



Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare

Doctrine - Annotated Bibliography

All of the resources below are accessible on the HUB via either Ebscohost or JSTOR. The quotes beneath the citations are either the abstract of the article or a paragraph in which the main lines of the argument are expressed.

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Imago Dei and the Human Distinctive?

One of the ways non-human animals have traditionally entered into theological discourse is through the contrast drawn between them and humans. A common way of articulating this distinction is to assert that humans are the animals which bear the image of God, whereas other animals do not. What this image consists in, whether only humans bear it, and whether it is proper to draw on it as a framing device for discussing human-animal relations are all live subjects of debate in contemporary theology. Below are a number of articles which deal with these themes.

Humans as Animals

The last two articles below appeared in the same journal with the latter being a response to the former:

Clough, D. (2013). 'Not a not-animal: The vocation to be a human animal creature'. *Studies in Christian Ethics*, 26(1), 4-17.

Accessible at: <https://chesterrep.openrepository.com/bitstream/10034/620277/4/Clough%20-%20Not%20a%20Not-Animal.pdf>

"This article diagnoses and critiques two 'not-animal' modes of theological anthropology: first, the construction of human identity on the basis of supposed evidence of human/non-human difference; second, accounts of the human that take no account of God's other creatures. It suggests that not-animal anthropologies exhibit poor theological methodology, are based on inaccurate depictions of both humans and other animals, and result in problematic construals of what it means to be human. Instead, the article concludes, we require theological anthropologies that take as a starting point the relationship between humanity and God and recognise the animal and creaturely context of human existence." (4)

Creegan, Nicola Hoggard. 2007. 'Being an Animal and Being Made in the Image of God'. *Colloquium* 39 (2): 185–203.

"In this paper, then, I attempt to argue that attending to animals and to humanity's animal inheritance is a part of understanding ourselves as spiritual and animal beings. Attending to animals is a way of knowing our own history and some of the truth of human becoming. Another repercussion of this stance is that humans might make peace with the animals, attributing to them some of the same respect we give one another. Attending to this part of our history is a way of repenting the long disengagement with animals evident in our theology, and the weight that imago Dei and even the doctrine of fall have borne in trying to differentiate us from the animal world. A theological investigation of this boundary of the animal/human will also find our theology of fallenness, of image and of salvation challenged, deepened and expanded."

Levett-Olson, L. Lee. 2007. 'A Truly Cosmic Grace: A Response to Nicola Hoggard Creegan'. *Colloquium* 39 (2): 204-208.

"Hoggard Creegan's failure to acknowledge the cosmic scale of the fall underscores the depth of the problem that this article itself seeks to address: the seeming inability of human theologians to interpret God and nature outside the constraints of anthropomorphic special pleading. The persistent devaluation of non-human nature, which the article notes, still colours the narrative perspective. "As humans we all share the same violent past. We have come out of the animals..." (202). The joining of these two sentences makes Hoggard Creegan's stance clear: animal nature is not only inherently violent, it is the source of violence in human nature. Animals, in this exposition, remain objects of our pejorative scrutiny. They are perpetrators of harm and precursors of the fall." (205)

Non-Human Animals as Image Bearers?

Carter, Christopher. 2014. 'The Imago Dei as the Mind of Jesus Christ'. *Zygon* 49 (3): 752-60.

"In this essay I examine David Clough's interpretation of the imago Dei and his use of "creaturely" language in his book *On Animals: Volume 1, Systematic Theology*. Contrary to Clough, I argue that the imago Dei should be interpreted as being uniquely human. Using a neuroscientific approach, I elaborate on my claim that while Jesus is the image of God perfected, the imago Dei is best understood as having the mind of Christ. In regards to language, I make the case that using terms such as "creature" when referring to nonhuman animals is problematic in that it can serve to alienate human beings from their capacity to image God. In addition I argue that "creaturely" language raises concerns for the African American community given Western Christianity's history as it relates to their valuation of black bodies and human enslavement."

Clough, David. 2014. 'On Thinking Theologically about Animals: A Response'. *Zygon* 49 (3): 764-71.

"I judge Christopher Carter's proposal to retain the traditional identification of our minds with the image of God (Carter 2014, 756-57) to be particularly problematic, because, as Hans Reinders among many others has argued (Reinders 2008), once we have done this it is hard to resist the implication that those with less cognitive ability image God less well and are consequently less human than others. Margaret Adam argues that we do not need to expand the image of God beyond the human in order to understand our moral responsibility toward other creatures (Adam 2014, 748) but I suggest we do need to do so in order to be faithful to Christian Scripture and tradition. In the Bible, lions, hens, lambs, and doves and other stranger creatures frequently image God (e.g., Isa. 31.4-5; Mt. 23.37; Jn 1.29; Mk 1.10; Rev. 5.6). Among later theological authors, Augustine and Aquinas, to name but two, affirmed that a trace of the Trinity is found in every creature (Aquinas 1963, 1, qu. 45, a. 7, citing Augustine's *de Trinitate*). Stephen Webb argues that an account of imaging God as a human vocation is residually anthropocentric (Webb 2014, 763), but I disagree that this is the case. Every creature plays its own role before God and therefore can be said to have its own vocation: it is called into being by God and is called to take its particular part in the earthly chorus of divine worship, whether supernova or hill or stream or tree or worm or hedgehog or human. I remain convinced, therefore, that theologians need to give much more careful consideration to how to speak well concerning the image of God in a more-than-human context, and that the Christological emphasis for which I argue (Clough 2012, 100-02) will be a crucial element in doing this well."

Deane-Drummond, Celia E. 2012. 'God's Image and Likeness in Humans and Other Animals: Performative Soul-Making and Graced Nature'. *Zygon* 47 (4): 934–48.

"Although official Roman Catholic teaching affirms the concept of evolution as a convincing theory in order to explain the biological origin of different life forms, there is still a strong insistence on an "ontological gap" between human beings and all other creatures. This paper investigates how best to interpret that gap while still affirming human evolution. Drawing on medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas, I seek to uncover the influence of Aristotelian ideas on the rational soul. I will argue for the crucial importance of divine grace in consideration of divine image-bearing bearing so that while other animals share in the likeness of God, only humans, like angels, bear God's image. Such an approach does not provide any justification for the denigration of other creatures. Rather, the possibility of a further transformation of human nature, deification, and thus into the likeness of God depends on Christ as the one who bears the image of God perfectly, and the Spirit, who enables such a transformation in human subjects."

Meyer, Eric D. 2017. 'The Political Ecology of Dignity: Human Dignity and the Inevitable Returns of Animality'. *Modern Theology* 33 (4): 549–69.

"The conclusion that writes itself for this essay begins drawing pathos-laden parallels between the executions of Mary the Elephant, suspended from a railroad crane in Tennessee, and Jesus of Nazareth, pinned to a Roman cross. Tempting as the parallel is, I do not want to depict Mary as a nonhuman Christ-figure or ascribe to Jesus a cosmic-victimhood manifest in a divine identification with Mary. Instead, I want to conclude by focusing on the crowds that turned both deaths into frenzied spectacles of degradation, on the political theology that generates those scenes. Both the crowd that shouted "Crucify, crucify!" and the crowd that shouted, "Man's dominion! Man's dominion," I would suggest, voiced indignation arising from a sense that the captives before them had transgressed a theological and political hierarchy of dignity. Both crowds rallied around narrow conceptions of dignity in contagions of exclusionary unification that would be satisfied by nothing less than the destruction of a vulnerable body. Let me conclude, then, with a few questions: When we describe and defend accounts of human dignity that allow for the violent subordination of animality, what kind of crowd do we facilitate? What political ecology of difference develops within and around such a crowd? How "near" is the Realm of God to such a crowd? What shifts in theological interest or emphasis would cultivate collectives better attuned to our common-but-differentiated creaturely vulnerability? How—before God, in God's name—can we attend to the blood and flesh of our common creaturely wounds?"

Urk-Coster, Eva van. 2021. 'Created in the Image of God: Both Human and Non-Human Animals?' *Theology and Science* 19 (4): 343–62.

"In this article, I examine the possibility of widening the concept of imago Dei so as to include (other) animals next to humans by interacting with the theologians David Clough, David Fergusson and Celia Deane-Drummond. In light of the challenges of creaturely existence in the Anthropocene, I conclude that the traditional idea that only humans are created in the image and likeness of God should be maintained. Such a position does not need to be diminishing to other animals, can take seriously scientific insights on evolution and classic theological arguments, and is especially relevant given the era of the Anthropocene."

Laudato Si' and Animals

The publication of the papal encyclical [*Laudato Si'*](#) in 2015 caused some Catholic theologians to reflect on whether this represented a substantive development in official church teaching about animals. Below are four articles which, while largely celebrating *Laudato Si'* as a positive development, take differing stances on whether the encyclical goes far enough and what lessons can be learned from it.

Aseneta, Anatoly Angelo R. 2017. '*Laudato Si'* on Non-Human Animals'. *Journal of Moral Theology* 6 (2): 230–45.

"Francis's *Laudato Si* has turned our attention to the ecological crisis and gave rise to lively discussions about ecological issues and our responsibilities to our common home. In addition, the encyclical also shows a particular concern towards non-human animals and provides directions on how we should treat them who are our fellow inhabitants. This essay looks at what *Laudato Si* ' teaches about the treatment of non-human animals, especially its strengths and weaknesses in light of the existing Catholic tradition. I hope to show that, despite the way Francis extends Catholic teaching on concern for non-human animals, there is still room for improvement, specifically by directly addressing ways in which humans use non-human animals."

Berkman, John. 2021. 'Must We Love Non-Human Animals?' *New Blackfriars* 102 (1099): 322–38...

(as of 7 Dec 2022 this is freely available here but this this may change in future:
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/nbfr.12615>)

"In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis provides a similar diagnosis. Our society - with its particular kind of scientific mindset - is prone to see creation as mere nature. It arises from the cultural authority of what Michel Foucault's call a particular 'gaze,' a clinical or scientific gaze. It objectifies that upon which it gazes, and is typical of those with intellectual authority and/or positions of power. Vivisectionists and abattoir employees exemplify the Foucaultian gaze. How can those in such jobs possibly see the God-given goodness and beauty of all creatures? As Pope Francis puts it, the attitude of those who take on the scientific gaze with regard to non-human animals "will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on immediate needs" To look upon a mink or a bear or leopard, a cow, a pig, or a chicken, a chimpanzee, a dog, or a mouse through a 'biological' lens, or to calculate their worth in terms of our economic or medical benefit, is degrading and 'disintegrating.' This disintegrating gaze is the exact opposite of Pope Francis' vision of 'integral ecology.'

"Christians are called to a very different kind of gaze, to seek knowledge of various species of non-human animals of a different kind and by different means. It is a gaze of love, which involves entering into a personal relationship with the object of one's gaze. Our gaze upon minks and leopards, sheep and goats, rats and rabbits, must be as objects of wonder, with whom we seek fraternal relationships "through bonds of affection." Our gaze upon other animals is to mimic God's gaze upon human and non-human animals."

Edwards, Denis. 2016. "Sublime Communion": The Theology of the Natural World in *Laudato Si'*". *Theological Studies* 77 (2): 377–91.

"One of the crucial questions for any ecological theology concerns the meaning and value of nonhuman creatures. Do they receive their meaning and value only from their usefulness to human beings? Or do they have meaning and value in themselves? The Catholic tradition has tended to see the rest of the creation as ordered to the human and as existing simply for human use. Even the Second Vatican Council, in its *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, strikes a clearly anthropocentric note. But does not more need to be said, above all in the age of the Anthropocene? *Laudato Si'* does say far more, and in doing so offers a new development in Catholic teaching in the clarity of its claim that nonhuman creatures have value in themselves. This teaching, of course, is not new to ecological theology, but its incorporation into Catholic social teaching is an important new development."

O'Halloran, Nathan W. 2018. "Each Creature, Resplendently Transfigured": Development of Teaching in *Laudato Si'*". *Theological Studies* 79 (2): 376–98.

"Three stages can be traced in the Catholic Church's magisterial teaching on the status of nonhuman creatures in the eschatological New Creation. In this article I ask three questions: which, why, and how: Which creatures are in the new creation, why are they part of the New Creation, and how will they be there? I argue that *Laudato Si'* gives a new magisterial answer to these three questions and constitutes an important new development in the teaching on New Creation."

Roundtable on Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology*

The Winter 2005 issue of *Review and Expositor* was dedicated to articles on animals in theology and the Bible. This issue featured a roundtable on Andrew Linzey's 1995 book, *Animal Theology*, by specialists in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and systematic theology. These are included below along with a response from Linzey. Readers may wish to compare this discussion with another roundtable which occurred in the *Zygon* 49 no 3 (2014) about David Clough's *On Animals*. That roundtable featured articles included about by Clough and Carter, as well as others by David Fergusson, Margaret Adam, and Stephen H. Webb.

Holt, Sally Smith. 2005. 'A Review of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* from a Theological Perspective'. *Review & Expositor* 102 (1): 101–9.

"While there are instances in *Animal Theology* where Linzey's arguments are problematic, his work, in its entirety, achieves what he intends. Linzey argues for the generosity paradigm, or God's model of generosity revealed to humanity through Christ. This should also be the paradigm for humans regarding their treatment of animals. His tone may seem extreme to many, as he moves beyond ethicists like Singer in his exploration of the idea of generosity. Singer and others endorse an equality principle that, as previously stated, can be considered utilitarian in nature. The greater good thus allows for some use, or for Linzey "abuse," of animals. Linzey's model of generosity prohibits any such "institutionalized abuse." Like Schweitzer's reverence for life that Linzey refers to earlier in his text, he acknowledges that his generosity principle is impossible to enact, but at the same time, it is what we should be working toward (*Animal Theology*, 42-44). This is the beauty of his book, and this is what makes it a worthwhile endeavor in Christian scholarship. Linzey writes that Christians cannot "carry on their business as though the world

of animals was invisible, and as if urgent and thoughtful questions cannot be raised about our theological understanding of the non-human world." He is right. Linzey will not convince all Christians to become vegetarians, but at least he calls us to consider thoughtfully those that share this world with us.

Linzey, Andrew. 2005. 'The Divine Worth of Other Creatures: A Response to Reviews of Animal Theology'. *Review & Expositor* 102 (1): 111–24.

"We cannot get away from the problem of finding a vantage point through which we are to see - and interpret. As Max Weber remarked, "All knowledge comes from a point of view." Not all biblical texts unambiguously serve moral causes, even and especially, our favourite ones; some insights have to be primary. *Animal Theology* stands or falls by whether I have grasped some of the important biblical insights that should be at the heart of this debate. The most significant of which is the generosity of God disclosed in the life of Jesus Christ. I may not have selected the most pertinent texts, or given them the most thoughtful exposition, but that Jesus offers us a model of lordship manifest in service - a paradigm of inclusive moral generosity to those normally beyond the boundaries of moral concern is, I contend, pure Gospel, and its implications are vast for re-envisaging Christian theology in relation to our "dominion" over animals."

May, David M. 2005. 'A Review of Andrew Linzey's Animal Theology from a New Testament Perspective'. *Review & Expositor* 102 (1): 87–93.

"While some of my assessments may seem on the surface negative, I fully support Andrew Linzey's goal of helping individuals be more sensitive and thoughtful in relationship to the creatures around us. He has challenged readers to think in provocative ways about their ethical behavior towards animals. His is a voice that readers need to hear. What is needed, at least for me as a New Testament scholar, is a more biblically grounded and biblically integrated animal theology. Linzey has quite correctly and boldly highlighted the dominant infrastructures of consumerism and death associated with humanity's relationship with creatures. He has provided some biblical texts that could be used to interpret via a counter-world of evangelical imagination the infrastructures that are so destructive to creatures. A thorough exegetical analysis of animal narratives in the New Testament would supply the foundation for a "faithful reading of the biblical text," which hopefully would cause metanoia in our thoughts and for our actions."

McEntire, Mark. 2005. 'A Review of Andrew Linzey's Animal Theology from an Old Testament Perspective'. *Review & Expositor* 102 (1): 95–99.

"I have raised serious questions about the way Andrew Linzey has utilized the Old Testament texts that play a major role in his argument. I wish that I could move in the other critical direction and identify some texts that might have been better suited to form a foundation for his position. I am afraid that I cannot. Unfortunately, the major ideas of *Animal Theology* seem utterly foreign to the Old Testament. This is in no way a rejection of Linzey's program. We should recognize that an idea like the abolition of slavery also seems foreign to the Old Testament. The best we might say is that the command to love neighbor as self in Lev 19:18 creates a momentum that ultimately cannot be resisted, even if it takes thousands of years to overcome an entrenched institution like slavery. Our use of animals is also deeply entrenched in human culture. Linzey's ethic of generosity may help to sustain the momentum to overcome it, but one searches in vain for the Old Testament text to provide the necessary power to start the process."