it follows that animal immortalism is true.

The Anti-Animal-Rights Objection

Another objection concerns the nature of the moral claims animals have. It might be thought that in order to have duties of justice to animals, animals must have *rights*, and that to assume this is problematic.

There are, at a minimum, two variations of this objection. The first is that animals lack rights, and therefore any view implying otherwise is false. The second is that either my arguments assume animal rights, in which case the arguments come too cheaply; or that my arguments do not assume animal rights, in which case my arguments are insufficiently motivated.

These arguments assume that it is controversial to assume that duties of justice are owed to animals, but that is implausible. It is transparently unjust, for example, to torture animals for pleasure. If that implies that animals have rights, then it is difficult to see why such an implication is especially controversial. On the other hand, it is not clear why animals have rights simply because it is wrong to torture them for pleasure. Some moral duties arguably do not imply rights to all of the individuals protected by the duties. For

example, it is wrong to destroy every rainforest, but not because rainforests have rights. Similarly, it might be that animals should be compensated for wrongs they suffer, but also true that they lack a right to that compensation.

Given these possibilities, my arguments need not appeal to animal rights in order to find motivation. They need only to appeal to the fact that it is unfair that animals are moral subjects who, if they are immortal, are worse off than others through no fault of their own; and that they deserve compensation when they are wronged.

The Boredom Objection

My arguments for animal immortalism are predicated on the seemingly plausible assumption that immortality is *good* for animals. Without this assumption, it's no longer clear why immortality would compensate animals for their suffering, or why it would be bad for animals not to exist forever. However, perhaps immortality is *not* good for animals.

There are two variations of this objection. The first is that immortality is *merely possibly* not good for animals, whereas the second is that immortality is *necessarily* not good for animals. I shall address both objections in turn.⁴⁶

It might seem possible for immortality to fail to be good for animals. On this objection, immortality is possibly but not necessarily bad. So, on this view, immortality is also possibly *good* for animals. However, my arguments offer reason to reject that possibility. On the view I have defended here, Gaia's goodness entails that no injustice is ever done to animals, and that some injustice would occur if animals were not immortal. Thus, there is no possible world in which animals are immortal.

It might be objected that there are possible worlds in which many animals are moral agents (e.g., as a result of special divine action) deserving of punishment, or at least not deserving of a good immortality. And perhaps it is not unjust in those worlds for Gaia to subject them not to a *bad* afterlife, but to a *boring* afterlife. But such an objection is hardly a criticism of my position. I do not claim that just *any* animal is immortal; that is, I do not claim that for every possible world in which the animal exists, it is immortal. Rather, I claim that for every possible world in which the animal exists *and is not a moral agent*, it is immortal.

So much, then, for the objection that immortality *could be* bad for animals. A stronger objection remains, however, which is that immortality is *necessarily* not good for animals. This might take one of two forms. First, it might necessarily not be good because of the very intrinsic nature of animal immortality. For example, perhaps sentient, agentless animals are psychologically constituted such that they *could not* enjoy an afterlife. Second, it might

necessarily not be good because it will *eventually* become boring. Arguing against the value of human immortality, Bernard Williams says this:

Against this, I am going to suggest that the supposed contingencies are not really contingencies; that an endless life would be a meaningless one; and that we could have no reason for living eternally a human life. There is no desirable or significant property which life would have more of, or have more unqualifiedly, if we lasted for ever.⁴⁷

I offer two replies. The first is that, on classical Anselmian theism, many human beings will experience good afterlives. Perhaps the problem of boredom is a more salient one for animals than for human beings. However, I can see little reason to believe that animals *could not possibly* enjoy an immortal existence, since their experiences might be sufficiently varied and intense. As John Martin Fischer observes,

Certainly, an immortal life could consist in a certain *mix* of activities, possibly including friendship, love, family, intellectual, artistic and athletic activity, sensual delights, and so forth. We could imagine that any *one* of these would be boring and alienating, pursued relentlessly and without some combination of the others. In general, single-minded and unbalanced pursuit of any single kind of activity will be unattractive. But of course from the fact that one's life will be *unending* it does not follow that it must be *unitary* or *unbalanced*. That one's life is endless clearly does not have the implication that one must endlessly and single-mindedly pursue some particular sort of activity.⁴⁸

Animal afterlives might also be populated with diverse experiences. For example, the same Sadie who loves Arcadia Beach also loves playing with other dogs, swimming in a cool pool, running alongside bicycles, catching treats, and wrestling with her favorite companions. These activities might be explored in infinitely different ways, and the same is true of any sentient, agentless animal.

We might press the objection further, however. It might be thought that, after a considerable amount of varied activities for Sadie, there will no longer be a great *diversity* in those activities. For example, one treat might taste very differently than another, but both treats have been had millions of times, and anyway treat time is generally the same sort of pleasure. The same might also be true of the other activities mentioned. Thus, the varied pleasures will tend to boil down to just a handful of *kinds* of pleasure—treat time, play time, rest time—and that might become boring for Sadie.

Against this, we can appeal to two considerations. First, we can appeal to divine omnipotence and omniscience. Gaia can perform any number of actions which might make afterlives more enjoyable, or at least less boring, for animals.⁴⁹ For example, Gaia could erase all or a select portion of the

memories of animals in order to make it possible for them to take pleasure from repeated (or kind-similar) experiences. Or Gaia might directly enhance the animal's pleasurable experience. Second, we can appeal to divine goodness. Recall that the following counterfactual is necessarily true:

(DG) If Gaia creates animals, then Gaia herself does no injustice to any animal.

If any animal would be bored and if boredom is a harm, then—because it's unjust for any innocent animal to be harmed through no fault of its own—Gaia will have acted unjustly by creating that animal. The reason is disjunctive: Gaia will have created an animal who will *either* die *or* live an immortal and boring existence, both of which are harms. The fact that there are animals is therefore reason to believe that neither of these disjuncts is true, and that animals will therefore live *good* immortal lives.

The Agency Objection

A final objection addresses the possibility that some animals will be cognitively enhanced to the extent that they are capable of making free decisions which might alter the permanence or nature of the state in which they exist. Dougherty envisions such cognitive transformation and endorses it for his theodicy of animal suffering:

[A]nimals ... will not only be resurrected at the eschaton, but will be deified in much the same way that humans will be. That they will become, in the language of *Narnia*, "talking animals." Language is the characteristic mark of high intelligence. So I am suggesting that they will become full-fledged persons (rational substances) who can look back on their lives—both pre- and post-personal—and form attitudes about what has happened to them and how they fit into God's plan. If God is just and loving, and if they are rational and of good will, then they will accept, though with no loss of the sense of the gravity of their suffering, that they were an important part of something infinitely valuable, and that in addition to being justly, lavishly rewarded for it, they will embrace their role in creation. In this embrace, evil is defeated.⁵⁰

Compensation is not enough for justice, which is the low bar of theodicy. Or, if you prefer, justice is not enough for a *loving* God (it is to their credit that Hick and Adams also keep this before the reader's mind). What is needed is the *defeat* of animal suffering. The paradigm case (but not, in my view, logically necessary) of the defeat of evil is when the individual endorses their role in the drama of creation and salvation and is glad to have played it (which might be different than being glad *for* it).⁵¹

An animal whose cognitive set (hereafter, CS) was enhanced to the extent that she could endorse her role in the theistic plan is surely also sophisticated

enough to *reject* such a role. And she might reject it in any number of ways, some of which (we might suppose) lead to her existing in a bad afterlife or being permanently erased from existence. As an example of this, consider the following case:

Koba is an ape who, after death, is cognitively enhanced by Gaia. He reflects critically on the frequent abuse of his life and rejects his *role* in the divine redemptive drama. He would rather be erased from existence forever than embrace Gaia's plan for the world.

As the objection is stated, it is not inconsistent with the truth of animal immortalism. Recall that animal immortalism is a thesis restricted to animals who are *not* moral agents. Koba, by contrast, *is* a moral agent. Indeed, it is possible for a great many possible worlds to be filled with animals who are all like Koba: They each die, are cognitively enhanced by Gaia, and make choices which negatively affect their welfare. However, animal immortalism should be more than a thesis about mere possible worlds; it should also be a thesis about the actual world. Thus, I offer a briefly reply to this objection, which I shall call the Agency Objection.

My first reply concerns the *nature* of the cognitive enhancements.⁵² There are, in the afterlife, two possible kinds of animals with cognitive enhancements: Animals who would *accept* a good afterlife in some permanent way and animals who would *reject* a good afterlife in some permanent way. The former kind of animal is unproblematic for animal immortalism, since that animal ends up where we claim *all* animals end up.

Because we identify a good afterlife as the state or place that is uniquely good for animals, it follows that if an animal permanently rejects a good afterlife, it acts against its own best interest. There are three possible ways that an animal might come to permanently reject a good afterlife: (1) on the basis of reasons or desires had temporally *prior* to the advanced cognitive set; (2) on the basis of reasons or desires had temporally *posterior* to and *because of* the advanced cognitive set; or (3) on the basis of reasons or desires had temporally *posterior* to but *not because of* the advanced cognitive set.

Suppose (1) is true: animals reject a good afterlife on the basis of reasons or desires they had prior to getting a new and advanced cognitive set. Recall that, on the view we are considering, animals' cognitive sets are advanced to permit them free agency, meaning that animals lacked free agency prior to the enhancements. Yet if that is true, then the reasons and desires animals had prior to the advancements were not chosen by the animals, but instead were obtained as a result of brute luck. Thus, if they come to suffer on the basis of those reasons or desires, they come to suffer through no fault of their own, which is unjust.⁵³

Suppose instead that animals permanently reject a good afterlife on the basis of reasons or desires had only after and as a result of their new cognitive set. This is possibility (2). By *as a result of*, we mean that the reasons or desires are *built into* the new cognitive set, such that the animal never had any reasons or desires to choose against a good afterlife but now has such reasons or desires. This is tantamount to Gaia *giving* reasons or desires to animals that lead them to choose against a good afterlife. Because this is manifestly unjust, Gaia would not do it.

The final possibility is that animals permanently reject a good afterlife on the basis of reasons or desires they acquire after acquiring the new cognitive set, but not directly because they acquire the new cognitive set. Unlike in the previous case, therefore, the reasons or desires are not built into the new cognitive set. Rather, animals come to acquire these reasons or desires as a result of using their new cognitive set. Continuing with the earlier example, imagine the same ape, Koba, acquires an advanced cognitive set and is given one-hundred years to make a permanent decision about the afterlife.⁵⁴ Somewhere along the way, Koba commits a moral wrong, and later another, until eventually he develops an evil moral character. The time comes for Koba to choose, and he chooses against a good afterlife.

A fuller treatment of the issue is warranted, but an initial reply is available. Koba is an ape with an enhanced cognitive set, one that does not initially include but eventually adopts (freely, we are supposing) reasons or desires that lead Koba to choose against a good afterlife. But consider Koba's pre-enhanced cognitive set. At that time, he had no reasons or desires to choose against a good afterlife, and instead had reasons or desires which would direct him toward or be fulfilled by only a good afterlife (i.e., by a good afterlife).⁵⁵ This means that Koba's pre-enhanced cognitive set, which would have led Koba to a good afterlife, is swapped for an enhanced cognitive set which leads Koba to reject a good afterlife. But Koba cannot permissibly be forced to undergo such radical change if he does not desire it and if it is against his best interest. Koba's pre-enhanced state is such that he lacks sufficient understanding to want it, and having it is certainly against his best interest since it results in his choosing against a good afterlife.

What if Gaia does not know with certainty what Koba will choose?⁵⁶ Gaia would avoid wrongdoing if she enhanced Koba's CS and Koba chose a good afterlife. And, of course, if Koba *does* choose wrongly, then Gaia will have acted wrongly. Open theists might reply that Gaia did not act *culpably* in enhancing Koba even if Koba chooses wrongly, and surely it is important for theists that Gaia never acts culpably. Yet it also seems important that Gaia never acts *wrongly*. Saying otherwise amounts to denying a claim central to Anselmian theism. So we should conclude that Gaia would never act wrongly, and therefore would avoid *risking* acting wrongly.⁵⁷

CONCLUSION

I have offered a defense of animal immortalism, the view that each and every agentless animal that exists will live forever. My arguments for animal immortalism entail not only that animals will live forever, but also that their eternal existences will be *good* existences. There is some reason to think these arguments therefore entail animal universalism, but I have not argued for that conclusion here.⁵⁸ Each of my arguments assumes the existence of an Anselmian divinity whose omnipotence, omniscience, and perfect goodness entail make animal immortalism conditionally plausible. Thus, if one accepts the existence of a divine being with those classically theistic properties, then one has strong reason to accept animal immortalism.

The first argument for animal immortalism begins with a defense of the modest claim that all animals are *possibly* biologically immortal. That is to say, there is nothing metaphysically impossible about, say, a dog living forever. Gaia could, if she so desired, conserve a dog's existence indefinitely. Thus, for every animal, there is some possible world in which that dog (and so on for every animal) has an existence that is enduring in Wierenga's sense.⁵⁹ I then show that there is a possible world in which *all* animals in that world *simultaneously* have the property of enduring existence. Thus, there is some possible world with some finite number of animals enjoys enduring existence. Since death is a harm for the one who dies, and because it is an injustice to be harmed through no fault of one's own, any animal who is not immortal suffers an injustice if she dies. Since it would not be the fault of any animal that they exist in a world in which they are mortal and eventually die, it follows from all this that any animal who is mortal suffers an injustice. A perfectly just Gaia, however, permits no injustices, and therefore would not create a world in which any animal is not immortal.

The second argument for animal immortalism addressed *compensation* for past wrongs. Even without a strong view of animal rights, it is plausible to think that, for example, horribly abused animals are deserving of medical assistance and that their perpetrators be punished. In addition to injustices resulting from morally responsible behavior, there are also *natural* injustices, or injustices which do not (directly) result from morally responsible behavior. It is clear that animals suffer natural injustices, as William Rowe's suffering fawn illustrates.⁶⁰ Victims of injustice should be compensated as a matter of justice, and therefore animals who have suffered injustice (natural or otherwise) will be compensated by a perfectly just Gaia. Animals are not compensated in this life, so they must be compensated in the next.

This alone fails to secure animal immortalism; however, as perhaps not *every* animal suffers an injustice. Some animals, for example, have lived pleasant lives. Moreover, animal immortalism is not just a thesis about the

actual world, but also a thesis about every possible world in which there are agentless animals. Since there are some possible worlds in which animals suffer no injustices, any argument for animal immortalism must support the conclusion that those animals, too, are immortal. To show this, I appeal to the principle that in order to avoid future harm, it cannot be a requirement that you were previously treated unjustly. For example, if there were ten spots in a lifeboat and ten people in need of saving, it would be wrong to allow *only* the five whose lives have included some injustice to be saved.⁶¹ In the same way, it would be wrong to save from death (or resurrect) *only* animals who were previously treated unjustly. Thus, it is likewise a matter of justice that those animals be immortal. Moreover, this applies across possible worlds. If there are possible worlds in which no animal suffers an injustice, those animals should not be deprived of immortality on that basis.

After offering positive arguments for animal immortalism, I raised and refuted a handful of objections to it. The first is the Gappy Existence Objection, which says that animals might be immortal but have noncontinuous (i.e., *gappy*) existence in the afterlife. It is unclear what the force of this objection is supposed to be, but the best interpretation is that it is possible for immortality to be of little value or compensation. In reply, I observe that gappy existence implies (temporary) death—a harm animals suffer through no fault of their own, and therefore an injustice. Thus, Gaia has strong reason to guarantee continuous immortality. Moreover, the demands of justice require that immortality be of great value for animals who are compensated for past wrongs, and thus an immortal existence should not be a gappy one if gappy existences are of little value. The second is the Transworld Unluckiness Objection, which claims that animal immortalism might be false because for every world in which animals are immortal, there is at least one animal that is transworld unlucky. What this means is that there is at least one animal who is not immortal in that world. Thus, if Gaia creates any world with immortal animals, there will be at least one animal who is not immortal—a conclusion plainly incompatible with animal immortalism. Against this, I showed not only that there is no good reason to accept transworld unluckiness, but strong reason to reject it. If a world was such that its counterfactuals resulted in an injustice for so much as one animal, Gaia would not create that world, and thus there would be no animals. Because there are animals, it follows that there is no transworld unluckiness. The third considered objection is the Anti-Animal-Rights Objection, according to which animals lack rights and thus they are not owed duties of justice, or at least not compensation for injustices committed against them, and thus not owed immortality. But animals are owed some duties of justice: for example, it is an injustice to torture them unnecessarily. And animals are owed compensation for past wrongs, as in cases where (for example) a dog has been severely abused and is owed medical care and a good home, and

where the dog has a right to the abuser's punishment by the state. The fourth objection is the Boredom Objection, according to which animals either *could* find the afterlife boring or *will necessarily* find it boring. On grounds of divine power and knowledge, I argued that Gaia could make the afterlife supremely worth living for animals. On grounds of divine goodness, I argued that Gaia would not create any animals if they faced the following dilemma: face the harm of death or face the harm of a dull existence. Since there are animals, that is the evidence that they will not suffer either fate, and that animal immortalism is therefore true. The fifth and final objection is the Agency Objection, which claims that Gaia might cognitively enhance animals in the afterlife in such a way that they will make choices incompatible with continuing in a perpetually good afterlife. For example, they might choose a bad afterlife or make choices resulting in permanent death. I show that while this possibility is not strictly inconsistent with animal immortalism, it does weaken its stance as a substantive moral thesis about the fates of animals in the actual world. I reply that Gaia would not cognitively enhance (or *risk* cognitively enhancing) animals when doing so would result in a less rational cognitive set, or CS. Animals would have a less rational CS if that CS led them to make intellectual endorsements, the results of which were existence in a bad afterlife or perpetual death. Thus, Gaia will not cognitively enhance any animal in a way that would undermine animal immortalism, and so the Agency Objection fails.

The conclusion is that all agentless animals are immortal if an omniscient, omnipotent, and perfectly just Gaia exists. Their immortality, moreover, is a *good* thing for them. That animals receive the gift of immortality is a matter of justice, and it is a matter of justice because death would be an unjust harm were innocent animals to suffer it. For animals, therefore, there is no sting to death.⁶² There is no death at all, only a good life eternal.⁶³

NOTES

1. Dustin Crummett (forthcoming) has recently defended the view that insects plausibly do suffer and that their suffering makes the problem of evil even worse.

2. Regan 2014, 102.

3. For more on evidence of the existence of animal pain, see Sahar Akhtar 2011.

4. Engel 2000, 879.

5. See Trent Dougherty 2014, chapter 5.

6. Indeed, some philosophers argue that even standard human persons cannot plausibly be held responsible with respect to those decisions. See Adams 1993, 309–310. Cf. Adams 1999, 38–39; Talbott 2004, 282–283.

7. This leaves open that they might *temporarily* cease to exist. For example, perhaps animals do temporarily cease to exist before they enter the afterlife. For more on this, see section 4.1 below, where I reply to the Gappy Existence Argument.

8. I borrow this term from Wierenga 1989, 31.

9. There is real linguistic ambiguity about what it means for someone to be immortal or mortal. On one reading, this being immortal means you *cannot* die and being mortal means you *can*. On another, being immortal means you *will not* die and being mortal means you *will*. My own use of the terms shows deference to the latter interpretation, where claims about immortality and mortality are claims about what *will in fact* happen to someone.

10. I prefer “unfailingly good” to “perfectly good,” since the latter might imply implausibly modal judgments: for example, that the world is as good as it possibly could be. For more on this, see Graves 2014.

11. This avoids the heavily masculinized “God” and substitutes a suitably neutral alternative. The change in terminology, however, does not signal a broad departure from a broadly Anselmian (or classically theistic) conception of divinity. For more on that conception, see Morris 1989.

12. Rowe 2005, 15.

13. Morris 1989, 26.

14. This isn’t to say that the divinity of Anselmian theism is characterized by *only* these properties. Nevertheless, these are the central properties ascribed to the Anselmian Gaia. What’s more, since I never here deny some of the other properties typically endorsed by Anselmian theists (e.g., simplicity or impassability); my use of “Anselmian” to describe my theistic position is proper.

15. The distinction between “make more likely” and “make plausible” can be illustrated in the following way. Suppose you are Christian and endorse trinitarianism, the view that Gaia is constituted by exactly three divine persons. If our evidence indicates that atheism is true, then your trinitarian beliefs are less likely true (i.e., less probably true) than they would be if our evidence supported (bare) theism. But because our evidence supports only bare theism (i.e., the view that there is a divine being *of some sort*), it does not make trinitarianism plausible.

16. Trent Dougherty’s arguments for animal survivalism, the thesis that animals survive death, are similarly conditional. Dougherty appeals to Christian theism as evidence that animal survivalism is true. See Dougherty 2014, 156–164.

17. Graves, Hereth, and John 2017, 161. Animal Immortalism is therefore compatible with the view that animals will not occupy heaven because heaven is a place for propositional agents alone. For discussion of this objection (the Nature of Heaven Objection) and a related objection (the Two Heavens Objection), see the discussion in Graves, Hereth, and John 2017, 182–184 and 188–189.

18. Graves, Hereth, and John 2017, fn. 4.

19. Temkin 1993, 13.

20. This might seem like a false trilemma, but the claim here is that an animal is in at most one of these states at any given time. I have said nothing yet about whether animals are *continuously* in one state. Later, in the course of defending the Faultless Harm Argument, I address the possibility of “neutral” afterlives.

21. That’s not to say that the mere feat of forming coherent sentences proves that these claims are possibly true. Rather, I take it as obvious that these claims could be true, and are thus (by definition) true in certain possible worlds.

22. Is biological immortality *itself* a good thing? Yes, at least derivatively, since existence itself is a good thing. See also my response to the Boredom Objection in section 4.4.

23. *Possible* worlds are distinguished from *feasible* worlds in the following way. If offered a bribe of a million dollars, Mary could either accept the bribe or reject it. Thus, there are two possible worlds, WA (the world where Mary accepts the bribe) and WR (the world where Mary rejects the bribe). However, suppose it's a fact about Mary's freedom that, were she faced with that bribe, she *would* reject it. If Gaia wants to create Mary free and leave her that way, then Gaia cannot create WA, since then Mary would not be free. Thus, only the second world, WR, is feasible for Gaia.

24. But might it be that there are certain true counterfactuals whose collective implication is that not *all* animals are biologically immortal in *any* world? I call this the Transworld Unluckiness Objection, and respond to it in section 4.2.

25. This is *not* the same claim as "If some animal would be *better off* in W than W*, then that animal is harmed if it exists in W*." If that were true, then any animal who was not maximally well off would be harmed as a result, which is absurd.

26. The modal nature of animal immortalism entails that W is not, in fact, a possible world, since there is no possible world in which any animal is mortal.

27. Despite it seeming to me that the Faultless Harm Argument and the Just Compensation Argument can be defended separately, they might be nevertheless combined into a single argument as follows:

(P1)For every particular animal: Either that animal's earthly existence was, on the whole, welfare-positive, welfare-neutral, or welfare-negative.

(P2)If an animal's earthly existence was welfare-positive, then they will enjoy immortally good afterlives since the alternatives (i.e., welfare-neutral or welfare-negative existences) would unjustly harm them.

(P3)If an animal's earthly existence was welfare-neutral, then they will enjoy immortally good afterlives since the alternatives (i.e., welfare-neutral or welfare-negative existences) would either unjustly harm them or would unjustly privilege animals who are already welfare-privileged.

(P4)If an animal's earthly existence was welfare-negative, then they will enjoy immortally good afterlives since the alternatives (i.e., welfare-neutral or welfare-negative existences) would either unjustly harm them further, or fail to compensate them for their earthly unjust suffering, or would unjustly privilege animals who are already welfare-privileged.

(C)Therefore, for every particular animal: that animal will enjoy an immortally good afterlife.

28. This therefore excludes merely possible animals and currently living animals. The former can be safely excluded from consideration, and the latter's futures remain under consideration.

29. Dougherty 2014, 30–31.

30. Howard-Snyder 1999, 78.

31. Rowe 1996, 262.

32. Murray 2008, 125. Cf. Walls 2002, 90.

33. Emmerman 2015, 217. It is noteworthy that Emmerman argues that sanctuaries are not moral remedies for harmed animals, since animals remain captive. Following Emmerman, we might regard existence in a good afterlife as a moral requirement for harmed animals, a means to compensate those animals, while also maintaining that animals in the afterlife enjoy unfettered freedom.

34. The parallels with Rowe's argument strongly suggest that if Rowe's argument has any prima facie force whatsoever, so does mine. In other words, if it is prima facie plausible to think that animal suffering is problematic for Anselmian theism, then it is also prima facie problematic to think Gaia lacks a duty to compensate the animals who do suffer.

35. Compensating living individuals for their suffering is, among other things, making them better off than they were before. But doing that is impossible if you leave them less well off than they were before, which in Yogi's case would be equivalent to providing him with massages and treats but not veterinary care.

36. Or, to use an alternate phrasing: *culpable* perpetrators owe *precisely as much* as *non-culpable* perpetrators do.

37. A necessary condition for compensation is that there are *grounds* for compensation: in this case, prior unjust harm. But the unharmed animals are by hypothesis not harmed, and therefore (absent some other grounding) there is no possibility of compensation.

38. One might object that it is not *because* certain animals have not suffered that they are not provided an opportunity to be immortal, since there might be other grounds for providing such an opportunity. But such an objection misses the mark, since being harmed would nevertheless be a *disjunctive* prerequisite for immortality. Here's why: If an animal must achieve some particular status in order to achieve immortality, one of which is previous victimization and another of which is (for example) being desperately loved by an immortal child, then the animal must either be loved a child *or* be a victim of some heinous crime. Yet even this disjunctive requirement is unjust, since it cannot be a requirement *in any way* that one be a victim of an unjust harm in order to avoid future harm.

39. The plausibility increases if we assume, along with Ted Sider, that "God is in control of the institution of divine judgment, in control of the mechanism or *criterion* that determines who goes to Heaven and who goes to Hell" or, more broadly, the criterion that determines eternal destinies more broadly. For on such an assumption, it would be divine action that effectively establishes prior harm as a prerequisite for immortality. See Sider 2002, 58.

40. This is more contentious in cases of prioritization. I assume, however, that issues of prioritization do not arise for Gaia.

41. Things worsen for the Compensation Only View if we conclude with Murray 2008, 129 that Gaia is already responsible for permitting animals to suffer in the first place.

42. Dougherty 2014, 168–172. Dougherty defends the possibility of gappy existence in order to defend his view that animals die and are later resurrected—a thesis implying that existence can be gappy. His defense of the possibility of gappy existence, then, is only to defend the possibility of resurrection.

43. Gappy existence might not be so bad after all. Consider, for example, a reincarnated individual who exists for a regular human lifetime, ceases to exist for a few hundred years, comes into existence again for yet another regular human lifetime, and so on for multiple cycles. That sort of gappy existence might not seem *bad* at all. Here, however, it might simply be unclear whether *death* has occurred. (See footnote 7 above.) Both in terms of subjectively experiencing gappy existence and its mind-independent welfare-affecting status, perhaps gappy existence is more analogous to temporary unconsciousness, like sleeping. If that is true, however, then the Gappy Existence Objection still fails, because then it's no threat to a good afterlife for animals. My thanks to Simon Cushing for raising this objection and providing the example.

44. See Flint 1998, 51–54. See also Plantinga 1974, 174–180.

45. Transworld Unluckiness bears similarity to two other pessimistic theses about counterfactuals. The first is Alvin Plantinga's Transworld Depravity thesis, according to which it is possible that every world with libertarian-free creatures is such that at least one creature in that world would freely act wrongly. The second is William Lane Craig's Transworld Damnation thesis, according to which it is possible that every world with libertarian-free creatures is such that at least one creature would freely act in such a way to bring about her own damnation. For more on Transworld Depravity, see Plantinga 1974, 184–190. For more on Transworld Damnation, see Craig 1989; VanArragon 2001; and Craig 2005. Of course, the animals under consideration here are *agentless*, and thus the worry isn't that their counterfactuals of *freedom* are worrisome. Rather, the worry is that something other than freedom makes their counterfactuals unlucky. It's worth noting that this is therefore a less serious worry than Transworld Depravity or Transworld Damnation, since contingent features of the world *not* grounded in creaturely freedom are, in general, more easily controlled by Gaia.

46. My thanks to Ray VanArragon for raising this objection.

47. Williams 1973: 89.

48. Fischer 2009: 83.

49. Might the afterlife be *sometimes* boring for animals? Perhaps, and that doesn't seem problematic. What matters is that their afterlives are not boring *always* or *on the whole*.

50. Dougherty 2014, 3.

51. Dougherty 2014, 148.

52. I assume that it is Gaia who provides animals with their enhanced cognitive sets. However, the argument goes through even if Gaia does not personally do this, since on traditional theism Gaia is least responsible for everything Gaia permits to occur, including whether and what kind of CS animals are afforded. If animals are afforded a defective or otherwise bad CS, then Gaia permitted it, and Gaia's permitting it is incompatible with Gaia's goodness.

53. But perhaps animals will reflect on those reasons and desires at great length and judge them to be reasons or desires worth acting upon. This is the third possibility I discuss below.

54. The choice of one-hundred years is purely arbitrary. Perhaps the duration is shorter or longer—perhaps infinite. If it is infinite, the odds of animal immortalism arguably improve. For more on this sort of argument as it relates to human agents, see Kronen and Reitan 2013, 160–167.

55. If Koba *did* have reasons or desires to choose against his welfare, or if Koba was simply *apathetic* about pursuing it, this returns us to the problems with possibility (1): namely, Koba would make decisions based on reasons or desires which he acquired or developed through no fault of his own which result in him compromising his welfare through no fault of his own. Such an outcome would be unjust.

56. This is the open theist view of divine providence and omniscience, according to which Gaia lacks exhaustive definite foreknowledge of libertarian-free actions.

57. For another reply to the Agency Objection, see Graves, Hereth, and John 2017, 184–188.

58. For a defense of animal universalism, see Graves, Hereth, and John 2017.

59. Wierenga 1989, 31.

60. See Rowe 1979, 337.

61. As pointed out earlier, this is consistent with saying that previous injustices might determine *priority* of who is saved.

62. This alludes to the rhetorical comments made in the Christian tradition by Saint Paul in his First Letter to the church in Corinth, chapter fifteen, verse fifty-five.

63. My thanks to Simon Cushing, Ray VanArragon, and Tyler M. John for comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

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AQ: Please update the reference [Crummett, Dustin. Forthcoming].

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