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RESTORYING THE WILD: SHARED HISTORIES OF WOMEN AND WOLVES IN SELECTED NORTH AMERICAN MEMOIRS

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NARRACJE NIEOSWOJONYCH: WSPÓLNE HISTORIE KOBIET I WILKÓW W WYBRANYCH WSPOMNIENIACH PÓŁNOCNOAMERYKAŃSKICH

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INTRODUCTION

To entangle one's gaze with that of a wolf is to enter into a shared story, the meaning of which is co-created, from that moment onward, by both participants of such an encounter. I came to understand this when I met Chitto during a visit to Wolf Science Center in Ernstbrunn, Austria, in 2019, the beginning of our story signified by the wolf returning my gaze. That day, he was the only animal to engage with me in such a manner; I assume he beheld my presence just like I beheld his and that the look was mutual. What our brief exchange meant for Chitto I cannot fathom, yet in meeting my eyes, he helped me realize not only the deeply personal nature of such encounters but also the importance of nonhuman agency that makes them possible. Beyond this lay a multitude of stories of human-wolf encounters and relations, none of them innocent, but all of them co-created by the individuals involved. Whether in captivity or in the wild, where the paths and gazes of wolves and humans intersected, unique connections would emerge, influenced by the past narratives and, at the same time, inspiring the creation of new ones that redefine our understanding of the role the animal others play in shaping these shared stories.

Although such accounts of encountering wolves in North American literature range from fictional to scientific, my interest lies in the autobiographical ones. Within those, shared stories of women and wolves received the least academic attention, and those that did were read mainly from ecofeminist perspectives, with little focus on wolves as individuals and agents. In order to bridge this gap, this thesis examines selected North American autobiographical narratives of women who shared parts of their lives with wolves and emphasized the latter's individuality and agency. The texts chosen for analysis each represent a different approach to living

with, alongside, or in partial connections with wolves while raising, tracking, studying, or observing them. While a variety of materials is discussed throughout the following chapters, the primary focus is on Evelyn Cameron's diaries (1893-1928), Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher's *Driftwood Valley* (1946), Lois Crisler's *Arctic Wild* (1958), Diane Boyd's essays, and Renée Askins's *Shadow Mountain* (2002), all of which I find significant in showing how human-wolf relations have changed over the years, particularly in the United States, and in which direction they might be heading.

The complexities of human-wolf relations, as narrated in the analyzed texts, require an approach that welcomes different theories, concepts, and perspectives, the common focus of which is the role of animals as individuals and agents in contexts of literary and real encounters with human others. For this reason—and because each narrative demands a slightly different approach—while I engage primarily with the concepts of companion species as defined by Donna Haraway and that of companion-agents as detailed by Vinciane Despret, the basis of my methodology is woven from a number of other notions as well. Those are introduced in Chapter One and pertain to animal agency, subjectivity, and individuality, as well as ways in which they influence the writing not only of nonhuman biographies but also autobiographical narratives, resulting in stories that I find to be co-created by wolves and the authors. In addition to the literary and historical context integral to understanding these multispecies entanglements, in this section I provide an overview of such co-created literature along with the current state of research on the subject, identifying the texts that were rarely of interest in academic inquiry and detailing the methods used for analyzing them in further chapters.

Chapters Two and Three explore the early narratives that challenged the ones dominating between the late 1890s and 1940s—of the wolf as a villain and pest with

whom no relationship beyond that of the hunter and the hunted could be developed—by portraying wolves in a visibly different way. The first of these are looked into in Chapter Two, which expands on the literary and historical background of human-wolf relations in the United States through a personal narrative of Evelyn Cameron. In her diaries, the two wolves she raised and cared for were made visible as individuals and agents, which was a rather unusual way of writing about these animals in times when the species was being systematically eradicated. Another narrative that challenged the conventions about living alongside, studying, and relating to wolves was Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher's *Driftwood Valley* (1946), which is the focus of Chapter Three. In it, I seek to demonstrate how the author and the wolves co-produced space and co-shaped the meanings of the study.

Chapters Four and Five offer a discussion of narratives that were particularly influential in changing the way the wolf was seen by engaging with the animals in their home ranges, asking questions about *who* wolves are, and being open to receiving unexpected responses. Thus, Chapter Four is devoted mainly to Lois Crisler's *Arctic Wild* (1958), in which I consider the role of embodied communication—as outlined by Barbara Smuts—not only in the author's relationship with wolves but also the ways in which it affected the writing of the memoir. This part shows the importance of such personal accounts in transforming public opinion about wolves. Other narratives that were essential in moving toward a new era of human-wolf coexistence are examined in Chapter Five, where I bring together Diane Boyd's essays and Renée Askins's *Shadow Mountain* (2002). In analyzing the ways in which living alongside wolves is negotiated after their comeback to the contiguous United States, I highlight the role of partial connections with the animals who were studied as they recolonized their former habitats and

those who were reintroduced in Yellowstone National Park. I suggest that the entangled stories that emerge in the course of these returns and restorations, as related by Boyd and Askins, emphasize the role of wolves as companion-agents. Reading shared stories in such a way encourages recognizing that wolves co-shape meaning, co-produce space, and co-create narratives with human others.

CHAPTER 1: IN THE COMPANY OF WOLVES

1.1. WOLF BIOGRAPHIES

1.1.1. WOLFISH AGENCY AND POINT OF VIEW

She was an efficient huntress, with long legs which carried her in a distinct, floating gait that is the signature of her kind. Her buff-grey fur rippled with whitish, silvery, and black undertones as she trotted effortlessly through the yellowed grasses; with ears perked up and gaze ahead, she did not spare a look at her audience as they observed from a distance with spotting scopes and long lens cameras, trying to capture her every movement, discussing the hunt they had just witnessed, watching with silence and awe as she went about her life in the Yellowstone wilderness. She had roamed this land for six years—both with her family and independently—mated with several males, reared three litters of pups, led the Lamar Canyon Pack with her mate 755M, and became a legend in her lifetime. Known for her relentless character, leadership skills, and canine beauty, she was an inspiration to some and a study subject to others, a heroine of the animal world—but first and foremost, she was a wild wolf. While her presence had made an impact on those who followed her life story, her absence was felt even more vividly when she was legally killed by a trophy hunter just outside of the Yellowstone National Park borders.[1] Biologists knew her as 832F,[2] the wolfwatchers as the 06 Female, and the general public simply as O-Six. Nate Blakeslee, Rick McIntyre, and Brenda Peterson, as well as journalists, wildlife

[1] Rick McIntyre, "The 06 Female," in: *Wild Wolves We Have Known*, ed. Richard P. Thiel (Minneapolis: International Wolf Center, 2015), 123-130.
[2] The study names are given to collared wolves in order of their capture and collaring, with F (female)/M (male)/U (unidentified) designating the sex.

filmmakers, and photographers, would tell and retell her story—all of them biographers of this individual wolf's life.[3]

As animal biographies have attracted increasing academic interest in recent years, the very concept of biography is being revisited. In her 2004 article "Animal Lives," Erica Fudge argued that while the word "biography" should not imply an anthropocentric exclusivity, the concept is widely understood as a story of a human's life—instead of a life story of an individual. Fudge offered short biographical entries for a couple of animals, providing the information that would matter for human lives: names, dates of birth and death, places of residence, physical appearances, character traits, family relations, and even careers.[4] While O-Six's life could be constructed into such a biography, the narrative would not necessarily present her as a subject in her story. Even though she was considered a "celebrity" among wolfwatchers,[5] career would have no meaning for O-Six—but family and social relations would. The place of residence—the territory she roamed and hunted on, the rendezvous site where her pups played, the den where they were born—would matter to O-Six as well, insofar as science and observation can infer the importance of those in a wolf's life.[6] Taking into account the animal point of view, or at least denouncing the anthropocentric one, is a step closer to recognizing animals as subjects and agents in the biographical narratives that concern them.

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[3] Nate Blakeslee, *American Wolf: A True Story of Survival and Obsession in the West* (New York: Crown, 2017); Rick McIntyre, *The Alpha Female Wolf: The Fierce Legacy of Yellowstone's 06* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2022); Brenda Peterson, *Wolf Nation: The Life, Death, and Return of Wild American Wolves* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2017), 82-97; Nate Schweber, "'Famous' Wolf is Killed Outside Yellowstone," *New York Times*, December 8, 2012, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/09/science/earth/famous-wolf-is-killed-outside-yellowstone.html.

[4] Erica Fudge, "Animal Lives," *History Today*, Vol. 54, No. 10 (2004), 21-26.

[5] Dina Spector, "The Most Famous Wolf In the World Has Been Killed By Hunters," *Business Insider*, December 10, 2012, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.businessinsider.com/yellowstone-female-wolf-832f-killed-by-hunters-2012-12.

[6] Daniel R. Stahler et al., "Ecology of Family Dynamics in Yellowstone Wolf Packs," in: *Yellowstone Wolves: Science and Discovery in the World's First National Park*, eds. Douglas W. Smith et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 42-60.

The notion of the animal point of view that situates nonhuman animals as subjects and agents rather than objects can be traced back to Jakob von Uexküll, a biologist who, with his concept of *Umwelt,* suggested that each animal, as an individual, experiences the world in their own way; while this subjective experience is shaped to a certain extent according to the individual's species and the environment they inhabit, their point of view would be deeply personal. In an introduction to *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans* (1934), Uexküll described his book as "a walk into unknown [nonhuman] worlds" whose existence was denied by scientific objectivity.[7] The two perspectives could not be reconciled in Uexküllian thought: the objective one that took into account only the observer's point of view and accepted the existence of a singular "world," and the subjective one that favored perceiving the environment in a way that was relevant to the observed and in which more points of view mattered. Science can greatly inform the human understanding of other "worlds," yet they can never be truly comprehended, and any rendition of them remains in the realm of informed speculation.[8] Thus, based on belonging to the same species, there may be a basic structure to the world that wolves experience, yet 832F and her mate 755M, as distinct individuals, would perceive the world in their unique ways. With his *Umwelt* theory, Uexküll abandoned the Cartesian view that nonhuman animals are merely machines controlled by instincts, even when his contemporaries still held onto it.[9] The *bête-machine* that was *Canis lupus* could therefore be dismantled into living subjects with perspective and agency, no longer forming a collective but inhabiting their own universes, each one connected with the other.

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[7] Jakob von Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans (with A Theory of Meaning)*, trans. Joseph O'Neil (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 41.
[8] Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, 53-54.
[9] Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, 41-52.

O-Six's biographers ventured, to a varying degree, into the she-wolf's world, exploring the possibilities of telling her story in a more wolf-centric way. To write such a biography is to perceive O-Six as an individual with distinctive a personality and behaviors shaped by her environment and experiences, not on human terms, but based on her life as a wild wolf in Yellowstone National Park. To bring out the complexity of her existence is to resist the approach that categorizes multiple species under a single concept of "animal" and standardizes wolves as a species with a set of stereotypical characteristics, thus de-individualizing them. Finally, to recognize O-Six's agency in her own story is to dispose of the notion that animals are so bound by instincts that their behavior follows unchanging patterns, one that would result in creating a biography of a wolf as a species instead of writing the biography of this wolf as an individual.[10]

The question of animal individuality in nonhuman biographies was explored , most notably , by historian Éric Baratay in *Le Point du vue Animal* (2012) and *Biographies Animales* (2017), in which—inspired by von Uexküll—he sought the "animal point of view" in order to present their side of history. In particular, Baratay hoped to breach the constraints of the notions central to biographies and portrayals of agency: those of the individual, the subject, and the person. In a broader view that encompassed both human and nonhuman animals, Baratay proposed that "an individual has singular traits; a person has particular behaviors; and a subject has preferences and choices."[11] Taking into account O-Six's individual experience and relations, specifically her "ways of welcoming, adapting, and encouraging [others] to do the same in return," her "status as representative of the species," her "place in the

[10] Éric Baratay, *Animal Biographies: Toward a History of Individuals*, trans. Lindsay Turner (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2022), 1-2.
[11] Baratay, *Animal Biographies*, 11.

history of [said] species,"[12] as well as her particular behaviors, preferences, and choices, she appears to have had a more active role in the biographical narratives than conventionally recognized. To accommodate an active rather than a passive role of an animal in biographies, Baratay suggested writing about the nonhuman experience in a way focusing on their point of view instead of writing about it from the human perspective. Therefore, animals would not *be* "shot, struck, or taken," but *feel themselves* "shot, struck, or taken,"[13] resulting in writing them as subjects and agents. These speculative narratives would be informed, of course, by the most recent research available in animal sciences. As Erica Fudge noted, the animal experience that was previously assumed to be "unavailable to us" was made available through forays into different disciplines that included, perhaps most importantly, the field of ethology.[14]

Although animal biography with its various iterations—from fictional and anthropomorphized to factual but representative—had had its beginnings in the 1780s, the rise of factual animal biographies that recognized and respected the nonhuman subjects as individuals has not truly begun until the 1950s, when ethologists shifted their focus of study to singular animals.[15] Dominique Lestel, whose philosophical ethology encourages a critical engagement with scientific, historical, and anthropological approaches to the question of animal subjectivity and individuality, characterized "singular animals" as those who "have great capacities for learning and 'personal development,' animals who have developed over the course of very different individual histories that have a considerable influence on

[12] Baratay, *Animal Biographies*, 12.
[13] Baratay, *Animal Biographies*, 13-14.
[14] Erica Fudge, "The History of Animals in the Present Moment: Rumination 2.0," *Humanimalia*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2022), 257.
[15] Baratay, *Animal Biographies*, 4.

who they ultimately become."[16] Contrary to the "classical objectivist ethology" developed by Konrad Lorenz and Nikolaas Tinbergen,[17] "[c]ontemporary ethology has gradually opened up to the idea that animals may have different personalities […] within the same species."[18] Indeed, it was not until ethologists such as Jane Goodall, Frans de Waal, Marc Bekoff, and Barbara Smuts[19] dared to challenge the rigid ethological model of study[20] that the discipline has shed some light on the emotional, social, and cultural life of animals. Recognizing animals as subjects and studying them as such has led to entering each other's worlds, and in these "new methodologies—such as following [animals] in their habitats, and letting them co-shape the conditions of the studies"[21]—scientists sought to individualize rather than standardize, going against the established norms and contributing to the popularization of biographies that emphasized animal agency.

As both Éric Baratay and historian Jason Hribal pointed out , nonhuman agency is manifested most vividly through resistance, often silently, on a daily basis when an animal refuses to cooperate with their caretaker[22] or, occasionally, in a way that resonates beyond the enclosure bars, such as captive wolves Vulko and Valle

[16] Dominique Lestel, "Histoire des Animaux Singuliers," *Bulletin d'histoire et d'épistémologie des Sciences de la Vie*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (2007), 122. All translations by the author unless noted otherwise.
[17] In fact, theories put forth by Uexküll had a profound influence on the field of ethology, inspiring Lorenz and Tinbergen, among other pioneers of the discipline. Lorenz and others, however—while adopting many of the ethological terms that Uexküll had coined—rejected his anti-Darwinian stance. Morten Tønnessen, "Umwelt Transitions: Uexküll and Environmental Change," *Biosemiotics*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2009), 47–64.
[18] Lestel, "Histoire des Animaux Singuliers," 122.
[19] See: Jane Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986); Frans de Waal, *Peacemaking Among Primates* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); Marc Bekoff, *The Emotional Lives of Animals* (Novato: New World Library, 2007); Barbara Smuts, "Encounters with Animal Minds," *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 5 (2001), 293–309.
[20] Dominique Guillo, "Les recherches éthologiques récentes sur les phénomènes socio-culturels dans le monde animal: Un regard renouvelé en profondeur," *L'Année sociologique*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (2016). 351-384.
[21] Eva Meijer and Bernice Bovenkerk, "Taking Animal Perspectives into Account in Animal Ethics," in: *Animals in Our Midst: The Challenges of Co-existing with Animals in the Anthropocene*, eds. Bernice Bovenkerk and Jozef Keulartz (Cham: Springer, 2021), 60.
[22] Jason Hribal, "'Animals are part of the working class': A Challenge to Labor History," *Labor History*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (2003), 435-453.

escaping from the Kolmården wildlife park in 2007,[23] or even more famously, Bärbel, the six-year-old she-wolf who had escaped from the Klingenthal Zoo in 2002 and managed to roam freely for 192 days before being shot.[24] While it is most visible in the case of captive, domesticated, or working animals, numerous observations of wild animal resistance have been collected as well. Whether it is an unnamed wolf jumping three 300 feet down off a mountain spur while fleeing for her or his life from a hunter,[25] a translocated wolf 003F covering over 18 miles across an ice bridge to return near the place of her capture,[26] or 692F[27] jumping up to snap her jaws at the helicopter from which biologists were trying to dart her for measurements and radio-collaring,[28] the anecdotes of wild wolves showing resistance are numerous in both popular and scientific literature. Yet resistance, although it indeed articulates the animal perspective, is not the sole sign of nonhuman agency.

Although not as easily identifiable or visible as in cases of resistance, cooperation can also be a sign of agency. Jocelyne Porscher and Tiphaine Schmitt hypothesized that cows, for instance, may cooperate with the breeders, "[investing] their intelligence and their affects in the work."[29] This, in turn, led Vinciane Despret, a philosopher focusing on human-animal relations, to question how and in what circumstances nonhuman agency may or may not be recognized in the first place. Because animals who cooperate with humans are doing what is expected of them,

[23] Josefine Elfström, "Han gäckar oss hela tiden," *Expressen*, March 19, 2007, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.expressen.se/nyheter/han-gackar-oss-hela-tiden.
[24] Achim Gruber, *Das Kuscheltierdrama: Ein Tierpathologe über das stille Leiden der Haustiere* (Munich: Droemer, 2019), 56
[25] Barry Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men* (New York: Scribner, 1978), 3.
[26] Elizabeth K. Orning et al., "Emigration and First-Year Movements of Initial Wolf Translocations to Isle Royale," *Northeastern Naturalist*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (2020), 701-708.
[27] O-Six's sister from the same litter. She was illegally shot outside Yellowstone National Park in 2011.
[28] Douglas Smith and Gary Ferguson, *Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2012), 212-213.
[29] Jocelyne Porcher and Tiphaine Schmitt, "Dairy Cows: Workers in the Shadows?", *Society & Animals*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2012), 55.

this agency remains invisible until they refuse or resist. Their "resistance shows that when everything goes correctly, it is because of an active investment on the part of the [animals]."[30] In fact, cooperation on the side of wolves with their human partners allowed a number of scientific studies to be conducted and even movies to be filmed. Chitto, Tekoa, and other wolves[31] from the Wolf Science Center in Austria worked with their partners (both wolf and human) in an experiment in which the differences in cooperation between wolves and dogs were tested;[32] Digger, meanwhile, actively participated in filming Nicolas Vanier's *Loup* (2009), working alongside other wolves[33] and reindeer, as well as with actors, trainers, and the production team.[34]

"[A]n animal resisting," wrote Despret, "indeed appears as the very subject of the action, but it is not the same process as the one by which he/she becomes an agent." It is interspecies encounters and relations that create "agenting," which Despret described as "a relational verb that connects and articulates narratives […], beings of different species, things and contexts. There is no agency that is not interagency. There is no agency without *agencement*,[35] a rapport of forces."[36] The characteristics of an individual that Baratay described are inseparable from the individual's relations with others. In Despret's words:

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[30] Vinciane Despret, "From Secret Agents to Interagency," *History and Theory*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (2013), 42-43.
[31] Etu, Maikan, Tala, Kaspar, Shima, Gero, Amarok, Nanuk, Una, Wamblee, and Yukon.
[32] Friederike Range et al., "Wolves lead and dogs follow, but they both cooperate with humans," *Scientific Reports*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2019), 1-10.
[33] A full cast includes Tyka, 2-Toes, Sweet Pea, Toby, Jack, Arthur, Ripley, T-Bone, Quigley, Zinger, Scrunch, and Thunder. Quigley, who stars as a pup in *Loup* (2009), years later famously portrayed the Direwolf Ghost in the *Game of Thrones* (2011) television series. Ryan Porter, "At Home in Alberta with Jon Snow's Ghost," *Toronto Star*, April 4, 2016, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/2016/04/04/at-home-in-alberta-with-jon-snows-ghost.html.
[34] Andrew Simpson, *Wolves Unleashed* (Calgary: Rocky Mountain Books, 2012). Simpson recalls that during filming, the wolves "fought against their instincts to get [them] the footage [they] needed." (194)
[35] Despret chose to use the French word "agencement" instead of its translation, "assemblages," as the former implies a link between "agency" and because "it insists upon an active process of attunement that is never fixed once and for all" (38).
[36] Despret, "From Secret Agents to Interagency," 44.

> Inciting, provoking, producing, inducing, arousing, sparking, evoking, instigating, engaging, inspiring, and so on are examples of active affects inside an *agencement*; a reactive affect is understood in terms of the capacity to be incited, inspired, engaged, or provoked, or in being induced to produce—or even in terms of the power to give another being the power to affect you.[37]

For Despret, to affect and be affected—"through encounters, conflicts, collaborations, frictions, affinities"—is tantamount to becoming "companion-agents."[38]

Whether agency is exemplified by resistance or cooperation, wolves have shown, time and again, that they are active participants in creating their species' history. Karen Jones considered wolves as historical agents in the Yellowstone reintroduction project,[39] Irina Arnold explored an individual wolf's agency through writing his biography,[40] Gustav Stenseke Arup suggested that wolves contribute to and co-produce their legal protection,[41] and Nicolas Lescureux, Laurent Garde, and Michel Meuret pointed to wolves as active agents involved in their own management.[42] Ultimately, although the conditions of animal agency are not commonly agreed upon, the rise of animal biographies and the animal turn in historical, philosophical, and literary studies might lessen the importance of these debates. Joshua Specht proposed agency to be "the starting point of […] analysis, […] rather than the conclusion of the argument, […] mapping the varied economic, political, social, and cultural contexts in which animals are embedded."[43] What

[37] Despret, "From Secret Agents to Interagency," 38.
[38] Despret, "From Secret Agents to Interagency," 44.
[39] Karen R. Jones, "Restor(y)ing the 'Fierce Green Fire': Animal Agency, Wolf Conservation and Environmental Memory in Yellowstone National Park," *BJHS: Themes*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2017), 151–168.
[40] Irina Arnold, "Getting Close(r). Alive or Dead: Biography, Individuality and Agency of the Wolf MT6," in: *Managing the Return of the Wild: Human Encounters with Wolves in Europe*, eds. Michaela Fenske and Bernhard Tschofen (London: Routledge, 2020), 142-163.
[41] Gustav Stenseke Arup, *Entangled Law: A Study of the Entanglement of Wolves, Humans, and Law in the Landscape* (Karlstad: Karlstads Universitet, 2021).
[42] Nicolas Lescureux, Laurent Garde, and Michel Meuret, "Considering Wolves as Active Agents in Understanding Stakeholder Perceptions and Developing Management Strategies," in: *Large Carnivore Conservation and Management*, ed. Tasos Hovardas (London: Routledge, 2018), 147-167.
[43] Joshua Specht, "Animal History After its Triumph: Unexpected Animals, Evolutionary Approaches and the Animal Lens," *History Compass*, Vol 14, No 7 (2016), 332.

formed the life of the slender, grey-furred huntress named O-Six was precisely made of contexts: different worlds, perspectives, and relations, the way she lived in her environment and coexisted with nonhuman and human others—as well as her place in the history of her species.

1.1.2. HISTORY OF WOLVES IN NORTH AMERICA

The question of who O-Six was and the reasons behind the creation of her biographies are subject to the broader historical, ecological, political, and literary contexts of wolf-human relations in North America that are tied directly to the stories of individual wolves known long before she was born. Her family's history is among the most detailed and well-known ongoing biographies of wild animals: it started with the famous Yellowstone wolf reintroduction and continues to this day as wolves are born and die, all the while their genealogies and stories are being meticulously recorded by biologists and wolfwatchers. Wolves 9F and 10M were among the first wolves reintroduced to the park in 1995 and became subjects of a number of biographies.[44] The life of one of their pups was no less written about;[45] 21M, as he was called, mated with 40F and fathered a litter in which 472F was born.[46] Then, in 2006—which is where O-Six's name comes from—the famous she-wolf was born to 472F and her mate 113M. O-Six's daughter, 926F, otherwise known as Spitfire, quickly rose to similar fame as that of her mother and great-great-grandfather, though

[44] Thomas McNamee, *The Killing of Wolf Number Ten* (Westport: Prospecta Press, 2014); Thomas McNamee, *The Return of the Wolf to Yellowstone* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998).
[45] Rick McIntyre, *The Reign of Wolf 21: The Saga of Yellowstone's Legendary Druid* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2020); Douglas Smith and Gary Ferguson, *Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2012).
[46] In earlier biographies of O-Six, 472F's mother was assumed to be 42F, which genetic analysis later proved wrong. While 42F was not the biological mother, she did adopt 472F, as she took her sister 40F's pups from the den after 40F was killed by other wolves and brought them to her den to raise alongside her own litter. McIntyre, *The Reign of Wolf 21*, 112-170.

her fate was shared with them as well: all three were shot by hunters. Spitfire's daughter, Little T, known as such for a small white "tornado-shaped" spot on her otherwise black-furred chest,[47] continued the legacy as an "alpha female"[48] of the pack, yet with no scientific name assigned to her as she remained uncollared.

One of the reasons why O-Six, Spitfire, and many other wolves would have their lives biographized and deaths eulogized in recent years lies in the changing attitudes toward the species in North America. Between the 1600s and the 1960s, wolves were regarded as pests in the United States, and campaigns to eradicate them, particularly between the 1870s to the 1900s, were so ruthless and successful that the species[49] was virtually wiped out from most of the lower 48 states, although they persisted in the wilder parts of Minnesota and on Isle Royale.[50] Between 1870 and 1877, over 700,000 wolves were killed in Montana alone; a century years later, an estimated 700 wolves were left in all of the contiguous states combined.[51] Moreover, several subspecies of wolves were hunted to extinction during this time. It was not until 1978 that wolves as a species finally gained protection under the Endangered

[47] Brad A. Bulin, *The Grand Lady of Yellowstone & Other Yellowstone Wolf Stories* (Independently published, 2020), 82.
[48] The concept of a strict hierarchy in wolf packs, along with terms such as "alpha male/female," was introduced by Rudolf Schenkel in the late 1940s and later popularized with the publication of David L. Mech's book *The Wolf: Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species* (1970). The concept was based on the pack structure and social behavior observed in wolves in captivity, where packs were often composed of unrelated individuals placed together in areas with insufficient space. In such situations, the animals indeed displayed social organization that could be interpreted as strictly hierarchical. Mech repeatedly called for retiring the term "alpha" in describing wild wolf packs, whose social roles are based on family relations, yet the term is still widely used in factual and fictional literature. Mech proposed to replace it with a term that better illustrates the social position of the wolf in a family group, such as calling the "alpha female" the "matriarch" or the "breeding female" instead. David L. Mech, "Alpha Status, Dominance, and Division of Labor in Wolf Packs," *Canadian Journal of Zoology*, Vol. 77, No. 8 (1999), 1196-1203.
[49] The estimates are for the grey wolf, but red wolves and Mexican wolves were targeted as well.
[50] Paula Wild, *Return of the Wolf: Conflict and Coexistence* (Madeira Park: Douglas & McIntyre, 2018), 30-38.
[51] Rick Lamplugh, "A Brief History of Wolves and Humans," *Rick Lamplugh*, September 27, 2021, accessed 31 January, 2023, http://ricklamplugh.blogspot.com/2020/11/how-two-million-wolves-disappeared.html.

Species Act of 1973,[52] but scarcely any were left to be conserved, and the protection itself would not last long. In early 2008, the Northern Rockies gray wolves in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming were removed from the Endangered Species List for the first time. The back-and-forth relisting and delisting continued until October 29, 2020, when wolves were stripped of protection across the 48 states. Federal protection was finally reinstated in February 2022, but not for all wolves—they are still legally killed in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, as well as parts of Washington, Oregon, and Utah.[53] Ever since they were first delisted, another war on wolves has been declared.

Because the wolf numbers in Alaska and Canada are relatively stable, there have never been any temporary protections for them on a scale comparable to the Endangered Species Act.[54] In fact, both Canada and the state of Alaska continue wolf control programs, with some Canadian regions maintaining wolf bounties[55] and Alaska allowing aerial gunning of wolves as well as the killing of pups in their dens.[56] Although the grey wolf as a species is not threatened either in Canada or Alaska, there are mounting concerns about the status of smaller populations, such as the Alexander Archipelago wolves[57] in Alaska and the Coastal wolves in British

[52] Some subspecies, such as the Mexican wolf, were already under protection. Kristina Alexander, *The Gray Wolf and the Endangered Species Act (ESA): A Brief Legal History* (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 2011).
[53] Emily Qiu, "A New Vision for Wolf Conservation After 150 Years of Yellowstone," *Earthjustice*, March 17, 2022, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://earthjustice.org/from-the-experts/2022-february/a-new-vision-for-wolf-conservation-after-150-years-of-yellowstone.
[54] As of 2022, only the eastern wolf (*Canis lycaon*) populations are protected in Canada, numbering a few hundred; the grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) is estimated at over 50,000 individuals. The Alaskan wolf population is estimated at 8,000-11,000 wolves.
[55] Gilbert Proulx and Dwight Rodtka, "Predator Bounties in Western Canada Cause Animal Suffering and Compromise Wildlife Conservation Efforts," *Animals*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (2015), 1034-1046.
[56] William J. Ripple et al., "Large Carnivores Under Assault in Alaska," *PLoS Biology*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (2019), 1-6.
[57] John R. Platt, "Alaska's Rare Alexander Archipelago Wolves Nearly Wiped Out in 1 Year," *Scientific American*, June 11, 2015, accessed 31 January 2023, https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/extinction-countdown/alaska-archipelago-wolves.

Columbia.[58] There are concerns, too, about the Yellowstone wolves.[59] It took nearly 70 years since the last pack was killed for wolves to return to Yellowstone National Park. They are not protected as individuals but as a population in an area designated for their existence. Within this protected area, they are not safe from illegal hunting or vehicle collisions, and once they take a step outside the Park's borders, they become big game species. In effect, many of the Yellowstone wolves were legally "harvested" outside the Park's boundaries ever since the grey wolf was delisted from the Endangered Species Act in some states.

There was 253M, known as Limpy, killed in Wyoming on March 28, 2008, the same day it had become legal to do so;[60] more named and unnamed wolves would share his fate in years and hunting seasons to come. In December 2020, The 06 Legacy, a nonprofit wolf advocacy organization founded in memory of O-Six, reported the death of 1201F of the Wapiti Lake Pack thus: "A man with a gun saw 1201F, but his vision was distorted. When he looked at her, he saw her as an object instead of the sentient being she was."[61] A year later, in a eulogy for 1109F of the Junction Butte Pack, The 06 Legacy team mourned that the she-wolf "didn't get to finish her own story. The hunter bought the ending with the purchase of a $12 wolf license. In our world today, her life was worth less than a Starbucks coffee."[62] Wildlife photographer and wolfwatcher Julie Argyle announced some of the recent

[58] Courtney Dickson, "B.C. Extends Aerial Wolf Cull For Five More Years," *CBC*, January 31, 2022, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-wolf-cull-extended-1.6330780.
[59] Margaret Osborne and Rachael Lallensack, "Hunters Have Killed 24 Yellowstone Gray Wolves So Far This Season—the Most in Over 25 Years," *Smithsonian Magazine*, February 9, 2022, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/hunters-have-killed-24-yellowstone-gray-wolves-so-far-this-season-the-most-in-over-25-years-180979545.
[60] Jim Yuskavitch, *In Wolf Country: The Power and Politics of Reintroduction* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2015), 71-72.
[61] The 06 Legacy, "1201F was born in Hayden Valley on land her great-grandparents established as their home," *Facebook*, December 21, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/The06Legacy/posts/1201f-was-born-in-hayden-valley-on-land-her-great-grandparents-established-as-th/2530457993917026.
[62] The 06 Legacy, "It has been reported that 1109F of the Junction Butte pack was killed in the Montana wolf hunt," *Facebook*, November 13, 2021, https://www.facebook.com/The06Legacy/photos/a.1912135485749283/2747174918911998.

deaths from the wolves' point of view, including 1329M's, killed in 2022 on the border of Wyoming and Utah,[63] and 1234M's from the same family:

> I am 1234M of the Wapiti Lake Pack and I am one of the latest wolves to be killed in the Montana hunt. I had no idea what was waiting for me when I crossed that invisible line that surrounds Yellowstone National Park, and sadly, I trusted the humans that I encountered that day and had no idea they were going to end my life.[64]

A decade before, there was also 754M, O-Six's packmate. And then, on December 6, there was O-Six herself, a casualty of Wyoming's 2012 hunting season. Her biographies are the result of these turbulent human-wolf relations. The question of who O-Six was does not have a single answer. Her wolf family cannot be asked directly, but her human observers would say she was a "[g]ood mother, hunter extraordinaire, beautiful, take-charge, dedicated, intelligent [and] driven. Driven to succeed, driven to hunt, driven to travel and mark territory, and driven to raise a family."[65] Her biographers are driven to tell her story.

1.1.3. WOLVES AS INDIVIDUALS

In the preface to *Wolves and the Wolf Myth in American Literature* (2009), S. K. Robisch related a snapshot of the life of the Druid Peak Pack, led at the time by 286F, who became the breeding female after 42F's death in 2004.[66] The moment of mating between two wolves—which Robisch refused to watch—prompted him to question the ethics of current human-wolf relations, especially in Yellowstone National Park:

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[63] Julie Argyle, "Remember me, I am 1329M of the Wapiti Lake Pack," *Facebook*, July 11, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/julieargylewildlifephotography/photos/a.123891041143714/2008991155967017.
[64] Julie Argyle, "I am 1234M of the Wapiti Lake Pack and I am one of the latest wolves to be killed in the Montana hunt," *Facebook*, January 20, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/julieargylewildlifephotography/posts/1879635672235900.
[65] Bulin, *The Grand Lady of Yellowstone*, 78.
[66] McIntyre, *The Reign of Wolf 21*, 205-209.

> At the roadside: a cluster of onlookers, biologists, and cinematographers. They, we, are always there, and I realized especially at that moment of intimacy between the two coupling wolves that the pack has no privacy except when it finds its way into the spaces that aren't under surveillance. The wolves are the source and constancy of story for these wolf-watchers, a kind of soap opera to some. Even when the pack manages to slip into a sheltered alcove of the park where it used to live in myth—the deep, dark forest or a clearing at the foot of the great mountain—many of its members are radio-collared.[67]

Wolves are known to respond to the presence of tourists;[68] in turn, how tourists or wolfwatchers choose to respond to the wolves' presence shapes the relations that are constantly negotiated but which are never equal or harmonious. Robisch's response to the wolves' mating was to turn away—yet he still could not turn away from wolfish stories he continued to write about, just like others could not stop looking at the mating wolves whose stories they would go on to tell.

These narratives constitute a part of an ongoing biography of a species, a population, a family, and an individual, as seen through the eyes of their human observers. "Why not tell the saga of the battle over the West's most iconic animal by following the life of a single wolf and her pack? Why not write the biography of a wolf?"[69] asked Nate Blakeslee, the author of *American Wolf: A True Story of Survival and Obsession in the West* (2017), perhaps the most well-known biography of O-Six. Others, too, could not turn away from such stories. Nick Jans, in *A Wolf Called Romeo* (2014), told the history of wolves in Alaska through the biography of a named individual. Rick McIntyre, meanwhile, wrote a saga of the Yellowstone wolves, with each of his four books focusing on individual animals: *The Rise of Wolf 8: Witnessing the Triumph of Yellowstone's Underdog* (2019), *The Reign of Wolf 21: The Saga of Yellowstone's Legendary Druid Pack* (2020), *The Redemption of Wolf*

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[67] S. K. Robisch, *Wolves and the Wolf Myth in American Literature* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2009), ix-x.
[68] Günther Bloch, *The Pipestone Wolves: The Rise and Fall of a Wolf Family* (Victoria: Rocky Mountain Books, 2016).
[69] Elizabeth Flock, "'Why not write the biography of a wolf?' and more advice from author Nate Blakeslee," *PBS*, October 9, 2018, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/arts/why-not-write-the-biography-of-a-wolf-and-more-advice-from-author-nate-blakeslee.

302: From Renegade to Yellowstone Alpha Male (2021), and *The Alpha Female Wolf: The Fierce Legacy of Yellowstone's 06* (2022). While these books may be among the most widely read wild animal biographies, they are neither the first nor the last wolf biographies to be published.

The first wolf biography, one that has had a considerable impact on the environmental movement and animal biographies in general, can perhaps be attributed to Ernest Thompson Seton's "Story of Lobo," first published in 1894 in *Scribner's Magazine* and later, more famously, as the opening story in *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898).[70] The story began in late 1893 when Seton set out to New Mexico to hunt down "Old Lobo" for his repeated depredations on cattle. The wolf eluded conventional methods of capture, not only avoiding traps and bait but also unearthing the former and defecating on the latter in a battle of wits with the hunter. Seton finally succeeded in trapping him early the next year when he killed his mate, Blanca, a white she-wolf after whose scent Lobo had later followed right into traps. A striking photograph of Lobo caught in four steel-jawed traps, deadly set on each of his legs, is still among the most widely used visuals in wolf literature and remains a plaintive sight as the wolf's demise came soon after the photograph was taken. Lobo resisted when he was approached by the hunter who attempted to strangle him with his lasso; perhaps it was the same lasso with which Blanca was strangled after attempting to escape from the trap, after resisting, as two hunters "each threw a lasso over the neck of the doomed wolf, and strained [their] horses in opposite directions until blood burst from her mouth, her eyes glazed, her limbs stiffened and then fell limp."[71] As Lobo snapped the lasso with his jaws, Seton switched to a rifle, yet he

[70] David L. Witt, *Ernest Thompson Seton: The Life and Legacy of an Artist and Conservationist* (Layton: Gibbs Smith, 2010), 5.
[71] Ernest Thompson Seton, "Lobo: The King of Currumpaw," in: *War Against the Wolf*: *America's Campaign to Exterminate the Wolf*, ed. Rick McIntyre (Stillwater: Voyageur Press, 1995), 226.

did not pull the trigger to end the hunt once and for all. It was not Seton's change of heart at the time that had stopped him from killing Lobo on the spot—he simply did not want to ruin the hide. "[B]efore the light had died from his fierce eyes," the trapped and injured wolf was carried on horseback to the hunter's ranch to serve as living bait for luring in the rest of his pack.[72] Lobo died that night, ending Seton's last wolf hunt of his life.

Just like biologists give numbers to the wolves they radio-collar, 832F among them, so did Seton, in his journal, number the wolves he had hunted. Outside the storied account, Lobo was known as #677, while his mate, Blanca, whose name Seton added later to his journal notes, was marked as #672. Lobo's death was reported without any apparent sentiment in Seton's journal,[73] yet became imbued with emotions in the storied account. "I took the chain from his neck, a cowboy helped me to carry him to the shed where lay the remains of Blanca," Seton wrote in the final words of the story, "and as we laid him beside her, the cattle-man exclaimed: 'There, you *would* come to her, now you are together again.'"[74] According to David L. Witt, who studied Seton's journals, this sentimental shift in writing and viewpoint was related, in part, to the act of naming the wolves. "Nameless things can be killed with impunity, while a named character can receive our empathy," he wrote. "Killing animal #677 is one thing; killing 'Lobo' is quite another."[75] Nevertheless, giving wolves personal names instead of numbers does not necessarily mean ascribing individuality, subjectivity, or personhood to them, and neither does it mean anthropomorphic bias. In fact, the history of naming animals suggests that the practice can serve vastly different purposes. In the past, giving

[72] Seton, "Lobo: The King of Currumpaw," 228.
[73] Witt, *Ernest Thompson Seton*, 31-36.
[74] Seton, "Lobo: The King of Currumpaw," 229.
[75] Witt, *Ernest Thompson Seton*, 37.

personal names or alphanumeric codes to wild animals was usually a means through which recording observations was made more convenient, with scarcely any thought about ethical implications involved in the act of naming. Pets and captive animals at laboratories, too, were hardly ascribed personhood or rights along with the personal names they were given. More often than not, the studied animals served as representative examples of their species, their names effectively meaningless as individual differences were not the focus of these studies.[76] In the same way, in the first half of the twentieth century, some wolves were hunted down and killed despite being named.[77] The practice of naming wild animals is still a matter of dispute, especially in the scientific context. Some ethologists argue that naming a study animal can get in the way of objective results and recommend using numbers instead—nevertheless noting that numbers, too, can bias the observer.[78] In the end, the reasons and consequences of naming extend beyond the simplistic labels of anthropomorphic sentiment and scientific objectivity.

In *Keepers of the Wolves* (2001), Richard P. Thiel, who managed the wolf recovery program in Wisconsin in the 1980s, reminisced about wolf 1187, toward whom he felt fondness despite giving the wolf a number instead of a name, according to the protocol he followed. Thiel noted that "the number had made no difference as [he] had responded to wolf 1187's quirky individuality," nor had it changed how this individual wolf's story unfolded.[79] In the biography of the wolf called Romeo, Nick Jans likewise dismissed the idea that giving a wolf a personal name instead of a

[76] Etienne S. Benson, "Naming the Ethological Subject," *Science in Context*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2016), 107-128.
[77] Bruce Hampton, *The Great American Wolf* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997), 1-14.
[78] David W. Macdonald et al., "Measuring the Dynamics of Mammalian Societies: An Ecologist's Guide to Ethological Methods," in: *Research Techniques in Animal Ecology: Controversies and Consequences*, eds. Luigi Boitani and Todd K. Fuller (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 364.
[79] Richard P. Thiel, *Keepers of the Wolves: The Early Years of Wolf Recovery in Wisconsin* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 96.

number can drastically change the way he or she is perceived. Romeo was an Alaskan wolf known for his solitary appearances in Juneau and an affinity for playing with the residents' dogs. He came to the town presumably in search of his pregnant mate, soon to be named Juliet. It was just as likely that the two wolves were simply packmates or even unrelated individuals,[80] yet the Romeo and Juliet story had a tinge of romantic and literary flair to it—similar, in fact, to the story of Lobo and Blanca—and became part of the ongoing narrative. The female bore no name when she was hit by a vehicle months before the appearance of Romeo, dying just like many other unnamed wolves killed every season in Alaska. It was only when Romeo's story became more widely known that Juliet was given a name. Romeo, too, became "an individual [people] could recognize and come to know, in some sense of the word: not *a* wolf, but *the* wolf. Romeo."[81] Wolves in Alaska are not protected, and he was legally killed in 2009, later joining Juliet—"frozen in a stiff, unwolflike pose and a glassy stare"—as a stuffed exhibit at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center.[82] Romeo's naming, however, was not the reason why he was recognized as an individual with agency:

> [let us say] the black wolf was never called anything beyond that simple adjective and noun or, in common research practice, was tagged with a neutral identifier—W-14A or whatever. Would that have changed anything that had so far happened, shifted his fate, or altered how we perceived him? The wolf arrived without a name, and his personality and actions over time led to it, not the other way around.[83]

It does not matter, either, that O-Six was referred to by a number; after all, there should be little difference between calling her 832F and 06, yet the latter effectively became her name. Moreover, it is not unusual for some wolves to be given different names, such as 10M, who was named "Aurora" by schoolchildren from Hinton,

[80] Nick Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2014), 118-125.
[81] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 117.
[82] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 13.
[83] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 119-120.

Alberta,[84] while those involved with the reintroduction project privately called him "Arnold."[85] Wolves become individuals through agency and interagency, which may sometimes lead to naming them, and not through being named in the first place. The names matter *because* these wolves are individuals whose stories are at least partially known. As we crave stories, more affinity is felt toward wolves who have some of those to tell—especially those they tell together with us. What matters is recognizing them as co-creators of these narratives.

Indeed, wolves do not need to be named to be seen as individuals or to have their agency recognized, but it also cannot be denied that naming is part of the process through which they may become more *visible* as individuals or agents. In the case of Lobo's biography, Seton's attempt to endear the wolf to his readership through naming and individualizing certainly created the intended impact, inspiring future generations of naturalists and conservationists.[86] More important than Lobo's naming, however, was the emphasis on the wolf's perspective—albeit anthropomorphized—that Seton tried to convey to his audience. That Seton seemed to have sought the animal point of view is evident not only from his writings but also his paintings and sketches, which suggest he was looking for ways to see what the wolf may see and recreate this perspective for others to experience as well. In the painting *Triumph of the Wolves* (1893), for instance, Seton depicted wolves feasting on a hunter they had killed from their wolfish point of view.[87] Not only for writers, but for artists and photographers, too, ventures into different worlds meant crouching

[84] Gary Ferguson, *Yellowstone Wolves: The First Year* (Helena: Falcon Press, 1996), 121.
[85] Renée Askins, *Shadow Mountain: A Memoir of Wolves, a Woman, and the Wild* (New York: Anchor Books, [2002] 2004), 225-226.
[86] A lifelong wolfwatcher and naturalist Rick McIntyre dedicated *War Against the Wolf* (1995) to Lobo and Blanca: "Together in life, together in death," and went on to author four wolf biographies; Sir David Attenborough, who narrates Lobo's story in a BBC documentary *Lobo: The Wolf That Changed America* (2007), mentioned that it left a deep impression on him when he read it as a boy.
[87] Dee Seton Barber, Introduction to: Ernest Thompson Seton and Julia M. Seton, *The Gospel of the Redman* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2005), xxiii.

down to be on the same level as the animal whose point of view they tried to capture, or placing themselves behind the enclosure bars to better visualize the animal perspective.[88] Whereas the picture of Lobo captured on the last day of his life was taken from above, an indisputably human—a hunter's—point of view, a set of lesser-known photographs from the 1930s shows Seton playing with a captive wolf inside the wolf's enclosure, positioned on the same level as his canine companion.[89] While this wolf's name remains unknown, from 1901 to at least 1909 there was a pair of wolves named after Lobo and Blanca at the London Zoo, whom Seton described in *Lives of the Game Animals* vol. 1 (1925) and likely visited and observed on occasion.[90] The captive wolf Seton had played with could have also been named after Lobo, or carry a different name altogether—perhaps the wolf was not named at all; what matters is the change of perspective that allowed the former hunter to recognize wolves as individuals with their own points of view, which he attempted to catch a glimpse of.

It was a turning point, with a wolf hunter becoming a wolf advocate through his popular account of Lobo's life and death. In this sense, Seton was not unlike Aldo Leopold, whose 1909 encounter with a green-eyed wolf he had shot led to an epiphany that, as it made its way to print in 1949 as "Thinking Like a Mountain" essay, became another passionate plea for the wilderness and predators—wolves in particular. Like many others, Leopold was influenced by Seton's "biography of a lobo wolf," which, although read "with intense sympathy,"[91] did not stop him from killing wolves. Sympathy for the "animal victim" does not, after all, have a profound

[88] Baratay, *Animal Biographies*, 8-9.
[89] Witt, *Ernest Thompson Seton*, 149.
[90] Ernest Thompson Seton, *Lives of the Game Animals*, volume 1, (New York: The Literary Guild of America, [1925] 1937), 270, 330; Personal communication with David L. Witt, August 15, 2022.
[91] Aldo Leopold, "Unpublished Foreword to *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There*," in: *War Against the Wolf*: *America's Campaign to Exterminate the Wolf*, ed. Rick McIntyre, (Stillwater: Voyageur Press, 1995), 324.

enough impact needed to change human-wolf relations. It was only when Leopold looked into the eyes of the she-wolf—who remains unnamed—that he seemed to have been affected:

> We reached the old wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes—something known only to her and to the mountain. I was young then, and full of trigger-itch; I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view.[92]

Environmental historian Karen Jones noted that the encounter between Leopold and the she-wolf shaped the future narratives that wolves have found themselves in, especially in Yellowstone National Park. They have since become "[i]mbued with a vivid and eternal 'fierce green fire'" that represented not only the complicated relationship between humans and wilderness but also the search for new ways of coexisting. "Leopold's shared gaze with a she-wolf thus became a kind of rhetorical crossing point for inter-species communication and environmental atonement,"[93] wrote Jones. Seton and Leopold were wolf hunters turned conservationists whose "conversion" was brought about by singular encounters with individual wolves whom they found extraordinary. Much like O-Six, the green-eyed she-wolf from Leopold's essay and Lobo from Seton's story had helped turn the tide in the history of their species.

The story that ended in a hunter's epiphany and served as an opening to Seton's book has nevertheless sparked a controversy that would leave its author, among several others, with a "nature faker" moniker. Seton's stories were partly fictionalized,[94] which led John Burroughs, a naturalist with a keen interest in

[92] Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), 130.
[93] Jones, "Restor(y)ing the 'Fierce Green Fire,'" 152.
[94] Seton, *Lives of the Game Animals*, 314.

ornithology, to denounce them as sentimental, "sham natural history."[95] Theodore Roosevelt joined the debate in 1907 with an interview with Edward B. Clark for *Everybody's Magazine*, "Roosevelt and the Nature Fakirs," in which he condemned other nature writers, such as William J. Long, for his story "Wayeeses, the White Wolf" (1905), which Roosevelt had found outrageously fictional, and Jack London for his "lack of knowledge" about wolves in *White Fang* (1906).[96] Partly in response to the accusations,[97] Seton wrote *Life Histories of Northern Animals* (1909), which was praised by Roosevelt, and *Lives of the Game Animals* (1925-1928) for which he was awarded the John Burroughs Medal.[98] Especially in the latter work, Seton maintained his opinion that wolves are not "beasts of desolation"[99] but highly intelligent animals, each with their unique personality.[100]

The nature-faking controversy reappeared in 1963 with the publication of Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*, which, despite the author's claims, was not a true account of a biologist living in harmony with a pack of wolves in the Canadian Arctic.[101] It was followed by similarly fictitious books, such as Roger Caras's *The Custer Wolf: Biography of an American Renegade* (1966) that adopted a wolf's point

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[95] John Burroughs, "Real and Sham Natural History," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 91, No. 545 (1903), 298-310.
[96] Edward B. Clark, "Roosevelt on the Nature Fakirs," *Everybody's Magazine*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1907), 770-774.
[97] Ernest T. Seton, William J. Long, and Jack London responded to this criticism. Both Seton and Long defended their accounts as being true and based on their personal observation and experience while accusing Burroughs—mainly an ornithologist—of having no knowledge of wolves. Long pointed out that Roosevelt's knowledge of wolves came solely from hunting them. London, on the other hand, argued that the wolfdog books he wrote were intended to avoid and even condemn anthropomorphism in animal stories. All the writers insisted on animals being more than instinct-driven machines, a view derived from Descartes and held by both Burroughs and Roosevelt. William J. Long, *Wayeeses, the White Wolf* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1908), v-xi; Jack London, *Revolution and Other Essays* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910), 237-266.
[98] Julia Moss Seton, *By a Thousand Fires: Nature Notes and Extracts from the Life and Unpublished Journals of Ernest Thompson Seton* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1967), 243.
[99] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol 2, ed. Herman Hagedorn (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, [1889] 1927), 305.
[100] Seton, *Lives of the Game Animals*, 329-337.
[101] Alexander William Francis Banfield, "Review of Never Cry Wolf by Farley Mowat," *Canadian Field-Naturalist*, Vol. 78, No. 1 (1964), 52-54; Douglas Pimlott, "Review of Never Cry Wolf by Farley Mowat," *Journal of Wildlife Management*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (1966), 236-237.

of view, or James Greiner's *The Red Snow: A Story of the Alaskan Gray Wolf* (1980) that narrated the life of a fictional wolf pack based on available research. Such "part-romantic, part-testimonial literature" at the time not only "canonized the wolf as a charismatic emblem of the sacred wild"[102] but also prompted an outcry against wolf eradication programs.[103] While both "Story of Lobo" and *Never Cry Wolf* were among the most influential narratives ever written about wolves, garnering sympathy for the species, they were still fictionalized accounts that would tear an even bigger rift between science and "sentimental" nature writing.

Mowat was accused of basing a considerable part of *Never Cry Wolf*—specifically, the wolves' family life—on Adolph Murie's *The Wolves of Mount McKinley* (1944), a scientific study describing several seasons of observing a wolf pack in Denali National Park. Mowat's book proved more attractive to readers, at the same time leading them to misunderstand wolves as predators who can—quite harmlessly, at least for human interests—survive mainly on mice in the absence of their main ungulate prey. Mowat went so far as to suggest that sometimes, wolves may even prefer to feed on rodents rather than caribou.[104] While his focus on the importance of family in a wolf's life is commendable, denying wolves' hunting cultures[105] is another form of imposing anthropocentric values on nonhuman animals. David L. Mech, a renowned wolf biologist, had come to review Mowat's book rather unfavorably, calling it fiction with a misleading message.[106] It appears

[102] Jones, "Restor(y)ing the 'Fierce Green Fire,'" 163.
[103] Hampton, *The Great American Wolf*, 168.
[104] Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1963), 107-112, 121.
[105] Through his years of observation of wolves in Denali, biologist Gordon Haber realized that wolf families have distinct hunting traditions—in a way that amounts to culture. Joseph Bump of the Voyageurs Wolf Project came to a similar conclusion. Gordon Haber and Marybeth Holleman, *Among Wolves: Gordon Haber's Insights into Alaska's Most Misunderstood Animal* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2013), 121-128; Joseph Bump et al., "Predator Personalities Alter Ecosystem Services," *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, Vol. 20, No. 5 (2022), 275-277.
[106] David L. Mech, *The Wolf: The Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species* (New York: Doubleday Publishing, 1970), 389.

that scientific accounts insisting on objectivity are no more effective than overly romanticized stories. It would take an approach different from the above for such publications to appeal to the public on a personal level and preserve uniquely wolfish behaviors, personalities, and cultures.

While Ernest T. Seton, Aldo Leopold, Farley Mowat, Adolph Murie, and David L. Mech are often cited as those whose literary and scientific forays into the worlds of wolves were especially impactful, only one woman is mentioned alongside them. Lois Crisler's *Arctic Wild* (1958), considered to be among the most important books on wolves, is also one of the earliest co-created human-wolf narratives, biographizing the life of individual wolves named Lady and Trigger alongside the life of the author. Though Crisler indeed penned a classic, other women had also made significant contributions to wolf literature. Written between 1893 and 1928, Evelyn Cameron's diaries not only provided an insight into the wolf's decline in Montana due to eradication efforts but also recorded several months of living with two wolf pups named Tussa and Weecharpee. In 1946, Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher's journal notes from the time she spent living with wild wolves as neighbors were published as *Driftwood Valley*. In 1968, Lois Crisler published her second memoir, *Captive Wild*, in which she recounted seven years of living with a she-wolf named Alatna. Starting in the 1980s, Diane Boyd wrote and co-author around forty scientific articles and personal essays about wolves, in some of which Kishinena, Phyllis, and Sage take center stage. In 1997, Teresa Martino told a story of rewilding the she-wolf Mckenzie in *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness*. In 2002, there was Renée Askins's *Shadow Mountain*, inspired in part by the author's time raising a captive wolf cub named Natasha, an experience which led Askins to become involved with the Yellowstone reintroduction efforts. Helen Thayer's *Three Among the Wolves*

from 2004, meanwhile, was a true story of living alongside a wild wolf pack in a way that Farley Mowat imagined it. In *Howl: Of Woman and Wolf*, published in 2015, Susan Imhoff Bird wrote of her travels across wolf country, interspersing it with a story of OR-7's journey to find a mate and establish his own territory. Then, in 2020, Cheryl Alexander's *Takaya: Lone Wolf* became both a memoir and the titular wolf's biography.

These entangled stories of women and wolves that cast them both as companion-agents were written alongside the dominant narratives of hunters-turned-conservationists, biologists insisting on scientific objectivity, and naturalists venturing into the realm of speculative fiction, yet they were rarely a subject of academic inquiry. More often than not, the focus is on the feminist interpretations in which wolves become symbols: of wildness that women strive to connect with or return to, popularized by Clarissa Pinkola Estés's *Women Who Run with Wolves* (1992), or of resistance against the binary oppositions that situate women lower than men, and animals lower than both. To be sure, there are women who identify with wolves, who speak of wildness they experienced in and through their presence, and who find the oppression of animals and women to be connected.[107] Although the importance of such approaches should not be denied or belittled—as sentiment and emotions are certainly necessary for seeking new and different paths to coexistence[108]—my concern lies with real wolves and real women, as individuals rather than symbols, and whose relations are not determined predominantly by gender.

[107] Diane Antonio, "Of Wolves and Women," in: *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations*, eds. Carol J. Adams and Josephine Donovan (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 213-230.
[108] Jody Emel, "Are You Man Enough, Big and Bad Enough? Ecofeminism and Wolf Eradication in the USA," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 13, No. 6 (1995), 707-734.

In his extensive yet incomplete overview of women's writings about wolves, S. K. Robisch reduced them mainly to feminist fiction, with a handful of women biologists and naturalists such as Lois Crisler, Renée Askins, and Diane Boyd praised as the rare exceptions.[109] In *Made from this Earth* (1993), Vera Norwood briefly discussed Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher's *Driftwood Valley* as well as Crisler's *Arctic Wild* and *Captive Wild* with a focus on domesticity and the feminine empathy for animals, touching on the connectedness with wildlife as if it were women's friends, family, and even children.[110] Neither Robisch nor Norwood, however, concerned themselves with individual wolves as active co-creators of these stories. I ask to look beyond the approach of associating femininity and gender roles with shared histories between women and wolves in such narratives—even as the authors themselves are caught in the gender contexts that shaped their circumstances—to see the women *as well as* wolves, not in supporting roles but as companion-agents.

While animal biography as a genre introduced novel ways of writing nonhuman histories, entanglements between animals and their biographers resulted in co-created narratives that ask who they are in *response* to one another. In the narratives that follow the lives of biologists, naturalists, or photographers and their companion-agents, both affect each other, co-creating their personal histories, the histories of their species, and the history of human-wolf relations. These narratives should be understood as one of many ways of relating, as well as recognizing wolves as agents and individuals who actively co-shape those stories. They beget companionship that situates wolves not together with nor apart from us but living their stories alongside our own.

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[109] Robisch, *Wolves and the Wolf Myth in American Literature*, 341-368.
[110] Vera Norwood, *Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 237-245.

1.2. WOLVES AS COMPANION SPECIES

1.2.1. WOLFISH ENTANGLEMENTS

"'Where did you get that scratch on your nose?' her teacher once asked. 'Playing with my daddy's wolves,' Faye replied." What sounds like a fairytale or perhaps a quote from one of Margaret Atwood's novels is, in fact, an excerpt from a 1963 article in *Look* magazine. Faye Ginsburg's father studied canine behavior, and she was raised alongside captive wolves kept for research. When she was eleven years old, a journalist visited her father's laboratory at the University of Chicago to write the story of a girl romping with seven wolves who were "her favorite playmates," as reported by Jack Starr.[111] It was a privilege she took for granted at the time.[112] While the photographs for the magazine story were cropped to look as if Ginsburg and the wolves, Romulus and Hortense, were alone in their "affectionate" tussles, the original frames show her father keeping the wolves on tight leashes and supervising the playing session.[113] One of these photos was later used in Donna Haraway's book *When Species Meet* (2008).

Haraway wrote of her exchange with Ginsburg, in which they discussed a cartoon published in the *New Yorker* that depicted a she-wolf being welcomed back to the pack after being fitted with a radio-collar by scientists. The story from *Look* magazine about scientists' wolves circled back, years later, to another magazine story about scientists' wolves; this time, instead of being studied in captivity, the wolf was

[111] Jack Starr, "A Wolf Can Be a Girl's Best Friend," *Look Magazine*, December 3, 1963, in: *A Wolf Can Be a Girl's Best Friend*, eds. Faye Ginsburg and Steven Meyer (New York: Blurb Books, 2016), 11-13.
[112] Faye Ginsburg, "On Being Raised by Benson (and Wolves)," *Bridges*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2009), 111-114.
[113] Faye Ginsburg and Steven Meyer, *A Wolf Can Be a Girl's Best Friend* (New York: Blurb Books, 2016), 3-19.

studied more or less remotely in the wild. Haraway's interpretation of the cartoon postulated that the scientists' wolf has to be re-integrated into the wolf society by another wolf, who would help in this transition. "If all goes well," scientists and wolves shall "become messmates, companion species, and significant others to one another, as well as conspecifics."[114] While the outcome of such a meeting is unknown, the essential aspect of it lies in becoming with one another:[115] "[t]he scientist–wolf will send back data as well as bring data to the wolves in the forest. These encounters will shape naturecultures for them all."[116] Here, the naturecultures signify overcoming the dichotomies that dictate power relations between nature and culture, human and nonhuman, as collapsing the artificial boundaries opens up possibilities for novel ways of thinking about subjectivity, agency, and entanglement in past, present, and future multispecies histories.

In a way, Donna Haraway's *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003), which formed a foundation for *When Species Meet* (2008), was a natural continuation of both the *Cyborg Manifesto* (1985) and the "Situated Knowledges" (1988) essay, but this sister manifesto[117] turned out to be even more passionate and personal,[118] for its central figure was more worldly than a cyborg. Haraway does not understand companion species simply as pets; rather, they are other animals as well as significant others with whom human lives are entangled. Although dogs served as a

[114] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 15.
[115] The term used by Haraway was adapted from Vinciane Despret's article "The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthropo-zoo-genesis," in which the author suggests that Konrad Lorenz and the geese and jackdaws he studied affected each other in ways that became "shared experience, an experience of being 'with.'" Lorenz did not become a jackdaw; he "became a 'jackdaw-with-human' as much as the jackdaw became in some ways a 'human-with- jackdaw;'" neither did Lorenz "become a goose" as much as "he became 'with a goose-with a human'" (131).
[116] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 15.
[117] Haraway calls her "Situated Knowledges" a sister essay to the *Cyborg Manifesto*, and I would argue that *Companion Species Manifesto* belongs with the two as well. *Manifestly Haraway*, 207.
[118] Donna J. Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 215.

model for companion species, the concept was also applied to grizzly bears[119] as well as elephants[120] and even fungi,[121] despite the criticism it aroused.[122] Wolves, too, appeared among Haraway's case studies, and it seems as though there is a more natural association between the dog and the wolf—one domesticated, the other wild—than between dogs and fungi. Still, the approach becomes quite widely encompassing with Haraway's inclusion of objects, such as crutches and wheelchairs, into companion species. While the purpose is precisely to dismantle categories, wolves cannot be equated to dogs or crutches. Rather than narrowing the concept, then, I propose to engage with it by taking a step closer in order to analyze more deeply the stories in which wolves and women become companion species in their particular circumstances and contexts.

Wolves as companion species demand a different approach than dogs, and within the human-wolf relations, each wolf demands a different approach as an individual. Their status is complicated enough in these worldly entanglements. By being evolutionarily close to dogs, wolves may attract affection as "pre-dog" creatures, for there is enough likeness to companion dogs and enough difference from them to make them seem familiar and alien at the same time. Then, their status is further complicated by the existence of captive wolves, wolfdogs bred and kept as pets, and wolf-coyote hybrids in the wild. Finally, wolves' status as predators is complicated politically—as a species of immense interest and controversy, they are caught between a protected and a killable status, depending on time and place. Even

[119] Jacob Metcalf, "Intimacy without Proximity: Encountering Grizzlies as a Companion Species," *Environmental Philosophy*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2008), 99-128.
[120] Jamie Lorimer, "Elephants as Companion Species: The Lively Biogeographies of Asian Elephant Conservation in Sri Lanka," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (2010), 491-506.
[121] Anna Tsing, "Unruly Edges: Mushrooms as Companion Species," *Environmental Humanities*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2012), 141–154.
[122] June Dwyer, "A Non-companion Species Manifesto: Humans, Wild Animals, and 'The Pain of Anthropomorphism,'" *South Atlantic Review*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (2007), 73-89.

though they cannot directly speak up in matters concerning them, their agency is evident enough to consider them as co-producers of history, space, and interspecies relations. The ways they respond to human presence differ depending on the individual and whether they live with, alongside, or away from humans; in every case, there is a responsibility to meet them halfway.

1.2.2. UNMAKING THE KILLABILITY

In her book *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (2007),[123] feminist theorist Karen Barad introduced the concept of agential realism, in which agency and subjectivity do not exist *a priori* but are created through intra-actions, through "cutting together-apart"[124] that "entails the enactment of an agential cut together with the entanglement of what's on 'either side' of the cut since these are produced in one move." These notions, fundamental to "thinking about questions of indebtedness, inheritance, memory, and responsibility,"[125] tie in closely with Haraway's concept of becoming-with: "[n]atures, cultures, subjects, and objects do not preexist their intertwined worldings;" who they are (and who they are to become) "is constituted in intra- and interaction. The partners do not precede the knotting; species of all kinds are

[123] The title is taken from Alice Fulton's poem "Shy One," part of which reads: "Because truths we don't suspect have a hard time / making themselves felt, as when thirteen species / of whiptail lizards composed entirely of females / stay undiscovered due to bias / against such things existing, / we have to meet the universe halfway. / Nothing will unfold for us unless we move toward what / looks to us like nothing: faith is a cascade." Looking for only the elements that are conventionally recognized and acceptable in science may prevent us from asking new questions and finding different answers. This is especially true of animal sciences, where initial assumptions are not easily overturned, even as new discoveries point to different conclusions. Alice Fulton, *Cascade Experiment: Selected Poems* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 59-60.
[124] Karen Barad, "Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart," *Parallax*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2014), 168–187.
[125] Malou Juelskjær and Nete Schwennesen, "Intra-active Entanglements—An Interview with Karen Barad," *Kvinder, Køn & Forskning*, Vol. 12, No. 1-2 (2012), 20.

consequent upon worldly subject- and object-shaping entanglements."[126] For both Barad and Haraway, being responsive and responsible "is an ethical call,"[127] indispensable in creating multispecies communities we hope to live in. The responsibility they speak of may arise in response to categorizing, for it can no doubt make certain species or individuals "killable," including hybrids as well as invasive and introduced species.[128]

Wolves who were so famously reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park were trapped in and transported from Canada, and this, at least for some, makes them killable. Animals do not recognize human-imposed borders as lines that cannot or should not be crossed, and some wolves were already crossing from Canada into the state of Montana in the years preceding the reintroduction.[129] In a 2012 interview with Malou Juelskjærand and Nete Schwennesen, Barad reiterated the anti-wolf argument that the reintroduced wolves were of a different species from those originally found in the park. Although not meant as a remark against the reintroduction itself,[130] the argument nevertheless is a dangerous one to repeat—and not entirely true. The wolves were, of course, not the same ones in the sense that the family lineages, traditional den sites, and hunting cultures of the wolves who inhabited Yellowstone before they were eradicated are lost forever—but they were not a different species.

The subspecies that used to roam the Yellowstone wilderness was first identified as *Canis lupus irremotus* and later "became synonymous with the now

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[126] Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 13.
[127] Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 396.
[128] Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway*, 231-236.
[129] Diane Boyd, "To Reintroduce or Not to Reintroduce, That Is the Question," in: *Yellowstone Wolves: Science and Discovery in the World's First National Park*, eds. Douglas W. Smith, Daniel R. Stahler, and Daniel R. MacNulty (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020), 19-20.
[130] Juelskjær and Schwennesen, "Intra-active Entanglements," 21-22.

recognized subspecies *C. l. nubilus*—a subspecies that is believed to have inhabited much of the contiguous western and central United States."[131] *Canis lupus occidentalis*, on the other hand, is a subspecies that roams Canadian and Alaskan regions; because wolves travel long distances and can mate with those from other regions and countries across political borders they are unaware of,[132] constraining one subspecies to a precise geographic location may prove futile. Additionally, physical characteristics, including size, coat color, and prey preference within a species, can vary according to the environment they inhabit.

> The commonly heard anti-wolf rally cry claiming that the government reintroduced a non-native, "larger, more aggressive, Canadian" wolf to Yellowstone has no biological basis. No historical line across northern Montana and Idaho exists that would have kept one group of wolves isolated from another. Instead, taxonomic distinctions in wolves are reflective of our own species' traditional approaches to organizing and naming things in nature.[133]

While the assertion about different wolf species being reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park was inaccurate, Barad nevertheless raised an important point: that reintroductions, restorations, rehabilitations, and, might I add, rewildings "must be taken as questions, not answers," and the questions to confront are those of "agency and responsibility, the violence of all the cuts (including 'restorative' ones), and their constitutive entanglements, with all the associated ethical, epistemological, and ontological implications of the reconfigurations of spacemattering." The reintroduced wolves indeed had "different material histories,"[134] but what they did bring with them were new meanings and new material histories. The Yellowstone wilderness where the wolves were reintroduced to in 1995 was different from what it was before the wolf eradication in the 1920s, just as it differs now, almost thirty years after the

[131] Douglas W. Smith et al., "Historical and Ecological Context for Wolf Recovery," in: *Yellowstone Wolves: Science and Discovery in the World's First National Park*, 8.
[132] For instance, a wolf radio-collared in 1980 in Minnesota was shot in Canada the next year. Steven H. Fritts, "Record Dispersal by a Wolf from Minnesota," *Journal of Mammalogy*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (1983), 166-167.
[133] Smith et al., "Historical and Ecological Context for Wolf Recovery," 9.
[134] Juelskjær and Schwennesen, "Intra-active Entanglements," 22.

reintroduction.[135] The restoration projects are also part of what Barad deemed as worldly entanglements, and the ethical obligation here is responding to the world in which Yellowstone National Park is now home to the generations of wolves whose predecessors were reintroduced. The question why should belonging to a different subspecies warrant labeling these wolves as killable remains one to ponder.

The same question brings attention to issues concerning the status of wolves and canids with wolf genes and their killability. Bridgett vonHoldt, an evolutionary biologist who studies the genetics of the Yellowstone wolves as well as canid hybridization, is an active participant in these discussions. There are "ghost wolves" on Galveston Island, Texas, whose genetics are of particular interest to vonHoldt. These canids look like coyotes, but their untypical appearance reveals the genes of red wolves that became extinct in the wild by 1980 in their DNA—and vonHoldt is following the story these genes tell. Stepping away from the conventional meaning of the word, the genomes from wolves of the past are telling the scientist a story. For her part, vonHoldt realizes the implications of the story she sees in the Galveston Island canids' genomes and tries to work out a way to weave this thread into the ongoing narrative of the red wolf conservation. After all, the newfound genomes may well help boost the impoverished genetic pool of the current red wolf population, which relies on the captive breeding program.

The narrative created through this study is one that can unmake the "killable" status of the Galveston's canids. The relationship between vonHoldt and these "ghost wolves," the red wolves of the past, is one that Donna Haraway would no doubt be fond of. For vonHoldt, the story is an opportunity to "redefine […] the 'canonical

[135] While the designation of Yellowstone as a national park preserved its wilderness, it was not the pristine wilderness as is often mistakenly reiterated. "It is essential to note that after park establishment, poaching, predator control, fire suppression, control of elk numbers, removal of native people, and bison ranching occurred, and that these factors continued to alter ecological relationships." Smith et al., "Historical and Ecological Context for Wolf Recovery," 8-9.

coyote,'" whose "populations may more likely represent a mosaic collection of individuals with diverse histories, with some possibly carrying the remnants of an extinct species."[136] How these studies resonate with vonHoldt, apart from the enthusiasm about contributing new knowledge about coyote and wolf genetics, and whether or how she may have been affected by them, remains within the scientist's private thoughts that are not conveyed in the journal articles. How the studies affected the Galveston Island canids, however, is more evident: from killable species, they were transformed into a potentially valuable group of individuals with past histories.

Kurti, or MT6, is likewise an individual with a story, which Irina Arnold seeks to peer into as her gaze meets the wolf standing right in front of her. He stands unmoving, unblinking, and uncaring; he is already a stuffed exhibit. "He has an effect on me: I feel sorry; I am astonished; I wonder what his fur must feel like. He affects me because I realise that he is vulnerable, endangered and mortal - just like me."[137] In conversation with Donna Haraway's concepts of companion species and becoming-with, as well as different forms of agency described by Mieke Roscher,[138] Irina Arnold tracked the biography, individuality, and agency of this particular wolf. He was first observed in 2015, wandering Lower Saxony where his presence was greeted with apprehension. Because the proximity in the resulting human-wolf encounters was regarded as too unnatural and dangerous, in 2016, the two-year-old

[136] Liz Fuller-Wright, "Red Wolf DNA Found in Mysterious Texas Canines," *Princeton University*, December 18, 2018, accessed 31 January 2023, https://www.princeton.edu/news/2018/12/18/red-wolf-dna-found-mysterious-texas-canines.
[137] Arnold, "Getting Close(r)," 147.
[138] Roscher suggests that "relational agency" applies to intimate, one-on-one relations between human and nonhuman individuals; "entangled agency" refers to relations that are situated within wider networks; "embodied agency" focuses on the physical presence of animals in spaces they can enter into conflicts with human interests; "animal agency" is specific to some species. Mieke Roscher, "Zwischen Wirkungsmacht und Handlungsmacht. Sozialgeschichtliche Perspektiven auf Tierliche Agency," in: *Das Handeln der Tiere. Tierliche Agency im Fokus der Human-Animal Studies*, eds. Sven Wirth et al. (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2016), 57-59.

MT6 was deemed too problematic to be allowed to keep wandering and was legally shot in the first case of lethal control of wolves in Germany.[139]

Regardless of one looks at his infinitely frozen pose and his unseeing gaze today, the stuffed MT6 looks unnatural—certainly more unnatural and unwolfish than his presence in places he chose to roam and in which he was not welcome. The preparation photographs from the taxidermist's workshop, which show Kurti's fur dense with needles, is a sight that would have been shocking if not for the fact that the wolf was already rendered into an object. The distinct marks around MT6's neck where a radio-collar was fastened,[140] just like the radio-collar that used to be fastened around the neck of the illegally killed wolf 10M—with the name "Aurora" still written with colored markers by children who named him thus[141]—are reminders of the asymmetrical relations we enter into with wolves and of the responsibility and importance of ethics that are brought into such meetings.

Those who followed the stories of individual wolves, and those who knew them intimately, are often unable to connect the living creatures with their lifeless taxidermic presence, yet it seems that their inanimate bodies can still affect others. Nick Jans, who knew the Alaskan wolf Romeo, described how, at the end of their shared story, all he could find comfort in was the presence of the wolf's remains. "Romeo's hide [lay] draped over the couch, close enough that I [could] reach over and run my hands through the silk-smooth guard hairs along its shoulders," he recalled. "When I first opened the box containing the tanned skin and bleached skull, I didn't know how I'd react; but I've taken a quiet comfort from their presence."[142] The urge to respond to wolves lingers even after their deaths; indeed, as Haraway

[139] Arnold, "Getting Close(r)," 151-158.
[140] Ulrike Kressel, "'Kurti' ist jetzt museumsreif," *Norddeutscher Rundfunk*, May 22, 2017. accessed 12 August 2019, https://www.ndr.de/kultur/Kurti-ist-jetzt-museumsreif,wolf3114.html.
[141] Ferguson, *Yellowstone Wolves*, 121.
[142] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 234.

points out, "touch ramifies and shapes accountability. Accountability, caring for, being affected, and entering into responsibility are not ethical abstractions."[143] There is a sense of responsibility in Irina Arnold's writing, which leads to asking new questions and seeking answers to our inability, or reluctance, to coexist with wolves. The questions, especially posed in front of Kurti's stuffed body, concern the embodied presence of predators in spaces previously deemed as exclusively human and safe from potential dangers to human interests that wolves bring with them when they transgress the boundaries between the wild and the domestic. "[Kurti's] corporeality builds a bridge between us," Arnold wrote, "making us both subjects in a relationship in this certain situation in this particular shared space."[144] This space is both natural and cultural and is constantly negotiated: how far the human is allowed to venture into and influence the natural, and how far the nonhuman is allowed to step into the "cultural landscape."[145] The story of MT6 repeats itself in lives and deaths of O-Six, Romeo, Spitfire, and 10M—each of these wolves is a "taxidermic statement for the negotiations about how close humans and wolves can(not), respectively, (do not) want to live together."[146]

The question Irina Arnold asks is: how close is too close, and what constitutes unnatural behavior for a wolf? Perhaps the question should not revolve around proximity at all; rather, the ways in which we negotiate this shared space should be considered. For Rosemary-Claire Collard, a geographer focusing on more-than-human environments, "space is not a preexisting, static box that entities move through or not;" instead, "spaces are produced within dynamic, heterogeneous, and

[143] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 36
[144] Arnold, "Getting Close(r)," 147
[145] Arnold, "Getting Close(r)," 142.
[146] Arnold, "Getting Close(r)," 143

often precarious assemblages of entities that are not all human."[147] That large predators such as wolves and cougars co-produce space, making and unmaking it with their presence or lack thereof, is central to Collard's argument. Taxidermic exhibits do not require such careful consideration, unlike wild animals who remain unpredictable regardless of all attempts to control them. Some wolves, such as Kurti or Romeo, may choose to come closer to humans, while O-Six and other wolves would rather remain at a distance. How much of this choice is allowed for animals sets the limits and boundaries of what is deemed natural and unnatural. The reason why wolves who choose to come closer are considered "unwolfish" lies in the cultural confines that are imposed on them: they are expected to remain within the wilderness—or at least the popular concept of it—despite being opportunistic predators who, under the right circumstances, would freely roam around the city centers. How we allow them to act and what statements we make about their presence influence our encounters in such shared spaces.

1.2.3. MEETING WOLVES HALFWAY

The issue comes back to meeting wolves halfway, to responding in an ethical way to their presence and reconfiguring our understanding of what mutual responding may entail. Vicki Hearne—who used to train wolves, among other animals—argued that such mutual responding, for instance, between a scientist and an animal, shapes the meanings and outcomes of the study:

> To the extent that the behaviorist manages to deny any belief in the dog's potential for believing, intending, meaning, etc., there will be no flow of intention, meaning, believing, hoping going on. The dog may try to respond to the behaviorist, but the behaviorist won't respond to the dog's response; […] The

[147] Rosemary-Claire Collard, "Cougar—Human Entanglements and the Biopolitical Un/Making of Safe Space," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2012), 25.

> behaviorist's dog will not only seem stupid, she will be stupid. […] conceptualization is pretty much a function of relationships and acknowledgment, a public affair. It takes two to conceive.[148]

Women and wolves in co-created narratives, through mutual responding, meet each other halfway, becoming with and who they are through such entanglements.

It is important to point out, however, that the concept of becoming-with is better put into practice in the sense of partial connections that allow the human and nonhuman to coexist with or alongside one another, to cooperate or choose to resist, to come close or stay away. Relying on Marilyn Strathern's theory of partial connections,[149] Joanna Latimer in particular sought to distinguish between becoming-with and "being alongside." Criticizing Haraway's concept as rather constraining and insisting on togetherness and intimacy, Latimer proposed temporary and situated relationships between humans and animals, which would foster partial connectivity while preserving divisions.[150] Latimer rightfully raised concerns about the concept of companion species as well, especially about Haraway's focus on becoming-with her dog Cayenne, which is, inevitably, a rather narrow form of relatedness with other animals. Although Haraway attempted to expand the concept beyond the dog and the nonhuman, we are still left with both a very specific circumstance that is given an in-depth analysis (relations between dogs and their partners in the sport of agility) and a very broad idea that objects can also act as companion species, thus blurring the divisions that are, after all, essential aspects of both individual and species' identities.

Collard was similarly cautious of Haraway's theories regarding the affective human-animal encounters and relations, for she claimed they "suggest a sense of

[148] Vicki Hearne, *Adam's Task: Calling Animals by Name* (New York: Knopf, 1986), 58.
[149] Marilyn Strathern, *Partial Connections* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1991).
[150] Joanna Latimer, "Being Alongside: Rethinking Relations amongst Different Kinds," *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 30, No. 7–8 (2013), 77–104.

possession."[151] After all, recognizing animals as individuals and respecting their species' needs is crucial to developing ethics of multispecies coexistence. Wolves need space to thrive, travel, interact with others, find enough prey to sustain themselves, and teach their young how to hunt; such spaces are always shared with other species, and more often than not, they are also shared with humans—yet contrary to Haraway's statement that "[r]esponse and respect are possible only […] with actual animals and people looking back at each other,''[152] not all of the actors need to come into direct, intimate contact to affect and be affected. At the same time, I find the concept of becoming-with open to different ways of relating, to becoming without physical proximity, for Haraway did, in fact, refer to Strathern's theory of partial connections, calling them "the relations of significant otherness."[153] In *The Companion Species Manifesto*, she specified that the process of becoming with the companion species is precisely about those partial connections:[154] "partially assimilating, and partially transforming: these are the actions of companion species."[155]

I suggest that becoming-with is the prerequisite for being alongside and that both can and even should be applied to different circumstances humans and wolves find themselves in. This, I argue, is especially useful in considering past histories and relations, such as between a homesteader and a pair of wolf pups purchased from a hunter, between a naturalist and a wolf pack she encountered only through fragments of their presence, between a biologist and a wolf captured for radio-collaring and followed through telemetry, or between a photographer and a wild wolf observed from afar. Some of these relations began with captivity, while others were

[151] Collard, "Cougar — Human Entanglements," 37-38.
[152] Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway*, 42.
[153] Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, 65.
[154] Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway*, 116-117.
[155] Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, 65.

intermittent and aided with technology or formed entirely without proximity—but none of them were perfectly harmonious. Brett L. Walker, a historian from Montana State University, traced the often violent human relationships with other animals, with a focus on nonhuman agency in environmental history. Regarding one of the rare cases of wolves attacking a human, he concluded that "[i]ntimacy with humans is always unnatural and always dangerous," for both sides of these relationships. "But it is also at this juncture, at the deadly intersection of the natural and unnatural, that these wolves entered history."[156]

The co-created narratives I engage with are suffused with intimacy, physical contact, encounters, and "looking back at each other"—yet none of them are innocent connections. It is precisely because of this that these wolves and women "entered history," and they did so together as companion-agents. Becoming-with indeed creates asymmetrical relations, sometimes violent and deadly—Haraway herself did not argue otherwise—but relations that nevertheless existed and exist within the imperfect human-animal histories. "The knowing self is partial in all its guises, never finished, whole, simply there and original; it is always constructed and stitched together imperfectly, and *therefore* able to join with another, to see together without claiming to be another," she wrote. "[A] scientific knower seeks the subject position not of identity, but of objectivity; that is, partial connection."[157]

Expanding on the concept of partial affinities in relation to scientific practice, Vinciane Despret suggested that allowing one's bodily presence to affect and respond to the observed animal not only co-constitutes meanings in the study but is

[156] Brett L. Walker, "Animals and the Intimacy of History," *History and Theory*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (2013), 47.
[157] Donna J. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (1988), 586.

also a way of adopting a partial and situated perspective of the other.[158] She turned to primatologists Barbara Smuts and Shirley Strum as well as to Farley Mowat[159] as examples of ethologists' unconventional methodologies of study in the field. The scientists' bodily presence, according to Despret, is rarely evident in their writing about the studies they conduct on, among, and with animals. At most, what is involved is the presence of the limitations of the human body that differs from the bodies of the animals whose environments it enters: the inability, for example, to withstand the cold or to adapt to the daily rhythm and mobility of the observed species. This is especially true of scientists studying wild wolves. In order to track animals who can cover 30 miles in a day, radio-telemetry is used; in the cold and dark months in the Arctic, where eyes and bodies would fail, only such devices can detect the presence of wolves.[160] Physical limitations aside, there are also limitations *imposed* on the scientist's body: it cannot, should not, enter into proximity, communication, relation, or affinity with the observed animals, which "is a means to preclude (to prevent or to avoid) the always possible reciprocity of the encounter."[161] If the taboo were to be broken, the scientist would invite criticism, their study would be labeled as sentimental, and their science would lose credibility.

When such situated, embodied connections are allowed and enacted, however, scientists and animals enter a space where new meanings are created, where both are

[158] Vinciane Despret, "Responding Bodies and Partial Affinities in Human-Animal Worlds," *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 30, No. 7–8 (2013), 51–76.
[159] Despite noting that many regard Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* (1963) as a work of fiction, Despret boldly repeats—at least in the article—perhaps the most criticized and rebuked point that Mowat makes in the book: that in the summer months, Arctic wolves feed mainly or even exclusively on mice. At least one study suggests that in parts of the Arctic such as Washington Land, Greenland, where their main ungulate prey (caribou and musk oxen) are scarce or absent, wolves may rely on arctic hares and only additionally lemmings—yet no evidence of wolves feeding mainly or exclusively on mice has been found. Fredrik Dalerum et al., "Exploring the Diet of Arctic Wolves (*Canis lupus arctos*) at their Northern Range Limit," *Canadian Journal of Zoology*, Vol. 96, No. 3 (2018), 277-281.
[160] David L. Mech and Dean H. Cluff, "Movements of Wolves at the Northern Extreme of the Species' Range, Including during Four Months of Darkness," *PLoS ONE*, Vol. 6, No.10 (2011), 1-5.
[161] Despret, "Responding Bodies and Partial Affinities in Human-Animal Worlds," 52-53.

transformed—albeit no doubt in different ways. Here, Despret introduced the notion of "politeness," not only in the sense of avoiding or minimizing the disturbance of the observed animals, but also a politeness of respecting and responding to them, of not acting as a passive, disembodied, and detached presence that observes and to which the animal merely reacts. "The animal does not react," wrote Despret, "he/she responds."[162] For Vera Norwood, "moments of intimate contact" between women naturalists or ethologists and the animals they studied in their own territories "became trophies signifying [their] success as well-behaved guests" on the home grounds of individual animals.[163] Haraway, too, wrote of the scientist's need to be "a polite guest"—in this case, a responsive one—while referring to Barbara Smuts's study of and amidst baboons.[164] In learning how to respond to them, Smuts transformed her own presence, to which the baboons responded with recognizing her "as a *subject* with whom they could communicate."[165] This shift of perspective not only acknowledges a nonhuman capacity for recognition but also opens a possibility to think in terms of the politeness of naming—that is, of considering the different ways through which animals identify each other. Wolves may have their identities encoded in their scent[166] or the frequency and amplitude of their howls;[167] they do not need to rely on our naming.

The concept of politeness is especially useful in terms of coexisting with wild animals, not only as scientists entering their worlds but even more so as "neighbors," as wolfwatchers, photographers, tourists, and ranchers, who need to allow their presence to be transformed by the embodied presence of wolves—what Despret

[162] Despret, "Responding Bodies and Partial Affinities in Human-Animal Worlds," 66.
[163] Norwood, *Made from this Earth*, 245.
[164] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 24.
[165] Smuts, "Encounters with Animal Minds," 295.
[166] Hearne, *Adam's Task*, 8.
[167] Holly Root-Gutteridge et al., "Identifying Individual Wild Eastern Grey Wolves (Canis lupus lycaon) Using Fundamental Frequency and Amplitude of Howls," *Bioacoustics: The International Journal of Animal Sound and its Recording*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2014), 55-66.

would call „attunement."[168] So far, more often than not, it was about resistance in allowing the wolves' presence, both embodied and imagined, and about resistance in letting it affect the presence of others. The perfect scenario, for some, seems to be for the wolves to adapt to them instead. Wolves are indeed known to adapt to changing environments and situations, as a highly flexible species they are, but they need to be met halfway; if there is no human response, no attempt at adapting, the becoming-with, partial connections, and being alongside cannot be realized.

It is worth noting that in seeking the animal point of view, asking questions that would matter to animals—which Vinciane Despret described as the "politeness of 'getting to know'"[169]—scientists often look for solutions to problems the animals may face, from dwindling prey populations to polluted environments. The partial connections that arise from such studies—whether the scientist's embodied presence is involved or not, as using radio-telemetry is also a partial connection—appear to be a by-product that is too often discarded in the name of scientific objectivity but which different practices may readily embrace. Regarding this, the other point Despret raised about the scientific practice is promising: in particular—concurrent with Hearne's thoughts—that the meanings and outcomes of such studies depend on the scientist's standpoint.[170]

In this case, standpoint does not imply that the scientist's gender, for example, determines what meanings they are able to perceive; rather, that diverse standpoints invite different ways of asking questions, moving the standpoints themselves in unexpected directions—ones that follow neither the assumptions of the scientist nor

[168] Vinciane Despret, "The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthropo-zoo-genesis," *Body and Society*, Vol. 10, No. 2-3 (2004), 125.
[169] Vinciane Despret, "Sheep Do Have Opinions," in: *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*, eds. Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, trans. Liz Carey-Libbrecht (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 361.
[170] Despret, "Responding Bodies and Partial Affinities in Human-Animal Worlds," 69.

the preexisting biases of the classical ethology.[171] This, in turn, allows the scientist to be moved as well, to ask new questions.[172] Diane Boyd, a biologist who studied wolves since the late 1970s, recounted a story that illustrates the benefits of "another perspective" that women can offer in the field of wolf research. Paul Paquet, who studied social behavior in captive wolves, at one point employed a woman "unfamiliar with traditional beliefs about wolf pack social structure;" to his surprise, she found "that the dominant female led the pack in behavioral interactions." It was previously believed that the breeding males lead the pack in all aspects. Paquet later observed the pack himself and confirmed the new finding.[173]

Bruno Latour, citing the primatologist Thelma Rowell, referred to giving animals a chance to behave differently—in this instance, for wolves to be unwolfish—and to giving the scientist a chance to make these differences visible. To achieve that, Latour suggested turning to "propositions," which he described as "*offers* made by an entity to relate to another under a certain perspective." They transcend species, making scientists and animals attentive to each other in ways that co-produce meaning. Articulate propositions, unlike the repetitive inarticulate ones, offer more possibilities for all elements to affect each other. Crucially, the differences in perspective, practices, and contexts allow for articulating more interesting propositions, giving animals "an opportunity to be seen," and giving the scientist an opportunity to talk about them in a different way.[174] The "scientist," here and henceforth, is not limited to the conventional meaning of the word; rather, it

[171] Bruno Latour, "A Well Articulated Primatology: Reflections of a Fellow Traveler," in: *Primate Encounters: Models of Science, Gender and Society*, eds. Shirley Strum and Linda Marie Fedigan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 379-381.
[172] Despret, "Sheep Do Have Opinions," 361, 366-368.
[173] Diane Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," in: *Intimate Nature: The Bond Between Women and Animals*, eds. Linda Hogan, Deena Metzger, and Brenda Peterson (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1998), 95.
[174] Latour, "A Well Articulated Primatology," 371-372.

refers to those who ask the questions and co-produce knowledge, including biologists and naturalists but also wolfwatchers and wildlife photographers.

The difference between practices that follow the dominant narratives and those that reveal more articulate meanings does not lie in the gender of the scientist but in the unique questions they ask and the distinct positions from which they view the world. The writings which I call co-created narratives were selected not because the women who studied or lived with wolves had an inherent feminine affinity with the animals, nor that their relations with wolves were special or their knowledge superior, but because they dared to ask new questions, creating well-articulated environments where, as companion-agents and companion species, wolves had an active role in the encounters, research, or cohabitation—where they were "given a chance," where they could respond.

CHAPTER 2: CHALLENGING THE DOMINANT NARRATIVES

2.1. A DIFFERENT QUESTION

In the early 1900s, there were no factual wolf biographies written by biologists or naturalists nor recollections by devoted wolfwatchers. The dominant narratives were spun by hunters and zookeepers, with trapped, killed, or caged wolves as the source of contact for anyone who sought a better understanding of the species. One of those interested in learning more was Ellen Velvin, who spent a considerable amount of time in zoos and menageries, inquiring zookeepers, trainers, and caretakers about wolves in captivity. For stories about wolves in the wild, she consulted hunters. In 1903, when the "nature fakers" controversy began to brew, Velvin spent several weeks at one of Frank C. Bostock's menageries and later edited his volume on training animals.[1] Then, in 1906, she published *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, in which a chapter was devoted to the subject of wolves. The way Velvin wrote about them bore faint traces of narratives that would challenge the dominant ones by asking different questions about who wolves are, what kind of relationships could be developed with them, and how co-created narratives of humans and wolves as companion-agents might be written.

In *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, Ellen Velvin did not introduce the wolf in a manner common to descriptions of the species at the time. In her own words, there was no mention of the wolf as the enemy, vermin, or pest, though she referenced quotes about their apparent treacherousness, viciousness, and cowardice, as Velvin was decidedly not free of the narratives which called them so. "For nearly

[1] Ellen Velvin, "Editor's Note," Foreword to: Frank C. Bostock, *The Training of Wild Animals*, ed. Ellen Velvin (New York: The Century Co., 1903), xi-xii.

three hundred years, similar descriptions of wolves appeared in American natural histories," wrote environmental lawyer Valerie M. Fogleman in her 1989 article, in which she examined the attitudes toward wolves in the United States in hopes that such narratives would not continue to be inherited in times when the wolf eradication programs ended and an era of protections, reintroductions, and natural recolonizations began. Fogleman noted that the wolf was written about in the same way from the sixteenth century all the way into the 1900s, and the American naturalists would echo the European ones' disgust with the species.[2] Despite this, instead of beginning with the derogatory qualities, Velvin asked a question that seemed to have preoccupied her, and around which the chapter and her inquiries revolved: namely, she wondered whether male wolves take care of their pups.[3]

In her correspondence with Theodore Roosevelt, Velvin thanked the president for valuable information on wolves and quoted some of the answers she received from her other correspondents, including one that confirmed wolves as good fathers.[4] Roosevelt was, naturally, skeptical of the theory Velvin was interested in, as he wrote in *Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter* (1905):

> I wish […] that I could get trustworthy information of any instance in which the male wolf […] has remained with his mate and joined in the care of the cubs. In the cases of breeding wolves which have come to my knowledge, the mother has been alone, and the male has not had anything to do with the care of the family.[5]

While Roosevelt found the contradictory opinions interesting, admitting that individual animals can behave differently,[6] he was nevertheless heavily opposed to

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[2] Valerie M. Fogleman, "Attitudes Towards Wolves: A History of Misperception," *Environmental Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1989), 70.
[3] Ellen Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals* (New York: Moffat, Yard & Company, 1906), 175.
[4] Ellen Velvin, *Letter from Ellen Velvin to Theodore Roosevelt*, April 7, 1906, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, , accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o52922.
[5] Theodore Roosevelt, *Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 368
[6] Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, 188.

the overall sentimentality in portraying animals in literature. To him, male wolves taking care of their pups was a romanticized notion held by no others but nature fakers.[7] It is debatable who was the nature faker: those who wrote of wolves with respect and were indeed correct about some of their behaviors, or those who categorized animals into either game or vermin. Roosevelt thought it necessary to remove wolves and other large predators from the land and saw no loss in their disappearance should they not be conserved—yet the ungulate game species, such as bighorn sheep, wapiti, whitetail deer, and moose, he felt, were the epitome of wilderness.[8] For Roosevelt, as for many of his contemporaries, the wolf was "the arch type of ravin, the beast of waste and desolation." Wolves were not yet completely eradicated from the contiguous United States at the time, but their gradual disappearance was already called a "[retreatment] from the advance of civilization."[9] Amidst the available sources of knowledge about the wolf, developing a narrative that challenged the hundreds-year-old one was no doubt a novel approach.

During nearly three years of research, Velvin inquired over a hundred people, "whose word," she wrote, was "absolutely reliable," about the possibility of male wolves staying with their mates to care for the litters. From the answers she managed to gather, the majority claimed that males do not get involved with rearing pups[10]—which shows just how little was known about wolves, how much was assumed on the grounds of their "villainous" nature, and how much, even, was projected onto them according to the stereotypically perceived gender roles. There is, no doubt, a gender bias in the past narratives concerning wolf behavior and social organization, including denying male wolves parental instinct and, in a similar vein, denying

[7] Roosevelt, *Outdoor Pastimes*, 368-369.
[8] Roosevelt, *Outdoor Pastimes*, 273.
[9] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. 2, ed. Herman Hagedorn (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, [1889] 1927), 305.
[10] Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, 176.

female wolves their leadership status in a family, yet this bias is not the only reason for misunderstandings. The information concerning male wolves not taking care of, or even killing pups, was based on keeping and breeding wolves in captivity, in which case unnatural behavior is not unheard of, especially without proper care for the animals. In fact, male wolves not only take care of the pups they fathered but sometimes also of unrelated ones, both behaviors proven by numerous observations and studies carried over the years in the wild,[11] but prior to the 1940s, hardly anyone was invested in studying wolves in their natural habitat or writing about them in a different way.

All of the "reliable authorities" on wolves at the time when Velvin asked her question were zookeepers and hunters. William T. Hornaday, the New York Zoological Park director, was presented as one of them. His sentiment was that among different species, "wolves are the meanest." Velvin further quoted him saying that:

> Of all the wild animals of North America, none are more despicable than wolves. There is no depth of meanness, treachery, or cruelty to which they do not cheerfully descend. They are the only animals on earth which make a regular practice of killing and devouring their wounded comrades and eating their own dead. […] In captivity, no matter how well yarned, well fed or comfortable, a wolf will watch and coax for hours to induce a neighbor in the next cage to thrust through tail or paw, so that he may instantly seize and chew it off without mercy. But in the face of foes capable of defence, even grey wolves are rank cowards, and unless cornered in a den, will not even stop to fight for their own cubs.[12]

John Abernethy, who accompanied Roosevelt on a wolf hunt in 1905 and entertained the president by catching the predators with his bare hands,[13] had a slightly less negative opinion about wolves, calling them loyal and possessed of some kind of

[11] Wolf 8M, for example, adopted 9F's six-month-old pups, who were fathered by 10M, while 21M adopted 40F's pups fathered by 38M. Rick McIntyre, *The Rise of Wolf 8: Witnessing the Triumph of Yellowstone's Underdog* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2019), 55-89.
[12] Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, 85.
[13] John R. Abernathy, *"Catch 'em Alive Jack:" The Life and Adventures of an American Pioneer* (London: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 97-122.

intelligence.[14] Yet this vast knowledge of their habits amounted to little more than how to catch them by chasing the animals on horseback, letting dogs throw themselves at them, jumping off the horse to crush the wolves to the ground and grip their lower jaws so as not to let them sink their "deadly poisonous" teeth into himself.[15] The authorities quoted by Velvin often echoed one another, describing wolves as treacherous, mean, and vicious.

Despite the contradictory and often untruthful information about wolves, Velvin still seemed fascinated by them, "partly because of their beauty, partly because of their quick and graceful movements, and partly because of their wonderful faces, so full of varied expressions: slyness, craftiness and quickness of perception." A somewhat melancholic statement followed her reasoning, as she wrote that the wolves' "absolute control over the eyes and muscles when suffering tortures, and even in the death agony, is truly wonderful. No wolf has ever been known to utter a sound when dying."[16] The resistance of the wolf in the prospect of death was repeated by Velvin throughout the chapter and later related with similar sentiment by the hunters of the last wolves known by names in the first half the twentieth century. It is also echoed in the famous, oft-quoted words by Aldo Leopold, who wrote of the fierce green fire dying in the eyes of the she-wolf he had shot. There was no such interspecies epiphany between Velvin and the captive wolves, however, perhaps lacking in any meaningful encounters. She did not mention any animals by name, and only signs of resistance against their trainers remained vivid in her account.[17] The narratives Velvin inherited were clearly not sufficient in coming close to understanding wolves as a species, let alone as

[14] Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, 179-181.
[15] Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, 178.
[16] Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, 175-176.
[17] Velvin, *Behind the Scenes with Wild Animals*, 185-186.

individuals, and because she remained unconvinced with the existing knowledge, she asked new questions and sought different answers—even after asking over a hundred wolf specialists of her time, whose response was, almost universally, consistent with the dominant narrative.

Wolves were nothing special in captive collections in those days, kept mostly because they were predatory animals who attracted crowds, even if they were not the main attraction, as the species was by no means popular. In 1914, when the Prospect Park Zoo in Brooklyn was raising funds to purchase the animals from Bostock's London-based menagerie, lions, bears, and monkeys were quickly claimed, but *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* had to plead with its readers to buy the wolves, $40 each[18]—there were eight in total, and they received names such as Akela, Dyker, Tip, Bruce, Jungle, Pet, Hungry, and Content from the donors.[19] Wolves were not easy to train, nor were they exotic or exciting in a way that lions and jaguars were. They were commonly seen as being of little value both in the wild and in captivity, and most of them remained forgotten, their histories unrecorded, their names lost to time. Because animals at the menageries were often captured in the wild, their past histories were largely unknown, and unless they were star performers, their histories in captivity went unrecorded as well. Nevertheless, a biography of two wolves who ended up in Bostock's menagerie can be traced through a co-created narrative in a certain frontierswoman's diaries. It was one of those unlikely companionships that had no innocent beginning nor a happy ending, largely because it played out at the time when wolf eradication efforts in the United States were apace.

[18] "Berkeley Asks All, Not Half a Lion," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, October 22, 1914, 6.
[19] "Big Christening Party at New Zoo," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, November 21, 1914, 3.

2.2. ERADICATION EFFORTS

For Evelyn Cameron, a homesteader in the Western frontier, the first encounter with wild wolves likely came around the time she came to Montana, but the first description of such an encounter in her diaries, which she started writing in 1893, is set on a cold and cloudy day in September of that year. Cameron's brother Alec was away, and her husband, Ewen, was out in the pasture with the horses. She stood alone, watching two big wolves from afar, one of them with an almost completely white fur.[20] She would not see any more signs of wolves until November 10, when she inspected an antelope Ewen had shot two days earlier. The carcass lay under the hill, no more than a backbone and legs left, and she thought wolves must have torn into the flesh. The predators gathered by a spring during the night, their paws treading on soft mud. The next day was cold, leaving their tracks frozen; Cameron passed them as she rode on through the badlands. The next evening, while outside, she could hear the wolves' distant calls.[21] Cameron could not know, at the time, that the howling would grow quiet in the following years and that she was chronicling the wolf's decline in Montana in her diaries.

Evelyn Cameron, born Evelyn J. Flower in 1868 in England, lived her early years in privilege until 1889, when she married Ewen Cameron, with whom she left for Montana. Their honeymoon trip to hunt big game eventually turned into settling there. When the Camerons did not fare well on their first ranch, they moved to another, to the side of the Yellowstone River. In her homesteading life, Cameron did

[20] Evelyn J. Cameron, *1893 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, September 21, 1893, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/83524.
[21] Cameron, *1893 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, November 10-12, 1893.

not shy away from jobs the ranch demanded, be it roping and branding cattle or breaking horses; she also sold vegetables from her garden and took in boarders, one of whom would introduce her to photography. She purchased her first camera in 1894 and began to study photography in her free time. Usually, because the ranch made her busy from dawn to dusk, she worked on her negatives during the night. The nineteenth century was not a prime time for photographers on the frontier, and women photographers especially were something of a novelty, but Cameron was not to be deterred. To earn a living, she worked as a photographer, charging $3 for a dozen photographs or 25 cents each. Her photographic endeavors focused on cowboys, shepherds, homesteaders, and wolf hunters—then called "wolfers"—but she was equally fascinated by the Western landscape and its wilderness and would take photographs of the wildlife that served as illustrations for her husband's nature articles.[22] None of them featured wild wolves, too elusive to be captured on her camera, unless already dead.

The sight of wolves in Montana was not uncommon, but it comes as no surprise that they would not stand still to pose for photographs. Although shooting with a camera is not lethal, "there is [still] something predatory in the act of taking a picture," noted Susan Sontag in her book about photography. She likened the act of photographing to hunting[23]—which happened not only in Yellowstone National Park but in other national parks as well with the advent of this new kind of trophy. Cameron hunted both with a gun and with her camera, yet valued the trophies collected with the latter method the most. Some trophies, however, were challenging to obtain. Back then, wolves were being trapped and killed for bounties, and they were wary of human presence, which usually meant danger. Cameron's brother

[22] Donna M. Lucey, *Photographing Montana, 1894-1928: The Life and Work of Evelyn Cameron* (Missoula: Mountain Press, 2001), 9-157.
[23] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), 14.

would always set the traps and engage in lively discussions with her husband about baits for the predators, as he thought he could "make a fortune killing wolves."[24] Cameron was no stranger to such talks. Not only was she familiar with the practices of running down wolves, roping them, and poisoning wolf pups in their dens, but she also watched wolves being skinned and admired their pelts. She photographed wolfers with dead wolves across their saddles and participated in hunting and trapping wolves herself.

On one such occasion in August 1894, the Camerons were invited to witness young wolves being roped on a neighboring ranch. Four of them were already roped, the remaining six to be a part of the show. Ewen promised they would go. The smoke from prairie fires hung in the air when the Camerons left early the next day to join in on the hunt. Three wolves were roped, and one was already shot dead, but the party was still on the lookout for the mother wolf and her five remaining pups. They followed the tracks down the river but did not find the wolves. Back at the ranch, all four pups roped the previous day were already skinned, their pelts hanging apart from their bodies.[25] The eradication efforts were to intensify with many more cruel methods in the coming years. In 1895, Cameron noted that dogs, too, fell victim in this war against the wolf, as hunters, tempted by the $3 bounty on wolves, "put poison everywhere," killing all the sheepmen's dogs in consequence.[26] She described cattle, horses, and deer being shot specifically to bait them with poison. The Camerons' wolfer had his own dog poisoned on such a site intended for wolves. On October 22, 1898, Cameron wrote: "[a]n outfit on this side was given orders to kill

[24] Cameron, *1893 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, March 1, 1893.
[25] Evelyn J. Cameron, *1894 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, August 27, 1894, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/80369.
[26] Evelyn J. Cameron, *1895 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, May 1, 1895, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/80370.

every wolf sighted, or kill the horses in trying to do so. They have run down & killed 100 wolves so far!"[27]

An estimated 200,000 wolves roamed Montana in 1800. The Lewis and Clark expedition encountered them frequently while crossing the state in 1805 and 1806, and fur trappers were not far behind the explorers. Back then, the fur market relied upon the beaver, but around 1850, the trade shifted its focus to buffalo, deer, and wolves. In 1853 alone, the American Fur Company shipped over 3,000 wolf pelts from Fort Benton on the Missouri River. Later, in the 1860s, the annual number was between 5,000 and 10,000.[28] As the skin trade developed, Montana's land—abounding in wolves up to about 1885—attracted men who would later become the first wolfers. When the great buffalo herds were being decimated and their bodies strewn across the prairie, wolves who fed on them thrived, and their numbers rose. Buffalo hunters killed these large herbivores either for sport or for the animals' hides and tongues, leaving the rest of the bodies to rot. Such an abundance of food lured in predators, and soon they became less wary around the hunters. This, in turn, made killing wolves easier. Wolfers baited each buffalo carcass they produced with strychnine, and just one such site could poison dozens of wolves. The price for wolf hides rose gradually from $0.50 and $1 between the 1830s and 1840s to $2 and $2.50 in the 1870s. The pelts could bring from $2,000 to $3,000 in just a few months if one killed enough wolves.[29]

Even so, wolves held on until the coming of the railroads in the 1860s and 1870s. With the railroads came cattle, and stockmen turned their herds loose on the

[27] Evelyn J. Cameron, *1898 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, October 22, 1898, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/80373.
[28] Mollie Yoneko Matteson, "The Land of Absence," in: *Place of the Wild*, ed. David Clarke Burks (Washington: Island Press, 1994), 97-98.
[29] Edward E. Curnow, "The History of the Eradication of the Wolf in Montana," MA Thesis, University of Montana, 1969), 25-30.

Montanan landscape, unfenced and unprotected. A number of animals died due to weather conditions, while a fraction fell prey to predators. With the buffalo herds virtually gone and the domesticated beef being readily available, wolves did the only thing that made sense: they switched to livestock. While cattlemen could not control the weather, they could control the wilderness around them. Local bounty systems were set up, and ranchers hired wolfers to deal with the problematic predators. In Montana, a bounty for wolves was passed in 1883[30] with a promised $1 per wolf. It was first repealed just four years later due to the staggering number of wolves being turned in for bounty—so many, in fact, that the state could not pay for them. The stockmen, however, would not give up. In 1891, the bounty was reinstated, and the price for a dead wolf doubled to $2. A decade later, the bounty on pups was increased to $5—the same amount as on adult wolves—resulting in entire litters being killed in their dens.

Moreover, in 1905, a law in Montana called for veterinarians to capture wolves, infect them with sarcoptic mange, and turn them loose so they would infect other wolves; the idea was previously proposed in 1893.[31] The disease, caused by a mite that burrows into the animal's skin and causes hair loss along with skin lesions, was still carried by foxes and coyotes after its introduction, and infections among the reintroduced Yellowstone wolves emerged in 2007. While many wolves recover from it, mange is still a factor in the wolf mortality rates[32] and was an indirect cause of the Druid Pack's extinction in 2010.[33] The same year mange was introduced to the canine population, the state of Montana paid $10 on adult wolves, and the kill tallies

[30] Peter Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 36–37.
[31] Curnow, "The History of the Eradication of the Wolf in Montana," 71-76.
[32] Paul Cross et al., "Energetic Costs of Mange in Wolves Estimated from Infrared Thermography," *Ecology*, Vol. 97, No. 8 (2016), 1939.
[33] Emily S. Almberg et al., "Parasite Invasion Following Host Reintroduction: a Case Study of Yellowstone's Wolves," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, Series B: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 367, No. 1604 (2012), 2845.

reflected the drastic decline in population numbers.[34] The history of wolves in Montana—mirrored in other states where eradication efforts were apace—was recorded in Cameron's diaries on a personal scale that showed individual attitudes toward these animals. In this context, space, and time, having any relationship with wolves beyond that of the hunter and the hunted was unconventional, and yet as the wolf eradication efforts were gaining momentum, a curious circumstance would lead Cameron from hunting wolves to caring for them.

2.3. A DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIP

On a windy afternoon of April 10, 1907, Cameron went to the calf barn to help Ewen make perches for an eagle before setting out to see their hired wolfer, Richard Brown, to inquire about the captured bird. Brown would not bring the eagle until the next day, however, for he was busy with month-old wolf pups. He had just killed six of them, left one in the den to lure in their mother, and took the two who were still alive back to his tent. Ewen bought them for $5 each—the same price the state would pay for dead pups—and the couple brought them back home. Acquiring the wolf pups was the highlight of Cameron's day, written in red ink in her diary; for the wolves, it must have been a stressful experience. The pups were restless, and during the night, they scrambled out of their box, prompting Cameron to wake up to tend to them.[35] "When introduced into the house," wrote Ewen Cameron in his article about wolves in Montana, "[the pups] walked up and down by the walls like caged

[34] Curnow, "The History of the Eradication of the Wolf in Montana," 83.
[35] Evelyn J. Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, April 11, 1907, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/80382.

beasts."[36] Even though they had only one night to adapt to their new surroundings, Cameron showed the wolves to two men who came to visit the next day. Soon, the smoke-brown-furred pups would attract even more attention as curiosity drove others to come to see them. After over a week of being fed porridge and rice with milk and raw eggs, the wolves' daily diet would consist of meat and milk.[37] Such records of daily life with the pups would continue throughout the diary, in time becoming a co-created narrative in which the wolves were made visible as individuals and companion-agents.

Acquiring the pups seems to have piqued Cameron's interest in wolves. On April 14, 1907, she went to see the wolfer, who promised to lead her to a wolf den for her to photograph. Brown had a job on another ranch that day, however, which meant Cameron had to look for the den alone. She tried to locate a den in which pups were born the previous summer, yet after a few hours spent searching and waiting out a storm, Cameron turned back home: "[p]orcupine [and] mountain rat dens [were] all I saw."[38] With directions from a neighboring ranch, she finally managed to locate two wolf dens several weeks later, one of which she photographed from a lowered perspective,[39] on the same level a breeding female or male coming to the den to feed the pups would have been. In one of such dens, the two wolves she kept at the ranch were born several weeks before, and they would flee into the Camerons' den-like root cellar when approached by strangers.[40]

The female was named Tussa, after a captive wolf in Llewelyn Lloyd's *Field Sports of the North of Europe* (1830), while the brother was called Weecharpee,

[36] Ewen S. Cameron, "The Wolf in Montana," unpublished manuscript, quoted in: Donna M. Lucey, *Photographing Montana, 1894-1928: The Life and Work of Evelyn Cameron* (Missoula: Mountain Press, 2001), 106.
[37] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, April 23, 1907.
[38] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, April 14, 1907.
[39] Evelyn J. Cameron, *Wolf Den*, 1907, photograph, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/73307.
[40] Lucey, *Photographing Montana*, 107.

which, as Cameron explained in a letter to her niece, meant "starlight." She described her life with the pups further: "I would go in the evening to the creek & sometimes when called they would plunge into the water & swim across to me so full of delight." Cameron allowed herself to become attuned to the wolves; when Tussa and Weecharpee refused to come when called by their names, Cameron would "howl like a wolf"—perhaps a more polite way to communicate with them—to which the wolves responded by coming to her, and "they would try to lick [her] all over in their sympathy [and] howl themselves in concert."[41] Their presence gave her life an additional rhythm, as feeding the wolves each day and securing them at nights punctuate almost every diary entry from the time she shared with them. Cameron would not let the pups out for long or at all if she thought the day was too cold for them,[42] and she was worried about Tussa when the she-wolf got bitten by a snake.[43] Soon, the wolves started following her around.[44]

By the end of April, Cameron was quite enamored of the wolves, noticing their intelligence, calling them "sweeties"[45] and playing with them often. In fact, perhaps the most vivid descriptions of the wolves come from Cameron's accounts of mutual affection involving touch: playing with and petting the pups, chasing around with Tussa,[46] or the she-wolf pulling Evelyn's hair loose. There was mutual curiosity and engagement involved, and the wolves did not merely react in this unlikely companionship. Cameron, too, responded to them and allowed herself to be transformed by their presence. For Donna Haraway, the correct questions to ask here would be whether the wolves could play *with* Cameron and whether Cameron

[41] Evelyn J. Cameron, *Letter to Betty Evelyn Edwards*, 1907, quoted in: Donna M. Lucey, *Photographing Montana, 1894-1928: The Life and Work of Evelyn Cameron* (Missoula: Mountain Press, 2001), 106.
[42] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, April 26, 1907.
[43] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, August 9, 1907.
[44] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, June 11, 1907.
[45] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, April 30, 1907.
[46] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, May 5, 1907.

learned to play with these wolves in particular and to respond to their invitation to play. "Weecharpee played with me,"[47] she wrote in her diary, indicating that the wolves had an active role in this relationship and that responses to agency were mutual. Cameron would howl to them, and they howled back. She did not extend the same way of relating to other wolves, but it certainly influenced how any future encounters might have developed had wolves not been close to being almost completely eradicated in those years.

Evelyn held no bias against wolves, nor did she find their behavior similar to the common descriptions at the time. Amused, she wrote of Tussa and Weecharpee playing with a black kitten: "[s]he is boss, & they run from her."[48] At first, Cameron would try to take the cat from the wolves for fear she would get hurt, but the pups proved gentle with the kitten, and their play was mutual as well. While in his article Ewen wrote of the wolves' gentleness with other animals and of Weecharpee catching and carrying "a tame goshawk without injury to the bird,"[49] in her diaries Cameron noted that her husband berated the Weecharpee for chasing cattle,[50] which she personally found to be done "entirely in the spirit of play." The cows, she continued, were not "the least afraid of the wolves."[51] Ewen was also impersonal when writing about the wolves, not using their names or pronouns other than "it," his account rendering them anonymous "male" and "female" pups. Evelyn would usually write intimately of the animals she knew, including horses and cows; the wolves were not merely "male" and "female" for her either, but "brother" and "sister."[52]

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[47] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, June 19, 1907.
[48] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, May 30, 1907.
[49] Cameron, "The Wolf in Montana," quoted in: Lucey, *Photographing Montana*,107.
[50] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, July 27, 1907.
[51] Cameron, *Letter to Betty Evelyn Edwards*, quoted in: Lucey, *Photographing Montana*, 107.
[52] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, April 13, 1907.

Cameron's attachment to the wolves was evident from her diary. On August 10, 1907, she wrote very clearly in red ink: "wolves 5 months old today."[53] After being asked how she could get so close as to photograph wolves, Cameron confessed in a letter to her mother: "Of course these were tame wolves which I brought up from the time they were a month old."[54] Nevertheless, their companionship was by no means harmonious. The wolves were not the same as the dogs the Camerons were used to keeping, proving challenging to handle. In the house and outside on the ranch, they were destructive, chewing ropes that kept horses tied to a picket and tearing sacks with flour in the pantry. For the latter, Cameron thrashed Weecharpee with a whip: "He messed over kitchen floor in consequence. Cleaned that up."[55] Soon, she began putting collars on the pups and chaining them;[56] on some photographs, the collars and chains around the wolves' necks are clearly visible when they were made to pose with people who were strangers to them.[57]

When Cameron did not document people's daily lives on the frontier, she turned her camera to wildlife and landscapes surrounding her. Tussa and Weecharpee, at the time, were confined to one world yet belonged to another, and the juxtaposition is striking in the photographs. Cameron was especially fond of photographing young women from neighboring ranches with the pups on their laps or in their arms, but the wolves would always try to pull away, almost all photographs marked with their resistance and blurred from their movements.[58]

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[53] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, August 10, 1907.
[54] Evelyn J. Cameron, *Letter to Elizabeth Lee Flower*, December 20, 1907, quoted in: Lucey, *Photographing Montana*, 131.
[55] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, June 20, 1907.
[56] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, May 27, 1907.
[57] Evelyn J. Cameron, *Jetta Hamilton Grey with Wolf Pup*, 1907, photograph, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/72956.
[58] Evelyn J. Cameron, *Jetta Hamilton Grey Holding Tussa and Weecharpee*, 1907, photograph, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/72912; *Jetta Hamilton Grey and Wolf Pup*, 1907, photograph, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023,

"When two months old," wrote Ewen Cameron, "their gambols and innocent appearance constantly tempted lady visitors to try and caress them, but the ungracious reception accorded to these overtures soon repelled the most enthusiastic lover of animals." To let the many curious guests see the wolves, they had to be chained to a post, or else they would flee or become aggressive. Tussa and Weecharpee were the most hostile, however, toward Richard Brown upon his visit, the same wolfer who captured the pups and killed their family. Cameron's husband feared that the wolves could also pose a threat to her, as she was fearless with Tussa and Weecharpee:

> Both pups were devoted to her, the female especially displaying as much affection as any dog could do; but the male […] was not good-tempered like his sister and especially resented being chained up. When five months old he often emitted horrible snarls and seized my wife's hand threateningly—albeit restraining himself from biting hard. She, nevertheless, persisted in playing with him without gloves, and always treating him precisely like a pet dog, and it was clear that any day he might lose his self-control so far as to inflict a dangerous bite with his permanent teeth.[59]

The wolves were already outgrowing their adorable puppy stage and were fast becoming the predators the Camerons used to hunt. Although Evelyn did not seem to feel hatred toward the species despite often describing horses and cattle being attacked and wounded by wolves, others did not share the same sentiment. On August 13, 1907, Cameron reported that her husband "met a drummer who asked for a gun to shoot [their] wolves with."[60]

Although brought up by Evelyn, the pups were still wild animals, and they were still wolves living in times when hunting and killing them was commonplace. Cameron would partake in both worlds in the few months she shared with Tussa and Weecharpee, but their time together would not last. On July 13, her husband "wrote

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https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/73374; *Jetta Hamilton Grey Holding Weecharpee and Tussa in Her Lap*, 1907, photograph, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/73305.

[59] Cameron, "The Wolf in Montana," quoted in: Lucey, *Photographing Montana*, 109.

[60] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, August 13, 1907.

to [Bostock] of Coney Island asking $50 for wolves, FOB."[61] The next month, Tussa and Weecharpee were loaded into a wagon, in which they traveled two days on their way to the nearest town. Although they were put on a straw and Cameron regularly brought them water and fed them meat from a restaurant, the wolves were chained inside, and with the temperatures reaching 40°C in the shade in those hot and sultry days,[62] they were uncomfortable. Weecharpee especially hated it, and he had to be handled with thick gloves when removed from the wagon.[63] The wolves stayed in a barn in town for two days before the Camerons returned. Tussa slipped her collar and fled earlier that day, and was seen near the house of one of Cameron's neighbors.[64] Evelyn rode three miles looking for Tussa before the wolf "came bounding out of a thick plum patch & nearly tore [them] to pieces with delight. Alas! She was led back & so ended her last run on her beloved prairie."[65] By the end of August, the wolves were shipped to Frank C. Bostock's menagerie in Dreamland, an amusement park at Coney Island, New York. "I miss wolves," Cameron would later write.[66]

Bostock owned numerous menageries over the years. In 1901, his Baltimore-based zoo burned down, along with around 300 animals who died in their cages, including at least six wolves.[67] The story repeated itself in 1911 when fire destroyed Dreamland Park. Tussa and Weecharpee might have perished there, along with over seventy other animals who, terrified, tried to escape their cages when the buildings started to burn. Caretakers were ordered to shoot the animals instead of letting them burn to death, but they had to flee themselves to escape the fire.[68] That same year, the bounty on wolves in Montana reached $15. When the U.S. Department of

[61] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, July 13, 1907.
[62] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, August 17, 1907.
[63] Lucey, *Photographing Montana*, 109.
[64] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, August 21.
[65] Lucey, *Photographing Montana*, 109.
[66] Cameron, *1907 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, August 31, 1907.
[67] "The Zoo Disaster," *The Baltimore Sun*, February 1, 1901, 12.
[68] "All Attractions Gone or Charred," *The Brooklyn Citizen*, May 27, 1911, 3.

Agriculture's Biological Survey took over the predator control, professional hunters and trappers were hired to kill wolves.[69] The ones captured by cowboys were either strangled—in a way that Blanca was killed in Seton's account—or roped between the horses who were spurred to go in opposite directions until the wolf was torn apart. Some wolves had their muzzles wired shut and were then turned loose to starve to death; others still were doused in gasoline and set on fire.[70] How Tussa and Weecharpee died is unknown, but at least one wolf is reported to have burned to death in the Dreamland fire.[71] It is possible they did not live to see the conflagration, or they could have been among the rescued animals; perhaps they were shipped to yet another menagerie or zoo and renamed, like the eight wolves purchased for the Prospect Park Zoo from Bostock's menagerie in London in 1914. Whichever might be the case, the only known part of Tussa and Weecharpee's biography was the one they shared with Evelyn Cameron and which remains in the diaries, correspondence, and photographs; through them, they entered history together—as companion-agents.

2.4. THE LAST WOLVES

The wolves hunted, trapped, and killed in Montana between the 1890s and 1920s are often described in numbers, their individual histories lost among the statistical data. For Cameron, too, they were anonymous predators she saw often and hunted on occasion. Yet after 1900, mentions of wolves became less and less frequent in her diaries, with scarcely any until 1907, when she started living with Tussa and Weecharpee on the ranch. Later still, she would only report wolf tracks but no sightings. Where wolves once were plentiful, now they seemed to be absent; through

[69] Curnow, "The History of the Eradication of the Wolf in Montana," 83-85.
[70] Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves*, 37.
[71] "All Attractions Gone or Charred," 3.

the eyes and diaries of Evelyn Cameron, Tussa and Weecharpee were among the last wolves in Montana. She did not mention going on any more wolf hunts after her brief experience with the two pups. Wolves were scarce by then, which could have been the reason, but it is also possible that her entanglement with Tussa and Weecharpee, however brief, made her less inclined to hunt their kind. In the life of the homesteaders, wolves were often experienced through hunting, defending livestock from them, assessing depredation damages, or watching their pelts hanging lifelessly. Tussa and Weechapree had personalities, showed agency, and resisted. In Cameron's diaries, they became visible as individuals.

In her last diary from 1928, several months before her death, Evelyn Cameron reported a single sighting of a timber wolf.[72] In 1933, half a decade after the bounty system in Montana was first initiated and over 111,000 wolves were officially killed for it,[73] the wolf was no more, and the bounty was repealed.[74] It was evident not only from Cameron's diaries but also, perhaps most of all, from the absence wolves left behind in the environment they used to inhabit that the early twentieth-century eradication efforts were rather successful. The surviving wolves were wary animals who learned to avoid traps and poison, and the longer they avoided capture or death, the more their infamy grew, along with the hunters' frustration.[75] "The hard-to-get wolves had reputations and so did the men who took them," wrote Jody Emel in her article about the wolf eradication in the United States.[76] Stories about these wolves typically involved descriptions of their daring and destructive exploits and predations on livestock, the hunter's relentless pursuit and eventually not so much outsmarting

[72] Evelyn J. Cameron, *1928 Diary of Evelyn Cameron*, March 4, 1928, Montana History Portal, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://mtmemory.recollectcms.com/nodes/view/80402.
[73] Michael D. Wise, *Producing Predators: Wolves, Work, and Conquest in the Northern Rockies* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 33-34.
[74] Barry H. Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men* (New York: Scribner, 1978), 183.
[75] Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves*, 38.
[76] Jody Emel, "Are You Man Enough, Big and Bad Enough? Ecofeminism and Wolf Eradication in the USA," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 13, No. 6 (1995), 719.

as overpowering them with traps, guns, and brute force—not unlike John Abernathy's descriptions of his wolf hunts. When the wolf was finally caught, sometimes he or she put up a vicious fight and, when unable to fight anymore, locked gaze with the hunter before his or her demise. Quite often, the hunters also expressed their regret for killing the animal who seemed smart enough to elude them for so long, which nevertheless did not stop them from pulling the trigger. "This ability to admire what one has murdered requires a curious detachment," Emel pointed out.[77] Although these "last" wolves were given names, their status as killable species and individuals was the core of the "man against the wolf" narratives that prevailed at the time, with only a single possible relationship between a human and a wolf: that of the hunter and the hunted.

The relentlessly pursued wolves were given names such as the Custer Wolf, Three Toes, or Snowdrift; the latter, a white wolf killed in the 1920s, was commonly believed to be among the last wolves in Montana. When these named individuals were being killed during the predator control programs that targeted wolves across the contiguous United States and southern Canada,[78] Edward Heber McCleery, a physician living in Kane, Pennsylvania, decided to acquire some of their pups for his collection to breed them in captivity. McCleery claimed to have obtained several pups fathered by Snowdrift, naming them Boreas, Diana, Montana, Lobo, and Silvermoon. In his book *The Lone Killer* (1941), McCleery reported that a wolfer caught Lady Snowdrift "in front of the den, while she was distressed to reach her pups." According to wolfer Don Stevens and ranger Stacey Eckert, after Snowdrift's mate was killed, the wolf "plainly had committed suicide by walking into traps, of which he knew," noting that it was not unusual for male wolves whose mates and

[77] Emel, "Are You Man Enough, Big and Bad Enough?", 724.
[78] Marco Musiani and Paul C. Paquet, "The Practices of Wolf Persecution, Protection, and Restoration in Canada and the United States," *BioScience*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (2004), 50–60.

pups were killed. Yet attached to these words was a photograph of an exhausted and trapped Snowdrift.[79] After the outlaw wolf was killed, an admonishment appeared in a newspaper: "Why such a super-wolf was not spared and sent to some Zoo is a mystery, which only the killer's psychology can fathom."[80] Another newspaper called the killing of Snowdrift and his mate "the slaughter of two of the rarest animals in the nation."[81] Selling wolves to zoos or killing them outright seemed to be the only two options, for adjusting according to the presence of wild wolves in their habitat was hardly considered. McCleery thought the only way to preserve the wolves was to capture the remaining ones and keep them safe from hunters—and well away from their home grounds.

The five pups sent to McCleery were not the only offspring of famous outlaw wolves who were up for sale. McCleery reportedly owned a pup of Three Toes and two pups of the Custer Wolf as well, while other wolves ended up as mascots and pets for private individuals, all destined for captivity.[82] Like in any captive situation where the wolves are not kept according to the standards and knowledge available today, their behavior at McCleery's park[83] was not an adequate source of learning about wolves in their natural habitats. In the 1930s, the admission price was 15 cents

[79] Edward Heber McCleery, *The Lone Killer* (Pittsburgh: J. D. St. Pierre Printing Co., 1929), 2.
[80] "Dr. McCleery's Wolf Farm," *Altoona Tribune*, January 12, 1924, 6.
[81] "Fierce Buffalo-wolves of West Tamed by Kane Physician on Four-acre Ranch," *The Pittsburgh Press*, February 20, 1927, 18.
[82] Edward Heber McCleery, *The Only Lobo Wolves In The World*, leaflet, 1940, *Dr. McCleery Lobo Wolves Digital Archive*, accessed 31 January, 2023, http://www.mccleerywolves.com/items/show/269; A. A. Nicolas, *From the Den of the Great Custer Wolf*, between 1929 and 1949, photograph, *Dr. McCleery Lobo Wolves Digital Archive*, accessed 31 January, 2023, http://www.mccleerywolves.com/exhibits/show/photos/item/478.
[83] Today, the park—now a sanctuary owned by Wolf Haven International—houses around 30 wolves who are well cared for. In 1980, the Pennsylvania wolves found their permanent residence in Bridger, Montana. They are no longer bred and are to remain at the sanctuary as long as they live. Brett French, "Descendants of Historic Pennsylvania Wolves Live in Montana," *The Spokesman-Review*, January 10, 2019, accessed 31 January 2023, https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2019/jan/10/descendants-of-historic-pennsylvania-wolves-live-i.

for children and 25 cents for adults,[84] not unlike the admission prices in Dreamland back in 1911, with wolves, perhaps including Tussa and Weecharpee, displayed alongside other animals for the crowd's amusement. There was little interest in learning wolves' habits in the wild until the late 1930s, when naturalists undertook studies and observations that were among the first of their kind.

[84] Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, *Pennsylvania: a Guide to the Keystone State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 370

CHAPTER 3: LIVING ALONGSIDE WOLVES

3.1. A DIFFERENT METHOD

In May 1937, naturalist John Stanwell-Fletcher stayed at McCleery's park for two days to observe the captive wolves, some of them possibly the descendants of the legendary outlaws. At the time, Stanwell-Fletcher's wife—whom he met and married earlier the same year—set out to the Tionesta Forest with her father to study flora and fauna of that area.[1] Born on January 4, 1906, in Germantown, Pennsylvania, and raised in Susquehanna County, Theodora Cope Stanwell-Fletcher was particularly taken with nature since childhood and later chose to study vertebrate ecology, ornithology, and botany at Cornell University. Her thesis for the master of science degree, "Some Observations of the Vertebrate Ecology of a Pennsylvania Mountain Farm," which she researched in the field between 1931 and 1932, consisted of observations and some autobiographical narrative—a rather unconventional approach supported by her professors. Stanwell-Fletcher was well aware of the unusual aspects of her methods, just as she knew her opinions and interpretations were not adhering to the dominant ones among scientists. At times, she even abandoned the scientific rigor to indulge in lyrical nature writing, describing her yearning to belong in times when encountering wolves and other predators on her path would have been common, but which was impossible once these species were eradicated, especially in her home state.[2] When the opportunity to live alongside wild wolves in British Columbia presented itself, Stanwell-Fletcher did not hesitate to enter into a shared

[1] John Stanwell-Fletcher, *Notes on Wolves*, 1937, Haverford College Library, Haverford, PA, Special Collections, Quaker Collection, Woodbourne Orchards and family of Francis R. Cope Jr. Papers, Coll. no. 1230.
[2] Marcia Myers Bonta, "Theodora Cope Stanwell-Fletcher" in: *American Nature Writers*, Vol. 2, ed. John Elder (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1996), 848-849.

space in which they could become companion species. It was a markedly different approach made possible by following her methods of studying and writing about animals, the results of which were published in *Driftwood Valley* (1946).

Before she left for British Columbia, Stanwell-Fletcher earned Ph.D. in vertebrate ecology in 1936. In her dissertation, "Observations on the Vertebrate Ecology of Some Pennsylvania Virgin Forests," she did not abandon the unconventional style of writing or methods of study, emphasizing that animals are individuals whose lives are not only about survival. She insisted that animals she observed played and found pleasure both in certain activities and in the simple act of living,[3] and was no less adamant in dispelling misconceptions and negativity toward certain species, especially predators, writing that they "may well be more beneficial than harmful in helping to maintain a balance of healthy wild animal life in any given region."[4] To Stanwell-Fletcher, the balance was disrupted once the predators were ruthlessly eradicated in the Pennsylvanian wilderness, and she wrote in hopes of preserving the memory of its past, relatively untouched by human hand.[5] To this end, she quoted—among other sources—an article from 1896, published about the time when the last wolves in the state were killed:

> I have more than once found dead wolves lying about one of these elk rocks, telling mutely, but eloquently, the tragic story of the pursuit of the elk by the wolves, his coming to bay on the rock, the battle and the elk's victory. The elk was not always victor, though, in such battles with wolves, and I have frequently found the stripped skeleton of one lying among the skeletons of wolves he had killed before being himself vanquished by their savage and hungry fellows.[6]

She still seemed to long for times and space where wolves could be encountered, writing about the "seemingly unlimited stretches of great forest wilderness" of the

[3] Theodora Morris Cope, "Observations on the Vertebrate Ecology of Some Pennsylvania Virgin Forests," Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University, 1936, 27-28, 179.
[4] Cope, "Observations on the Vertebrate Ecology of Some Pennsylvania Virgin Forests," 185.
[5] Cope, "Observations on the Vertebrate Ecology of Some Pennsylvania Virgin Forests," 2.
[6] Noah Parker, "Hunting Pennsylvania's Elk," *The New York Times*, April 12, 1896, 32, quoted in: Theodora Morris Cope, "Observations on the Vertebrate Ecology of Some Pennsylvania Virgin Forests," Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University, 1936, 33.

past, where the "sight of an elk, wolf, cougar, marten, otter, or thousands of wild pigeons was a common occurrence."[7] The year after completing her Ph.D., her wish to enter such a space was granted.

In August 1937, the Stanwell-Fletchers left behind Pennsylvania, where the last wolves in the contiguous United States were kept and bred in captivity, and set out to Driftwood Valley in British Columbia to follow in the tracks of those who were still wild. With their shared passion for and curiosity about wildlife, both Theodora and John previously traveled to the Canadian Arctic, where wolf populations remain relatively stable. Theodora especially felt at home in such remote places, where the ecological balance had not yet been destroyed and where predators such as wolves still lived—and where she could encounter them. The Stanwell-Fletchers' choice to travel to the Canadian wilderness came about not because one followed the other, as husband and wife, but because both of them longed for it separately;[8] to live in a place such as this was Theodora's dream.

From the beginning, Stanwell-Fletcher kept noting in her diary how a woman of slight stature venturing into a largely uninhabited land with wild, potentially dangerous animals prowling about was unimaginable, and she was adamant about challenging this view. Large predators such as wolves were not a species to be feared, for she believed no animals would attack humans unless dire circumstances called for it,[9] and so, out there in the wilderness, she once "undressed on a small sandy spit where [her] footprints mingled with the very fresh prints of a bear," and plunged into the icy cold water for a reviving swim, with only a hope that no bears

[7] Cope, "Observations on the Vertebrate Ecology of Some Pennsylvania Virgin Forests," 31.
[8] Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley: A Woman Naturalist in the Northern Wilderness* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, [1946] 1999), x.
[9] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 30.

should choose that very moment to join her.[10] Living alongside wolves and mingling her footprints with their tracks was not a worrying thought. Although Stanwell-Fletcher realized that her role in this venture included daily chores such as fetching water, cooking, and washing dishes, she was by no means reduced to a wilderness housewife; she was still a scientist, sharing in duties that life in Driftwood Valley required as well as studying its wildlife. Motivated by her wish to understand not only the lives of animals but also the problems they were facing, Stanwell-Fletcher adopted the same methods she used in field research in the Pennsylvanian forests.

The scientific part of this venture was not as innocent as observations of animals, however. The Stanwell-Fletchers' permits and equipment were provided by the British Columbia Provincial Museum, for which they had to collect specimens of fauna and flora. This also required categorizing and naming: "[f]irst it was necessary […] to find out names of the animate and inanimate things which made up our environment."[11] Although Theodora tended not to name individual animals, they were still regarded as companion-agents who were sharing space with her; thus, they were not to be killed for the museum collection. She deemed the area where observations were conducted as a sanctuary for wildlife,[12] with whom she wanted a relationship unspoiled by the requirements of killing and stuffing animals she perceived as individuals and companions. Stanwell-Fletcher permitted killings in the area under the rule that she should not share any relationship with these particular animals yet, and if she did, the individuals in question would be released upon being trapped. She expressed reluctance toward the collecting part of their study in the Driftwood region, especially since she was against the unnecessary and cruel hunting

[10] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 8.
[11] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, xi.
[12] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 27.

and trapping practices that extended beyond subsistence purposes and needs.[13] Her preferred methods of "collecting" were those of observing, sketching, and photographing.[14] In fact, Stanwell-Fletcher wished they would never succeed in trapping a wolf, particularly an individual to whose howls she listened to on one occasion in February 1938, when the night was dazzling, and the wolf's "beautiful voice"[15] later entered even her dreams:

> Like a breath of wind, rising slowly, softly, clearly to a high, lovely note of sadness and longing; dying down on two distinct notes so low that our human ears could scarcely catch them. It rose and died, again and again. A wolf singing the beauty of the night, singing it as no human voice had ever done, calling on a mate to share the beauty of it with him, to come to him, to love him. Over and over it sang, so tenderly and exquisitely that it seemed as if the voice were calling to me and I could hardly keep from crying. The whole wilderness was musical with it. […] I hardly remember getting into bed and to sleep, but all night in my dreams I thought I could hear a wolf calling and singing and sobbing in a voice of exquisite tenderness.[16]

At this point, perhaps, Stanwell-Fletcher realized how both she and the wolf were vulnerable and mortal, in a way that Irina Arnold had when looking at Kurti's stuffed body in a museum. Theodora observed the change in her husband, too, as he slowly turned against hunting and trapping upon sharing space with animals he began to see as individuals. The thought of trapping wolves was particularly appalling, for she was certain they possessed high intelligence. Stanwell-Fletcher wrote about the heartrending "expression in the eyes of [trapped] wolves," who died "from sheer agony of mind rather than from any physical injury."[17] Consequently, collecting through killing was replaced by a yearning for another kind of trophy.

For Stanwell-Fletcher, the most rewarding one would be seeing a wolf with her own eyes, which she was nevertheless denied in all her time spent in British Columbia. The other trophy she longed for was earning the wolves' trust as a polite

[13] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 50-64.
[14] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 27.
[15] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 122.
[16] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 118-119.
[17] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 122-123.

guest in their shared space. Yet she also wanted a more tangible trophy that could capture their presence, with all their charisma, beauty, vulnerability to anthropogenic impact on the environment, as well as the wolves' willingness to coexist with humans. "[N]ature has ceased to be what it always had been—what people needed protection from," wrote Susan Sontag. "Now nature—tamed, endangered, mortal—needs to be protected from people. When we are afraid, we shoot. But when we are nostalgic, we take pictures."[18] The reluctance to kill whom one has an affinity for does not eliminate the need for trophies—whether they are collected as experiences, journal notes, or photographs:

> To take actual photographs of the great timber wolf in the wilds is one of the foremost objects of all our trips this year. We haven't the slightest idea whether there's any real chance of success. […] Many wonderful close-ups of nearly every other big game animal have been taken, but none, as far as we know, of the North American timber wolf. If we could get them, it would be the best feather of all in our caps.[19]

John Stanwell-Fletcher would succeed both in observing and photographing wolves on his own. Theodora, on the other hand, had to contend with her disappointment of not sharing the same encounters.[20] Nevertheless, she recorded all the other experiences she had with wolves without laying eyes on them even once. She wrote down John's accounts as if she was privy to the same encounters and no doubt partially experienced them through his stories. Though reading tracks, she was reading the stories left behind by wolves themselves, too.[21] These, along with sensing the wolves' presence, hearing their calls, finding their kills, as well as touching the skull and hide of a gray-black male wolf acquired for the purpose of sending it to the Museum,[22] made up her trophies.

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[18] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), 15.
[19] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 256.
[20] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 304.
[21] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 53.
[22] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 121.

3.2. CO-PRODUCING SPACE AND MEANING

Ever since setting out on August 26, 1937, Stanwell-Fletcher recorded her experiences in a diary that was later published as *Driftwood Valley*, in which she wrote of British Columbia not unlike she wrote of the Pennsylvanian forests, with curiosity and accuracy of a scientist as well as passion and a romantic streak of a writer, enamored of the wilderness and its inhabitants. The place they were headed to was, to her, a land both dreamed and imagined but also one to be discovered and studied. The closer they got to the Driftwood region, the more Stanwell-Fletcher felt that the place was "theirs"[23]—not in the way of conquest or ownership, but as a place they belonged to rather than a place that belonged to them. She was adamant they should reach Driftwood Valley and settle there, feeling more confident about it than her husband had. What drove her toward this place specifically was its unstudied aspect that allowed for new discoveries. Her expectations of the place stretched beyond practicality, which, as she noted, was the main issue considered by the men she traveled with but did not seem enough for her.[24] What she was looking for was a sense of beauty.

They eventually chose to build a cabin in Driftwood Valley, near Lake Tetana, some "two hundred miles northeast of the southern tip of Alaska."[25] The moment they reached the place and surveyed Tetana, however, Stanwell-Fletcher's first impression of it was "peaceful and pleasant rather than spectacularly beautiful." She was unsure whether this first look left her "disappointed, or only vaguely satisfied."[26]

[23] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 17.
[24] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 4-21.
[25] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 4.
[26] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 21.

The reason behind this reaction was incomprehensible for her at that moment but likely lay in Stanwell-Fletcher imagining this great uninhabited wilderness as a near-mythical place where everything was stunning upon laying eyes on it, without engaging with it, and where, perhaps, she could encounter wolves and other species she could not encounter in the wilds of Pennsylvania right upon arrival. This was the wilderness she dreamed of and wrote about in her dissertations, but in front of Lake Tetana, she was faced with the real place. She was only mildly satisfied and even disappointed because untouched wilderness from days past might not have truly existed in a way she imagined it. There were signs of humankind around, and while she was reluctant to come to terms with it, she was to temporarily become part of the Driftwood Valley herself and leave her human trace on it.

Those who use the land for commercial or subsistence purposes—whether for trapping, logging, or grazing livestock—view the same environment differently from those who do not need to consider the presence of predators in shared spaces; for the latter, such environments are more of an abstract concept of untouched wilderness,[27] a place to visit, perhaps, but not a place to live in permanently or for longer periods of time. Such was Stanwell-Fletcher's initial view of the Driftwood region, but it would be transformed by co-shaping her space with wolves and other animals. As ethnologist Michaela Fenske suggested, nature may be a hybrid space that is socio-ecologically constructed;[28] Dominique Lestel, meanwhile, argued that "all human societies are also animal societies."[29] Taking a step further, Lestel linked the emergence of some animal subjects, individuals, and persons to their relations with

[27] Helene Figari and Ketil Skogen, "Social Representations of the Wolf," *Acta Sociologica*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (2011), 327.
[28] Michaela Fenske, "Retten und Gerettet Werden. Europäische Honigbienen und Menschen im urbanen Resonanzraum," in: *Hessische Blätter für Volks- und Kulturforschung*, eds. Siegfried Becker and Sonja Windmüller (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 2019), 95.
[29] Dominique Lestel, *Les amis de Mes Amis* (Paris: Seuil, 2007), 15.

humans in such hybrid spaces and communities.[30] The same should hold true of humans becoming who they are through encounters, interactions, and relationships with other animals. The time spent in Driftwood Valley was Stanwell-Fletcher's becoming-with, together with wolves as companion species. Her initial reaction to it resulted from her lack of embodied attachment to the place and meaningful entanglement with its inhabitants. Driftwood Valley was not yet a space she was co-producing with wolves and other species; there was no rapport of forces to co-shape their experiences and flesh out the story they would live together. When those relationships were formed, Stanwell-Fletcher found Driftwood captivating.

The sense of beauty was an important aspect of how she co-produced space. The Stanwell-Fletchers' cabin was fitted with windows low enough to let the inhabitants inside gaze at those outside as if they were not separated by walls—a separation that provided the comfort of living in the wilderness. There was no need for any ornaments inside, for the most scenic views were provided by looking outside the windows that framed "a picture lovelier than any conceived by an artist."[31] The books lining the shelves in the cabin ranged from the subject of Canadian plants and animals to geography, and of special interest were four volumes of Ernest Thompson Seton's *Lives of the Game Animals* that proved popular with one of Stanwell-Fletchers' visitors who, having read them over the nights he spent there, surmised that Seton's storied helped him understand why the Stanwell-Fletchers would choose to live in the wild to study wild animals.[32]

The space outside of the cabin was partly construed by Theodora, too. She cooked supper over a campfire, under the blanket of the sky and the bright moon and

[30] Dominique Lestel, "Portrait del'animal comme sujet," *Revue de synthese*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1999), 161-162.
[31] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 46.
[32] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 42.

stars that seemed to "flame like fires;"[33] they were her campfire over which she cooked whatever the valley provided. She had her favorite spot called Teddy's Hill, a vantage point from which she surveyed Driftwood Valley and the mountain ranges she came to know and cherish. It was unclear where her home ended and the wilderness started—perhaps it was one and the same. At times, she shared it with no other human being. She wrote of silence, stillness, and loneliness, yet there were always animals who, Stanwell-Fletcher felt, were just as curious about humans as humans were curious about them: "is it because, in company with many wild animals who are not harmed by man, they enjoy the novel behavior of human beings?" she wondered.[34] Their paths would always cross as they walked the same forest floors covered in velvet carpets and pillow-like moss.[35] It was the entanglement she was seeking and that she had found in British Columbia.

The silence she experienced was first broken in mid-October 1937 when she started hearing wolves howling. This "weird, rather musical call"[36] would accompany her ever since. It was the first indication of the wolves' presence in Driftwood Valley. In stark contrast to the narratives that prevailed from the 1800s through at least the 1930s, such as Theodore Roosevelt's description of "that most sinister and mournful sound, ever fraught with foreboding of murder and rapine, the long-drawn baying of the gray wolf,"[37] are Stanwell-Fletcher's words:

> One voice after another—some deep, some high—caught up the song in perfect harmony. It was not the tender, longing voice of a lone wolf calling to his love, but a whole company—a family perhaps—singing together for the joy of making music. The song, starting low, rose ever fuller and higher, but always beautifully modulated. […] The only thing comparable to it was a stringed symphony, but

[33] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 32.
[34] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 30.
[35] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 28.
[36] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 41.
[37] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. 2, ed. Herman Hagedorn (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, [1889] 1927), 86.

> the wolf voices seemed more full of soul and expression. And each night since, this valley has become a concert hall filled with wolf music.[38]

Similar descriptions can be found in Evelyn Cameron's and Ellen Velvin's writings and would continue to appear in women's literature on wolves in later years. The writers focused on the wolves' beauty, graceful movements, intelligent behavior, expressive eyes, endurance in the face of hardships or suffering, and the musical sound of their howls—hardly any of which were present in factual narratives of their time, either restricted by the need for scientific objectivity above all or clouded by the hatred toward predators who threatened human interests and competed for the same resources. It is not names that matter but the ways in which wolves are portrayed; it matters in the sense that human-wolf relationships are shaped according to how wolves are referred to, whether their howls are described as sinister or musical, and whether they are called pests, pets, endangered species, or companion species. Such "changes in terminology can signal important mutations in the character of relationships—commercially, epistemologically, emotionally, and politically," wrote Donna Haraway. "'New' names mark changes in power, symbolically and materially remaking kin and kind."[39]

Stanwell-Fletcher allowed herself to record both the scientific discoveries and observations as well as thoughts and emotions that could not be quantified the same way. With this method, she came closer to understanding the habits of wolves than others before her who relied solely on research in captivity or whose knowledge relied on hunting them. She noted that, unlike hunters, wolves usually would not waste the prey they killed, as they do not hurt for sport; any remains from their feeding are later used by other animals. She wrote, too, of wolves living in families

[38]Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 131.
[39] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 135.

rather than packs.[40] Instead of seeing wolves as enemies, competition, or killable species, Stanwell-Fletcher was aware that the sustenance, hardships, and space were shared with them. For the Stanwell-Fletchers and the wolves, the main source of meat was moose, the difficulty of breaking trail through the snow in winter was experienced by both as well, they frequented the same paths and vantage points, too. Wolf Hill, named so because wolves visited it just as often as the Stanwell-Fletchers, was only one of several vantage points they shared with wolves. Wolf Lake was likewise named so by the Stanwell-Fletchers because they knew wolves gathered there. Theodora believed that part of the reason why they used the same spots was the shared sense of beauty, which, although so important to Theodora and often mentioned in her memoir, could not be grasped scientifically. In February 1938, when the wolves finally started manifesting their presence in the Driftwood Valley, Stanwell-Fletcher wrote:

> The very spots where we linger to look upon the world stretched out below are favorite gathering places for the wolf tribe. […] Why […] should the wolves sit there unless it is because they too recognize and appreciate something that we call beauty? There is no food to be had on these hilltops. Deep, untouched snow covers mouse holes. Rabbit and squirrel tracks are scarce or absent, and, dense forest hides any sign of moving game in the valleys below.[41]

Stanwell-Fletcher correctly interpreted their howling as "love songs,"[42] for February is a month when wolves usually mate, and their activity in this time is consequently heightened. Though Theodora could not see their courtship rituals, she was still entranced by their calls to each other. Soon, she learned to distinguish between wolves' calls, noting how some were reserved for mating periods, the others for hunting or family gatherings. She could even tell apart one individual wolf by his voice and called him "the boy soprano"[43]—a polite way of naming, perhaps, since

[40] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 121.
[41] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 132.
[42] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 117.
[43] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 149.

wolves, too, recognize each other by the pitch and frequency of their voices. Without direct observations, Stanwell-Fletcher was left mostly with these choruses during nights and their tracks in the mornings; sometimes, however, wolves manifested their presence in other ways.

3.3. FOLLOWING EACH OTHER'S TRACKS

"Wolves have been following us, even coming within three hundred yards of the cabin," wrote Stanwell-Fletcher on February 21, 1938. "They use our snowshoe trails and we've found places where they must have stood behind bushes as we went by. Careful examination of their tracks indicates that they were made exactly at the same time as ours were."[44] What could have been recounted in a fearful and hateful manner, Stanwell-Fletcher related with curiosity and a little thrill, expressing similar emotions when the possibility of coming upon wolves feeding on moose presented itself.[45] On another occasion, she described walking with two dogs, Rex and Wahoo: "I am certain that sometimes wolves walk with us. There is a slight stirring of bushes and [then] I go to look at the spot a little hesitantly and fearfully, but quite unable to resist."[46] When reporting her husband's encounters with wolves, she emphasized the curiosity with which they responded to human presence. Wolves, perhaps just as curious about humans as humans were about them, watched the Stanwell-Fletchers on numerous occasions.[47] Even when they did not see the wolves, Theodora knew "that the wolves saw [them]," moving to the side of the trail when the Stanwell-

[44] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 136.
[45] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 211.
[46] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 304.
[47] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 258.

Fletchers walked by. "Often they followed us," she wrote, "no doubt from sheer curiosity."[48]

Not only mutual curiosity underlay her relations with wolves, however. On February 24, 1938, when Stanwell-Fletcher was walking to the cabin alone in the darkness, wolves joined her. "I knew I was being followed, and the first fright of it nearly shook me out of my weariness," she wrote. Knowing that wolves were walking on each side of her but not being able to see them made Theodora all the more aware of her vulnerability—not as a woman, but as an individual caught in a rapport of forces with other individuals of different species. The ambiguity of the encounter revealed, for the first time, the possibility of violent intimacy in human-wolf relations. "I've not been much afraid of the wolves. But there was no denying that if these were wolves, they must be following me closely and boldly."[49] The next day, the Stanwell-Fletchers' visitors found tracks of six wolves walking alongside Theodora almost all the way to the cabin. This time, she expressed no excitement about being in close proximity to wolves. As every encounter is charged with agency and responses of all participants, her response to the wolves' agencies indicated that closeness and intimacy are generally not preferred in relationships between humans and wild animals, and the brunt of the asymmetrical nature of such relations is not always taken by the nonhuman part of them.

Animal fear of humans encroaching on their territories or hunting them may be given due care in analyses of human-animal relations in scientists' memoirs, but human fear toward large predators such as wolves is rarely addressed. As part of these imperfect relations, fear should not be brushed aside as insignificant or given attention only one-sidedly. Stanwell-Fletcher's conflicted feelings about wolves

[48] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 129.
[49] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 130.

stemmed from living alongside them in the wild, not entirely on her terms but on theirs as well. Unlike with captive wolves at McCleery's park in Pennsylvania, where they were kept inside the pens, the only separation between Stanwell-Fletcher and the wolves in Driftwood Valley was the cabin. Outside, though she rationally knew that wolves usually do not attack people,[50] she was aware that the wild space was not owned by her, and she had to respect wolfish agency with every possibility it entailed. Perhaps most of all, it entailed vulnerability on her part and on the part of the wolves.

Her change of attitude toward them—from affection to respect tinged with fear—was a consequence of a relatively close encounter with the predators. The howling she heard so often was no longer only a lovely symphony but also a fierce and unnerving call, one that Stanwell-Fletcher associated with wolves hunting.[51] Nevertheless, she never judged the wolves' behavior as too "unwolfish" because she acknowledged their right to share the same space with her and act according to their choices. Where Stanwell-Fletcher's and the wolves' spaces intersected, the possibility of entanglements generated mutual responses to each other: they both held curiosity about one another as well as initial distrust, and both affected the spaces they moved through, each carrying their own vulnerabilities. According to Despret, such mutual responses to presence and agency—through engaging and affecting one another in a rapport of forces—result in becoming with each other as companion-agents.[52] This approach to relating between individuals of different species and contexts in "significant otherness," for Haraway, means "vulnerable, on-the-ground work that cobbles together nonharmonious agencies and ways of living that are

[50] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 116.
[51] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 141.
[52] Vinciane Despret, "From Secret Agents to Interagency," *History and Theory*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (2013), 44.

accountable both to their disparate inherited histories and to their barely possible but absolutely necessary joint futures."[53] Stanwell-Fletcher speculated that our attitudes toward wolves are made up of fear that is inherited, as well as of "admiration for an animal whose [intelligence] and personality have for centuries contested man and his ways."[54] Together with the Driftwood wolves and through their shared story, she co-created new narratives for others to inherit.

Fear did not invalidate Stanwell-Fletcher's coexistence alongside wolves; on the contrary, it was an indispensable part of her becoming-with that allowed her a more profound understanding of what living in the company of predators may involve, more true than any romanticized fictions which glorify wolf-human relations in an unrealistic chase after the untouched wilderness as well as an idealized, harmonious relationship with nature and wild animals. In his book *Monster of God*, David Quammen noted that relations between humans and large predators are not only situational but also depend greatly on the circumstances of the human part of this equation. Those who live in closer proximity to predators suffer more losses—either financially, by losing livestock, or emotionally by losing companion animals—than those for whom wolves, tigers, or lions remain a faraway presence, a symbol, or, at most, an embodied but safely separated presence in a zoo. Quammen asked whether it is "inevitable that costs exacted by […] predators be borne disproportionately" and what can be done to "redistribute the costs" as well as the "spiritual and aesthetic benefits."[55] Wolves' lives depend on the economy of affection and hostility—after all, hunting and predator control are often justified by

[53] Donna J. Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 100.
[54] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 126.
[55] David Quammen, *Monster of God: The Man-Eating Predator in the Jungles of History and the Mind* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 124.

this uneven distribution of costs and benefits—and it is for the wolves' sake as well as ours that answers to those questions be found.

The answer certainly does not lie in eradicating wolves nor removing those who live in their proximity from the land to remake it in the image of the untouched wilderness of the past. "Living in response to [shared] histories," argued Haraway, "is not about [such] exterminationist nonsolutions." What is needed are "contradictory truths," as both affectionate and violent relations with other animals are "inescapable [parts] of mortal companion species entanglements."[56] Stanwell-Fletcher's ambiguous relations with wolves in British Columbia act as a buffer zone between the two extremes, resulting in a co-created narrative in which both the human and the wolves interact in imperfect companion-agency that reveals more articulate meanings than those found in other literature of her time. Dissatisfied with nature poetry she used to read before coming to British Columbia, Stanwell-Fletcher sought authors who would "[know] firsthand the deep hardness and terribleness of a wilderness and, because of this, the greater beauty and wonder of it."[57] This is what she found in writing down her own experiences of becoming in the wilderness with companion species: the harsh beauty of disharmonious relations with other animals and animal others, as well as possibilities of coexistence with more equally distributed agency.

3.4. NEW NARRATIVES TO INHERIT

Living alongside wolves requires politeness, in Vinciane Despret's sense of the word. Stanwell-Fletcher knew well of this politeness, and attuned her presence to the

[56] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 105.
[57] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 96.

presence of wolves, taking precautions to safeguard their horses and dogs from the predators. What followed was a recognition that wolves were "aware of [the Stanwell Fletchers'] presence and habits," and perhaps trusted them, allowing their presence even near their pups. "With their remarkable gift of understanding," Theodora ventured, "they have apparently come to realize that there is nothing to fear from us, that we like them, that we are interested in their welfare." The affinity, according to Stanwell-Fletcher, was mutual. Her own fear, too, would subside upon understanding that although the wolves "have been constantly around [them] for several weeks, they have shown no sign of harming [them]" nor their horses or dogs. The acceptance of each other's presence was a mutual response which proved to be the coexistence Stanwell-Fletcher was seeking. "It is rather wonderful," she wrote, "that the most intelligent of all our wild companions has reached this basis of tolerance toward us." When it was time to leave British Columbia, Stanwell-Fletcher's greatest regret was the loss of coexistence and companionship that developed between her and the wolves, the time of departure approaching "just when [their] wilderness comrades [were] beginning to understand that the Tetana area can be a place where [they] may live side by side, unhampered one by the other, respecting one another's rights and habits."[58]

In the introduction to the 1999 edition of *Driftwood Valley*, Wendell Berry emphasized the sociable relations developed between the Stanwell-Fletchers and the wolves living in the Driftwood region as one of the most remarkable aspects of the memoir. Berry noted that although some may accuse Stanwell-Fletcher of anthropomorphizing animals in her account, it was written in "the language of affection and sympathy," for "[h]ow else might one explain animal character to

[58] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 307.

human beings? […] One must wonder […] if there is any 'purely scientific' way to get along or cooperate with animals, any more than there is with humans."[59] Science and data alone cannot account for the depth of wolves' lives and histories, let alone their relationships with other species. In objective terminology, killing becomes "predator control," "take," or "harvest," granting the activity the same kind of innocence that authors such as Stanwell-Fletcher sought to avoid. According to Haraway, "[t]here is no category that makes killing innocent, […] no category or strategy that removes one from killing."[60] For every animal Stanwell-Fletcher killed, she took responsibility, and did not hide behind language stripped of emotions precisely because she recognized the nonhuman subjectivity and agency, speculated about their emotional lives and even about a shared sense of beauty. Indeed, this alone might be taken for anthropomorphism.

"[T]he sciences today […] are occasionally so bound by rational analysis, or so wary of metaphor," wrote naturalist Barry H. Lopez, "that they recognize and denounce anthropomorphism as a kind of intellectual cancer, instead of employing it as a tool of comparative inquiry, which is perhaps the only way the mind works, that parallelism we finally call narrative."[61] Likewise, Éric Baratay argued that anthropomorphism is useful as a methodological framework when employed consciously and questioningly, without taking the human model as a "superior reference."[62] For Dominique Lestel, some dose of anthropomorphism, stripped of its negative connotations, may be necessary where animals living in hybrid communities are concerned, as both humans and animals affect each other through their presence

[59] Wendell Berry, Introduction to: Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley: A Woman Naturalist in the Northern Wilderness* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, [1946] 1999), vii.
[60] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 106.
[61] Barry Lopez, *Arctic Dreams* (New York: Scribner, 1986), 250.
[62] Éric Baratay, *Animal Biographies: Toward a History of Individuals*, trans. Lindsay Turner (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2022), 10.

and agency.[63] In fact, Stanwell-Fletcher was clear about the differences between humans and wolves, as well as between wolves and other species, and generally avoided overly anthropomorphic comparisons. Still, she noted, studying wild animals in their habitat "has rather a humbling effect on one's idea of man's much-vaunted behavior and faculties."[64] When parallelism was warranted, she would use it. After all, becoming with companion species happens through lived-together or alongside stories, with all their partial connections, similarities, and differences they generate. The narratives thus co-created can, in time, replace the previous ones with stories more worthy to inherit—perhaps less violent, yet still entangled and steeped in responsibility that should permeate every encounter and relation.

As both a nature and a scientific memoir, Stanwell-Fletcher's *Driftwood Valley* proved a timely narrative that attempted to undo the killable status of the wolf. Expressing sentiments that were ahead of her time, she condemned both the decision-makers and scientists who claimed that eradicating wolves in British Columbia and Alaska would mean an abundance of game species. On the contrary, excessive culling of a species destabilizes the ecological balance,[65] which was precisely the reason why wolves were reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park in 1995. Adolph Murie's *The Wolves of Mount McKinley* (1944), which recounted the study undertaken between 1939 and 1941 in Denali National Park in Alaska—almost concurrently with the Stanwell-Fletchers, who were spending their time with wolves in British Columbia between 1937 and 1941—was, arguably, the first unbiased study based on the observation of wild wolves. Before its publication, however, the Stanwell-Fletchers were already jointly writing articles about wolves and Driftwood

[63] Dominique Lestel, "The Question of the Animal Subject: Thoughts on the Fourth Wound to Human Narcissism," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, transl. Hollis Taylor, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2014), 122.
[64] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 123.
[65] Stanwell-Fletcher, *Driftwood Valley*, 124.

wildlife, published between 1940 and 1942.[66] Although Theodora would go on to write *The Tundra World* (1952) and *Clear Lands and Icy Seas: A Voyage to the Eastern Arctic* (1958), it was with *Driftwood Valley* that she won the John Burroughs Medal in 1948, as first woman nature writer to do so.

Despite all this, she had never witnessed a wolf with her own eyes in the Canadian wilderness. She would not share a gaze with one, nor would they howl to one another; they would not play together nor share tactile affections like Evelyn Cameron did with Tussa and Weecharpee. Yet it did not stop Stanwell-Fletcher from experiencing life alongside wolves in other ways. Certainly, it exemplifies the possibility of becoming with and being alongside without direct contact, without looking back at each other, without touch, even as Theodora longed for such an encounter. Her companionship with the wolves did not diminish due to their presence remaining hidden from her eyes—after all, she could grasp it with other senses as she listened to their howling, saw their tracks, found their kills, and walked the paths they walked. Her first sighting of a wolf seems to have happened years later in Churchill, Manitoba, where she traveled again in 1949 to do further research for her partially fictionalized *The Tundra World*.[67] From afar, she saw a wolf with a light grey fur, his sudden appearance so unbelievable she almost mistook him for a dog. "Three times he turned his head in our direction," she wrote, "but continued to travel leisurely […] along the ridge, never pausing or varying a slow and remarkably graceful lope until he vanished in a line of trees. Our presence disturbed him not at all—he was a king."[68]

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[66] John F. Stanwell-Fletcher and Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher, "Naturalists in the Wilds of British Columbia," *Scientific Monthly*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (1940), 17-33; Vol. 50, No. 2 (1940), 125-37; Vol. 50, No. 3 (1940), 210-224; John F. Stanwell-Fletcher and Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher, "Three Years in the Wolves' Wilderness," *Natural History*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (1942), 136–47.
[67] Bonta, "Theodora Cope Stanwell-Fletcher," 854.
[68] Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher, *The Tundra World* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1952), 135.

CHAPTER 4: BECOMING WITH WOLVES

4.1. THE LAND OF ABSENCE

In the 1940s, in the Olympic Mountains of the Pacific Northwest, Lois Crisler observed an animal she identified as a wolf.[1] The possibility of this sighting was remote, for wolves were thought to be absent from the area for about a decade. The wolf's presence or lack thereof is not the only debatable part of this story; another issue not agreed upon is what territories the Pacific Northwest is comprised of. Although there is no conclusive definition of its boundaries, the region is usually described as being lapped by the Pacific Ocean on its west coast and surrounded by the Rocky Mountains on the east, stretching over the states of Washington and Oregon, and, some would argue, across the border to British Columbia, Canada.[2] Dominated by several mountain ranges, including the Cascades and the Olympics, the Pacific Northwest is a mostly-forested area teeming with wildlife.[3] While wolves are still present in British Columbia, where Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher stayed between 1937 and 1941, the species was nearly completely eradicated in the Washington state, and reported to be extinct from the Olympic Mountains years before Crisler saw the animal she believed to be a young wolf. While this canid's identity remains uncertain, an intimate portrait of several others would be written most vividly in Lois Crisler's *Arctic Wild* (1958), which for many marked an

[1] Lois Crisler, "The True Mountaineer," *Natural History Magazine*, Vol. 59, No. 9 (1950), 428.
[2] Ken S. Coates, "Border Crossings: Patterns and Processes along the Canada—United States Boundary West of the Rockies," in: *Parallel Destinies: Canadian-American Relations West of the Rockies*, eds. John M. Findlay and Ken S. Coates (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 3-5.
[3] David Moskowitz, *Wildlife of the Pacific Northwest* (Portland: Timber Press, 2010), 17-26.

emergence of a new genre in wolf literature—that of a memoir co-created with animal others.

Such companion-agency could not be realized, however, in the absence of said animals. In 1907, Vernon Bailey, an employee of the Bureau of Biological Survey, noted that "[w]olves were common in the mountains about Colville, in north-eastern Washington, in 1891, and were said to be occasionally found in the Cascades about Easton. In 1894 they were reported as common in the Olympic Mountains."[4] By the 1900s, they were becoming scarce. 1920 is believed to be the year when the last wolf in the Olympic Mountains was killed, although several sightings were still reported throughout the 1930s.[5] The years that led to the downfall of wolves were marked by the increased arrival of homesteaders by the end of the century. Livestock was grazed on lands that, up until that moment, belonged to wild animals. Just as it had occurred elsewhere, predators were targeted to protect livestock.[6] Dora Richmond, born and raised on a homestead in the Olympic Mountains in the 1900s, recalled in a 1975 interview:

> We would put out the strychnine at night and pick it up in the morning, so it wouldn't get so many daytime animals, birds especially. Anyway, my aunt and I went out in the morning and there on the sandbar was a big old wolf. He was dead but my aunt had to take a shot at it anyway. There was a dollar bounty on wolves then so we wanted to skin it out. But the poison ruined the skin so we just put it in a bucket, took it out and buried it […]. I was about twelve when the last wolf […] died. My dad poisoned [them] cause they ate the sheep.[7]

By the time Franklin Roosevelt established the Olympic National Park in 1938, wolves were thought to be long gone.

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[4] Vernon Bailey, *Wolves in Relation to Stock, Game, and the National Forest Reserves* (Washington: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1907), 15.
[5] David Moskowitz, *Wolves in the Land of Salmon* (Portland: Timber Press, 2013), 260-262.
[6] Peter Dratch et al., *A Case Study for Species Reintroduction: The Wolf in Olympic National Park, Washington* (Olympia: Evergreen State College, 1975), 11.
[7] Peter Dratch, *Interview transcriptions with Olympic Peninsula Old-Timers*, Unpublished, Archive, Department of Cultural Resources, Olympic National Park, Port Angeles, Washington, 1978, quoted in: Moskowitz, *Wolves in the Land of Salmon*, 262.

Lois Brown Crisler—a former English assistant professor at the University of Washington—arrived there in December 1941, just a few months after the Stanwell-Fletchers left Driftwood Valley. Together with her husband Herbert, she moved to Hume's Ranch near the Elwha River and below Hurricane Ridge, where the couple stayed until 1943 as lookouts for enemy aircraft during the war,[8] with mostly marmots as neighbors. Crisler knew these small mammals fairly well, but she was not yet familiar with wolves. In an article published in 1950, she reported observing a young wolf hunting marmots. Yet the largest canids confirmed in the region at the time were coyotes, who came in the 1920s and proliferated in the Olympics.[9] In the absence of wolves who could balance the population, the coyotes—not native to the area—put pressure on small prey, particularly marmots.[10] It is unclear when, exactly, Crisler spotted the wolf, and whether it really was a wolf and not a coyote. From a distance, and for an untrained eye—for Crisler would not encounter wolves up close until 1953—a coyote can be mistaken for a young wolf. After all, the wolf in the Olympics was believed to be extinct, with only occasional sightings reported since the 1920s. In 1968, Robert L. Wood wrote that "[i]f, indeed, wolves were present in the Olympic Mountains today, most likely they have migrated from the Cascades and are not survivors of the original Olympic strain."[11] Although wolves do hunt marmot, they prey primarily on elk and deer, and the Crislers—having spent a whole decade following and filming the elk—did not report any wolves in the area during their stay, save for Lois's dubious observation. Had the wolves been present, surely the predators would have followed their prey.

[8] Irving Petite, "The Crislers, A Wilderness Legend in the Making," *Nature Magazine*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (1952), 207-209.
[9] Crisler, "The True Mountaineer," 422-428.
[10] Moskowitz, *Wolves in the Land of Salmon*, 276-278.
[11] Robert L. Wood, *Trail Country: Olympic National Park* (Seattle: The Mountaineers, 1968), 51.

While her husband filmed the Olympic wilderness, Lois wrote about it in articles, essays, and letters, both passionate and concerned about its wildlife. In the face of logging proposals in the area, she advocated for the preservation of the land and animals. Through the film about the Olympic elk and other species, with Lois as a cinematographer and a narrator, the Crislers educated the public about the remote region and its plight, encouraging its conservation. Walt Disney purchased the footage in 1949, and the documentary, along with Lois's mostly unchanged script, was released in 1952 as *The Olympic Elk*. A year before, the Crislers received an assignment from Disney Studios to film bighorn sheep in Tarryall Mountains, Colorado, and in 1952, they moved on to the Denali National Park to obtain footage of grizzly bears.[12] Their next destination was the Brooks Range in Alaska.

Armed with cameras and an objective to film the migrating herds of caribou, the Crislers set out to the heart of the tundra in the summer of 1953. The wilderness Lois thought to have experienced in the Olympic Mountains and the Colorado Rockies could not compare to the feeling of freedom in the Alaskan Arctic. For the first time, Crisler realized she only knew "captive wilderness" before—"[t]his was free," she confessed after taking in the vast land they had arrived at. Perhaps the wilderness of Washington and Colorado was incomplete without wolves, while the Arctic tundra—which Crisler supposed to be relatively untouched due to "the presence of wild animals in […] pristine variety and numbers"—was still home to these predators.[13] She wrote of the Arctic not unlike Stanwell-Fletcher wrote of the British Columbia, describing it as a space that was co-produced by all of its inhabitants, with "tundra [as] carpet and table" for caribou and wolves. "The latter,"

[12] John McNutt, "Back When: Crisler Captured Wilderness, Wildlife in Writing and on Film," *Peninsula Daily News*, May 2, 2021, accessed 25 Mach, 2023, https://www.peninsuladailynews.com/life/back-when-crisler-captured-wilderness-wildlife-in-writing-and-on-film.
[13] Lois Crisler, *Arctic Wild* (New York: Lyons Press, [1958] 1999), 38.

she mused, "do not live in some other compartment but lay their fur and step their paws on the same mattress and carpet, far-spreading under the pale-blue arctic sky."[14]

The presence of wolves was fleeting but telling. Upon exploring the Brooks Range, the Crislers happened upon a place they called Wolf Walk, "a cleaver along whose crest ran a trail made not by humans—no human trails were in all this land—but by paws of wolves and hoofs of caribou." There, between rocks, "lay white crunched caribou bones and bone-cluttered wolf scats."[15] Like the descriptions quoted by Stanwell-Fletcher about the Pennsylvanian wilderness of the past, with bones of elk and wolves resting silently together on rocks, the remains of caribou and their predators encountered by the Crislers were a reminder that within these worldly entanglements, "dying and killing are not optional."[16] Crisler was joining this "tolerant community of danger"[17] with the awareness that co-inhabiting entailed vulnerability and violent intimacy as well as affective encounters and unexpected companionships in myriad mortal entanglements that constituted this shared space.

Inevitably, it also entailed nonhuman responses to human presence. Although it was possible to come across wolf tracks and occasionally see wolves in the distance, they proved too elusive to observe long-term, let alone approach, unless they chose to approach instead, which they did only twice in the eighteen months the Crislers spent in the Alaskan Arctic. The difficulty of photographing wild wolves was realized by Cameron, the Stanwell-Fletchers, and the Crislers alike, and the latter requested a capture of wolf pups so they could be filmed for the Walt Disney

[14] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 43.
[15] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 51.
[16] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 74.
[17] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 43.

documentary released as *White Wilderness* in 1958.[18] According to historian Douglas Brinkley, the idea to film caribou was not exciting enough for Disney, and he persuaded the Crislers to raise wolves for filming, sponsoring the purchase of wolf pups from hunters. Disney was infamous for nature faking,[19] and Lois was not unaware of it;[20] still, she wanted to campaign against the wolf extermination efforts in Alaska, and the wildlife films in which wolves could be seen up close were a step toward her goal. When a den was found, five pups were taken from it, and the breeding pair was killed. Soon after, a pup who refused to eat was killed as well, while another suffocated to death on the rope tied around the neck; the third sibling escaped and died at the jaws of dogs. Thus the prologue to the known biography of the surviving pups was written.

A few weeks after their capture, the wolves saw the Crislers for the first time. The grey male Trigger and his chocolate-black sister Lady had their names written on a piece of paper tied to the cage they were kept in. Lois carried the pups for a mile on the way to the tent[21]—this was how their shared story began, anything but innocent. Navigating the relationship they were co-creating from the moment they met required some dose of trust and curiosity from all participants, as well as acceptance of accountability that followed. Aware of the initial ignorance involved in the plan to bring up the pups on the Arctic tundra to photograph them in the environment they belonged to, Crisler admitted that attempting "to live in a degree of

[18] The documentary proved controversial because of its infamous scene of lemmings committing "mass suicide" by leaping off a cliff, which was not only a case of nature faking but also of animal cruelty as the lemmings were purposefully thrown off the cliff.
[19] Douglas Brinkley, *The Quiet World: Saving Alaska's Wilderness Kingdom, 1879-1960* (New York: Harper, 2011), 343-353.
[20] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 272.
[21] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 74-79.

freedom with animals not human-oriented"[22] brought unexpected responses and connections but also disturbing consequences.

The idea to photograph wolves and other species they lived with in environments relatively undisturbed by anthropogenic impacts arose, for Crisler, as a way of preserving their stories. She believed that wilderness was fast disappearing, the narratives fading from the landscapes along with the presence of animals. This much is undeniably true, but for better or worse, wilderness is not a space removed from human presence; rather, spaces are constituted through the dynamic relationships between species of different contexts who become with one another and who enter history together. There are always new stories being created, many of them together with humans. Crisler and the wolves became entangled ever since their first encounter, and Lois could not remove herself from their already shared story any more than the human element can be removed from the process of directly observing or filming wild animals. In other words, there was no way to preserve the wolves' stories, whether through photography or writing, without visible knots that connected them to Crisler. Recognition of each other's presence and agency is followed by mutual responses, and they, in turn, become part of the narrative.

4.2. EMBODIED COMMUNICATION

Their story was a turbulent one, intimate but contradictory. At times, the degree of freedom allowed to Trigger and Lady was controlled by harnesses, leashes, collars, chains, and pens, yet what the Crislers craved was companionship in which the wolves chose to be in sociable relations with them without being forcibly kept by

[22] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 91.

their side with tethers. The harnesses were disposed of in a gesture of friendship—a simple act that prompted Lois to realize, perhaps for the first time, the conflicting feelings she harbored toward the wolves. On the one hand, she feared that Lady and Trigger would leave when set free; on the other, she was horrified when she thought the wolves bore permanent harness marks on their bodies and relieved upon finding it was their natural fur pattern instead. Lady and Trigger subverted her expectations when they ran away and then turned back in a display of joy, inviting their human companions to play.[23] The gestures that ensued between the Crislers and the wolves as they met halfway were mutual.

In learning how to communicate in the absence of common language, they had to attune themselves to each other's presence, paying attention to their differences and similarities to find a way to make mutual responding possible and comprehensible to both humans and wolves. The Crislers were not detached observers but social beings the wolves could elicit responses from, and indeed they did so. This allowed Lois to not only observe but also take part in behaviors that one would certainly not find in literature on wolves of her time: she watched how Lady delicately nuzzled and pawed flowers, how she gingerly approached newly formed ice for the first time, and how she learned to eat blueberries by watching Lois picking them. The Crislers learned from the wolves, too, by imitating their gestures. The first inkling that such a form of communication might be possible came when Lady bowed in a joyful manner,[24] in a greeting that the Crislers adopted and used in their ensuing greeting ceremonies with wolves. These, once established, continued and evolved throughout their relationship.[25]

[23] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 80-92.
[24] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 89-93.
[25] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 121, 125, 182, 259.

Barbara Smuts termed such gestures "embodied communication," referring to interactions between individuals that convey emotions, preferences, and intentions in negotiating meanings and outcomes of social relations. Embodied communication is used not only among individuals of the same species but also across species, as an integral part of "inter-species language" that does not rely on speech alone.[26] Being inevitably human-oriented, Crisler relied on spoken words as much as on gestures when interacting with Lady and Trigger, and described some of the sounds they made as "speaking" and "talking," yet not in a sense of human speech. Perhaps she could not find a better way to express how intently communicative wolves were, particularly under the excessive influence of emotions and stress. In such instances, Crisler felt that the wolves had an urgent matter to communicate, and she could usually grasp their emotions but not the intent—just like Lady and Trigger understood the tone of Crisler's voice but not the words.[27]

Lois described her "conversing" with wolves and their ways of relating in an intimate manner that would be deemed forbidden in objective scientific research. Rather than being bound by strict methodology, Crisler was a scientist in a sense proposed by Bruno Latour: asking new questions as well as co-producing knowledge and meaning with the wolves and through her relationships with them. In this way, she could capture nuances of the wolf body language and the slightest gestures and shifts in the relationships the wolves formed with herself, her husband, with other wolves, and with dogs, all of them "training each other in acts of communication"[28]

[26] Barbara Smuts, "Embodied Communication in Non-human Animals," in: *Human Development in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Alan Fogel, Barbara King, and Stuart Shanker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 137.
[27] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 149-150, 179, 199, 267.
[28] Donna J. Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 94.

they were not familiar with but for which, as social species, they had the capacities to learn.[29]

More than anything else, their communication relied upon meeting each other halfway, all participants actively negotiating their relationship by inciting to socialize, resisting, and responding to the above. Whether it was Lady pulling at Crisler's braid or Trigger capturing her mitten to frolic with, the wolves often initiated play, inventing most of the games.[30] When playing with Trigger, Lois recalled how the wolf "watched intently and leaped away when [she] jumped;" on another occasion, she chased him, and the wolf chased her back.[31] Although Lady and Trigger were usually the ones who chose whether, when, and how to engage in these social activities,[32] they also responded to invitations from their human companions. One time, Crisler started digging in the sand, and a wolf "came up and looked intently into the hole and dug at the other side of it." Lois "slapped the ground, then lifted [her] forearm sidewise, an old play gesture used with Trigger and Lady." The wolf responded by lifting a paw, and mutual play ensued.[33] Another time, while trying to ease the tension and alertness of Lady and Trigger, she "yawned and stretched. [She] sighed luxuriously. And the overbrightness faded from the wolves' eyes." They relaxed. With Trigger, she felt, there was another breakthrough in communication, which Vera Norwood interpreted as a "trophy" for Crisler:[34]

> The wolf lay silent by the door, head up, looking up with wolf attentiveness at everything—shelves, hanging light bulb, then me, sitting on the cot. On impulse I deliberately stretched and spread my fingers. Trigger, watching them, spread his own long "fingers" very slightly, the merest hint of a stretch. The wolf empathized![35]

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[29] Smuts, "Embodied Communication," 137.
[30] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 142-143.
[31] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 157.
[32] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 97.
[33] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 270-271.
[34] Vera Norwood, *Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 242.
[35] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 158-159.

Not all of their interactions were so accordant. To communicate refusal, the wolves "tossed one's hand away with the muzzle."[36] Trigger also "lay looking off as if indifferent" after he was prevented from going on a hunt with another wolf, refusing to look at Crisler until she coaxed him; he finally looked into her eyes and licked her hand, defusing the tense situation.[37] Trigger showed his displeasure in other ways, too, when he caught one's arm in his jaws[38] or lunged at Crisler, growling close to her face; both were resolved by gently talking to the wolf.[39] Crisler sought a relationship that would rely on such negotiations rather than training or violence. "A full-grown wolf will plead with you not to take his possessions," she wrote. "And you in turn can plead with a wolf. He glances at your eyes, desists from what displeased you and walks off as if indifferent."[40] Yet sometimes, the negotiations failed when the wolves absolutely refused—with good reasons—and the Crislers forced them into situations they did not want to participate in; afterward, they always tried to reconcile with Lady and Trigger.

The gestures and "conversations" they shared evolved into patterns that alternated between rather clumsy and discordant and more graceful and harmonized. Smuts noted that interactions of this kind could be called "dances" through which all participants become who they are with each other and in the context of one another; every change of rhythm in such dances signals a change in the relationship.[41] The rhythm and synchronization certainly varied throughout Crisler's relationship with Lady and Trigger, the changes manifesting perhaps most vividly in their greeting ceremonies. When there were dissonances, the wolves refused to greet her; when the

[36] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 167.
[37] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 165.
[38] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 226.
[39] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 148.
[40] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 288.
[41] Smuts, "Embodied Communication," 141-142.

situation was more harmonious, they enacted the mutual greeting. “When the wolf tilts head aside, bowing his neck, he may proceed to lay his neck clear down on the ground and unroll his eel-supple spine to follow—a dancer's maneuver,” wrote Crisler. “And he does it all in one fluent gesture, accompanied with the dazzling sweetness of the eyes.”[42] The dance-like movement mattered not as much as “the dance of relating,”[43] for mutually constituted meanings, not individual actions, are of the essence in embodied communication.[44] While the “dance” was in and out of synchronization numerous times, this form of mutual understanding—to the degree that can be achieved between different species and individuals—reconstrued all the participants, making “something new and elegant possible.”[45] The recognition of what Lady and Trigger communicated was part of their becoming-with, the politeness of responding in a mutually comprehensible way was another; yet such a relationship also demanded rejecting innocence and embracing accountability in the face of consequences that inevitably arise from living with wolves as companion species—particularly when captivity is involved.

4.3. THE INTIMACY OF ACCOUNTABILITY

With her fingers deep in Trigger’s fur as their gazes entangled,[46] and the fine vibrations she felt with her hand against Lady’s chest as they howled together,[47] Crisler must have been aware of the consequences of such close relations with wolves. “Touch, regard, looking back, becoming with,” wrote Haraway, “all these

[42] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 90.
[43] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 25.
[44] Smuts, “Embodied Communication,” 137-138.
[45] Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway*, 145.
[46] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 157.
[47] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 150.

make us responsible in unpredictable ways for which worlds take shape."[48] Crisler did not attempt to escape accountability in her memoir. Although the story of Lady and Trigger was sometimes related as the Crislers adopting or saving "orphaned" pups,[49] Lois was well aware that their captivity was wrong to begin with. "What was right to do in a situation unright from its beginning—the hour the pups were stolen from their den?"[50] Many such choices followed throughout her time with wolves.

When the Crislers decided to move to Point Barrow for winter, Lady and Trigger had to be packed into a plane to be flown there, after which they stayed either collared and chained or inside the Crislers' wanigan. The wolves had obvious trauma from flying in planes, and every time they saw one, they resisted being handled. Dragged on a leash near the plane that was supposed to take them to Point Barrow, Lady "dug her paws into the snow, striving with all her power to escape," then "whirled and leaped despairingly at [Crisler's] face."[51] Lady's trauma continued for a long time. On top of it, she fled at Point Barrow, eventually landing herself in a trap. Reminiscent of Ellen Velvin's description of wolfish silence in the prospect of death, Lady "never whimpered or uttered a sound" when being freed from the trap, and neither did she try to bite.[52] There was no beauty to her reaction in a way Velvin would have seen it, for Lady was no doubt full of terror at being approached, not only by a person she knew but also a stranger, with her leg injured and unable to escape. It was another trauma she had to live with.

After flying back to Killik, Lady finally had the collar removed for good; having spent over four months in it, she "sat leaning against the fence half fainting"

[48] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 36.
[49] Irving Petite, "Wolves Are Gentle Creatures, Former Peninsula Naturalists Discover," *Port Angeles Evening News*, March 15, 1957, 15; David McCord, "Reviewer Lauds Lois Crisler's Book, *Arctic Wild*," *Port Angeles Evening News*, October 21, 1958, 5; Clara Hussong, "*Arctic Wild* Records Adventure in Alaska," *Green Bay Press-Gazette*, April 28, 1959, 25.
[50] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 294.
[51] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 146.
[52] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 155.

when she could no longer feel the collar around her neck.[53] Lady and Trigger were not to be collared or chained ever again, yet they kept returning to the Crislers between their travels and hunts—not for food, but for companionship, Lois concluded.[54] It was their freedom to choose how to maintain their connection that Crisler found beauty but also despair in:

> Two hundred of [ptarmigan] sunned like white statues on a white hillside and Lady with calm joy went up to raise them. The first strip of birds toddled ahead of the black wolf, then rose, and she trotted, not ran, back and raised the next strip. The last strip of ptarmigan just sat there. As the four of us proceeded, each full of purpose and busyness, electric thrills of happiness went through me. But would the wolves come home with us? This day they did. Then one day they did not.[55]

According to Smuts, "relating to others (human or nonhuman) in this way requires giving up control over them and how they relate to us."[56] Fear of losing control over the wolves and how they related to her haunted Crisler and, against her better judgment, prompted her to make decisions that, sometimes, deprived the wolves of freedom of choice she deemed integral to their relationship. Crisler felt that she was constantly negotiating her role in these social relations,[57] which she recognized as important to wolves, who live "together on the deep level of responsibility," not merely as playmates but as companions and family—"a life commitment."[58] It was a quality Crisler admired and, just like with imitating the wolfish sounds and gestures, sought to share in this responsibility as well. Allowing Lady and Trigger freedom to decide how their relationship with the Crislers would develop was the first responsibility Lois felt she owed the wolves; returning them to the tundra so they might live out their time there was another;[59] killing them in case they got too badly

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[53] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 172.
[54] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 189.
[55] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 172.
[56] Barbara Smuts, "Reflections," in: John M. Coetzee et al., *The Lives of Animals*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 118.
[57] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 233, 259-261.
[58] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 260.
[59] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 168-169.

injured in traps or wounded by bullets was perhaps the hardest one to face.[60] Crisler gave up on the first two when she expressed a wish to take the wolves to Colorado and keep them in a two-acre pen, despite knowing they did not belong in captivity.[61] Her wish would eventually be fulfilled, at least partially.

Because the Crislers still needed footage of wolf pups that they did not manage to take with Lady and Trigger, Herbert went looking for a den. The initial plan to film the wolves from afar was abandoned as soon as he reached the place. "On the spur of the moment [he] decided to bring the pups home," Lois later reported. While the pups were being removed from the den, "[t]wo wolves, the parents no doubt, bounded around crying."[62] When Herbert presented the pups to Lois, he already had them named: Alatna, Arctic, Barrow, Killik, and Tundra, the latter so traumatized she refused to eat. The next troubling decision was made when Herbert allowed Trigger and Lady in with the five pups, putting the old assumption that male wolves are more likely to kill pups than take care of them to the test. Lois admitted that, at the time, they had no knowledge of what would happen. Even though the Crislers had read Adolph Murie's *The Wolves of Mount McKinley*—in which both male and female wolves were presented as attentive parents[63]—venturing a guess that Trigger and Lady would take care of, or at least not harm pups who were unrelated to them was risky, to say the least, and filled Lois with dread at what could happen. Herbert's decision was perhaps motivated by his understanding of wolves not as killing machines but as highly intelligent and social beings, so much so that he trusted them enough to put the lives of Alatna, Arctic, Barrow, Killik, and Tundra at stake. Perhaps, however, the motivation lay in wanting to obtain better footage for Walt

[60] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 154, 176.
[61] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 200-201.
[62] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 224.
[63] Adolph Murie, *The Wolves of Mount McKinley* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1944), 30.

Disney, a trophy just as tangible as it was unethical. Be it as it may, Trigger and Lady readily adopted the pups, becoming attentive caretakers. Trigger let the pups tug at his fur, Lady brought them toys, and both wolves played with and regurgitated meat for them. It had certainly put to shame the earlier authors who described wolves as indiscriminate cannibals. Yet it was also an ethically questionable experiment, the results of which, no matter what they would be, the Crislers had to take responsibility for.

Taking the pups from their den proved to be a life and death commitment indeed when the passage of the last of the migrating caribou through the tundra marked the end of the filming, and Herbert "was impatient to get on to other projects."[64] It was finally time to leave the Arctic, and the wolves' fate had to be decided. Lois admitted to not discussing it prior, for she "knew it must be death."[65] She felt responsible not only for how the wolves lived but also for how they died—yet not because she thought of them as killable. On the contrary, it was because they were *someone*, not something, that the manner of their death mattered.[66] Crisler knew they would starve or be shot by hunters if left alone on the tundra. She also knew they were not meant to live in captivity. Distancing herself from the prospect of having to kill them would be claiming innocence;[67] pretending that captivity was the better option would not absolve her of the responsibility either. In the end, she chose the latter. By that time, Lady and Trigger joined wild wolves and hunted together with them, Trigger pairing with a female Herbert had named Silver-mane. Lady later died in a fight with her, and Trigger was killed for a bounty of $50 not long after. Alatna, Arctic, Barrow, Killik, and Tundra, however, would die in

[64] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 293.
[65] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 264.
[66] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 106.
[67] Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway*, 235-236.

captivity. The five pups were loaded into the boxes that Lady and Trigger had been brought in and transported to Colorado,[68] where, having escaped from their pen, they were poisoned and shot within four months—all but one, Alatna, for whom Crisler kept bringing dogs as companions and mates over the years.

During that time, Crisler wrote her second memoir, *Captive Wild* (1968), a rather disturbing account of trying to navigate life with wolves, wolfdogs, and dogs, who were not provided with adequate care or enough space, and which culminated in Lois personally killing Alatna after seven years of shared life in captivity. Mentally, at that moment, she returned the she-wolf to the tundra, where she should never have been taken from in the first place.[69] Lois knew this. Such knowledge, according to Haraway, "is not the end but the beginning of serious accountability inside worldly complexities."[70] Yet unlike in the first memoir, in *Captive Wild* Crisler tried to justify and defend the choice of captivity for the pups,[71] as well as all the questionable decisions she had since made regarding them, many of which could be considered serious mistreatment of the animals in her care. Despite learning more about wolves than she could dream of and experiencing living with them as scarcely anyone before had the opportunity to, in the end she asked herself whether it was all worth it. "It would be vulgar to say yes, and egregious to say no," Crisler confessed in the epilogue to *Arctic Wild*. "The vulgarity would be that incredible vulgarity of those who say it improves one's character to kill animals. The egregiousness would be in assuming a knowledge of the future we do not have."[72] She could not have known, but in the future, others would be inspired by *Arctic Wild* enough to join the wolf conservation efforts.

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[68] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 299-300.
[69] Lois Crisler, *Captive Wild* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 237-238.
[70] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 106.
[71] Crisler, *Captive Wild*, 236-237.
[72] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 301.

Rachel Carson, a biologist famous for writing *Silent Spring* (1962), was particularly taken with Crisler's memoir. Carson's *The Sea Around Us* (1951), as well as her articles about wildlife published in the 1930 and 1940s, proved a great influence on Crisler, especially when she was writing about wolves.[73] This mutual admiration resulted in correspondence and eventual friendship between the two. Beyond discussing possible titles for *Silent Spring* and struggles in personal life, Carson and Crisler also exchanged letters about wolves.[74] Carson thought *Captive Wild* could become another success akin to Joy Adamson's *Born Free* (1960),[75] which recounted the life of Elsa, a lioness who lived much like Lady and Trigger, in partially wild, partially captive connections with humans. Many grew up reading such stories. Teresa Martino was among them, finding insight in Crisler's memoirs[76] and often returning to Adamson's *Born Free*, particularly during the time she spent with a captive-born wolf she had named Mckenzie,[77] after the Mackenzie Mountains in Yukon, where the she-wolf's grandparents were captured for a zoo in the 1970s. Mckenzie, whom she described as a "dancer on big silent paws,"[78] was born in a retiring rescue center, and from there, Martino took her to Vashon Island, just across from Puget Sound in the Pacific Northwest.[79] After almost a year of living together, she "rewilded" the wolf—an experience she related in *The Wolf, The Woman, The Wilderness* (1997).

Martino lived at a time when captive wolves and wolfdogs were becoming increasingly popular as pets. That is not to say there were no captive wolves or

[73] Brinkley, *The Quiet World*, 351-352.
[74] Rachel Carson, *Letter to Dorothy Freeman*, February 8, 1961, in: *Always, Rachel: The Letters of Rachel Carson and Dorothy Freeman, 1952-1964*, ed. Martha Freeman (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 344.
[75] Rachel Carson, *Letter to Dorothy Freeman*, March 28, 1961, in: *Always, Rachel*, 366-367.
[76] Personal communication with Teresa Martino, January 30, 2021.
[77] Teresa Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness: A True Story of Returning Home* (Troutdale: NewSage Press, 1997), 95.
[78] Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness*, 41.
[79] Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness*, 20-61.

wolfdogs kept prior to the 1970s. In *A Wolf in the Family* (1964)—whose cover advertises the story for the readers of *Born Free*—Jerome Hellmuth reminisced about buying two newly-born pups from a zoo in the 1960s. One of them died almost immediately; the other, Kunu, became a family pet. Inspired by Adolph Murie's descriptions of wolf family life in *The Wolves of Mount McKinley*, which included a story of Wags—a rather "friendly" female pup Murie took from a den to raise briefly as part of his studies[80]—Hellmuth thought he could free wolves from the role of villains by arguing that they make good household pets.[81] Kunu's life was to become frighteningly similar to Alatna's when the Hellmuths expressed their intention to breed her with dogs to get wolfdog pups. For all of his claims about the need for a change in how humans relate to wolves, most of the time Hellmuth told others that Kunu was a dog for fear of the consequences if he revealed the truth.[82] What became of Kunu is unknown. Hellmuth ended his account with acquiring another wolf pup he named Inuk in 1964 and presenting him to Kunu as her future mate.[83]

Kunu's story is not unusual, and Hellmuth was not alone in promoting wolves and wolfdogs as pets. In the 1940s, wolves were bred with dogs on fur farms, and the trade escalated from there.[84] Because of Martino's previous experience with wolves and wolfdogs, she was aware that they were not suited to such a life. Nevertheless, it is thought that between 250,000 and 500,000 wolfdogs are kept in the United States alone,[85] with no estimates available for pet wolves. By comparison, as of 2023, there are about 7,500 wolves in the wild in the lower 48 states, and between 7,000 and

[80] Murie, *The Wolves of Mount McKinley*, 45-49.
[81] Jerome Hellmuth, *A Wolf in the Family* (New York: New American Library, 1964), 17.
[82] Hellmuth, *A Wolf in the Family*, 74-84.
[83] Hellmuth, *A Wolf in the Family*, 160-186.
[84] Annie Lowrey, "What Do Wolfdogs Want?" *The Atlantic*, February 2, 2020, accessed 25 Mach, 2023, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/02/what-do-wolfdogs-want/605896.
[85] Ceiridwen Terrill, *Part Wild: One Woman's Journey With a Creature Caught Between the Worlds of Wolves and Dogs* (New York: Scribner, 2011), 207.

11,000 of them in Alaska.[86] Although wolfdog ownership is banned or regulated in some states, they remain not only popular and highly coveted pets but also a profitable business. From selling wolf hides to selling their live bodies, the wolf is still a commodity to many.

Contrary to Hellmuth's claims, wolves and wolfdogs do not make good pets. Their needs usually exceed the capacities of prospective owners, and the reality of living with such animals rarely meets their expectations. Cases of abuse and neglect are commonplace, according to rescuers, whenever the animals prove too challenging to handle. Crisler's experience with Alatna and her wolfdog pups is a painful testament to this. Annie Lowrey, a journalist writing for *The Atlantic*, reported that "between 60 and 70 percent of wolfdogs are abandoned or put down," thousands of them being killed every year as soon as they mature into adults,[87] so below two years of age. Even back in the 1980s, when Martino was privately rescuing such animals,[88] there were more unwanted pet wolves and wolfdogs than she could possibly take in, but take them she did, for the alternative was death.[89]

Martino thought the reason behind the desire to keep wolves and wolfdogs as pets was "the loss of our own wildness."[90] Certainly, some misguidedly wish to connect with their "wild side" through close contact with an undomesticated animal; more often, however, the reasons lie somewhere else altogether. For one, owning exotic pets is a sign of status, and wolves are thought to be among the most charismatic species, making them a popular target in the eyes of such animal collectors. For another, wolves are thought to be more "special" than dogs, to the

[86] Wolf Conservation Center, "Wild Wolf Populations in the United States," accessed 25 Mach, 2023, https://nywolf.org/learn/u-s-wolf-populations.
[87] Lowrey, "What Do Wolfdogs Want?"
[88] In 1997, Martino founded *Wolftown*, a nonprofit wildlife sanctuary she was running for over a decade. In that time, she had a number of wolves and wolfdogs in her care.
[89] Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness*, 19.
[90] Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness*, 41.

extent that emphasis is usually put on the content of wolf blood in a dog—the more wolf there is in a dog, the higher the value of the hybrid, and the more the animal's appearance resembles that of a wolf, the deeper the illusion that the owner is taming or creating a connection with a wild creature.[91] Barbara Smuts let herself be taken by a similar fantasy when she thought of her dog Bahati "as a wild animal possessed by instinctual wisdom," a "perception […] no doubt facilitated by the fact that she closely resembles a jet-black timber wolf."[92] This canine beauty of wolves and wolf-like dogs is one of the main reasons why many covet them as pets. In recent years, the popularity of wolfdogs rose, on the one hand, because of the many social media accounts which regularly post visually attractive snapshots of life with captive wolves and wolfdogs. On the other, it was also due to the presence of "direwolves" in a relatively popular *Game of Thrones* television series, in which the direwolf "Ghost" was played by Quigley, who also starred alongside Digger in Nicolas Vanier's *Loup* (2009). With his white fur and golden eyes, Quigley is a strikingly beautiful animal, not unlike Shadow, a rescued wolfdog whom Lowrey described as "numinous, her eyes gold flecked and her white coat as rich as a Russian novel;" meeting her in person made Lowrey understand the appeal of these animals.[93]

The sometimes overly romanticized portrayals of wolves in literature over the years undoubtedly played an important role in facilitating people's interest in owning them as well. While these novels presented a rather idyllic friendship between a wild canine and a human, such as Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*, memoirs about captive wolves and wolfdogs as companions usually offered a more sober approach, although also to a varying degree. Many such accounts were published after Jerome

[91] S. Marek Muller, "Companion Cyborgs: Untethering Discourses About Wolf-Hybrids," *Environmental Communication*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2021), 6-10.
[92] Smuts, "Reflections," 115.
[93] Lowrey, "What Do Wolfdogs Want?"

Hellmuth's *A Wolf in the Family* and Lois Crisler's *Captive Wild*, including Marika Lumi Morgan's *Wolf… Kill! The Wilderness Called Shunka* (1976),[94] Jim and Jamie Dutcher's *Wolves at Our Door* (2002), and Ceiridwen Terrill's *Part Wild* (2011), among others. Teresa Martino's memoir is perhaps the most unusual one, for the author sought to relinquish ownership of a wolf. More often than not, however, keeping pet wolves and wolfdogs is hardly about the animals themselves, even though it should be.

Martino asked, "Why do people want wolves as pets?"[95] Lowrey asked *what do wolves want*. "Wolves want to be wolves," she concluded. "And it is impossible to be a wolf […] when living in a cage."[96] The issue many no doubt grappled with was how to understand what a wolf wants in the absence of actual contact with the animal. Martino, for one, felt that science alone is not enough to understand wolves as individuals, nor our relations with them. "While scientists may go and observe a pack of wolves, I live with the wolves," she argued.[97] Although caring for rescued animals is commendable, studying wolves in captive environments yields different results, sometimes vastly so, from those obtained by observing them in the wild. Moreover, purchasing wolfdogs as pets and breeding wolves in zoos and wildlife parks—not all of them offering these animals enough space or proper care—raises ethical concerns.[98] Perhaps, at least, the question answered through keeping these animals in inadequate conditions is what wolves do *not* want.

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[94] Later reprinted as *Shunka: Life with an Arctic Wolf* (Exeter: J. N. Townsend Publishing, 1996).
[95] Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness*, 41.
[96] Lowrey, "What Do Wolfdogs Want?"
[97] Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness*,133.
[98] Erin Adler, "Dakota County Petting-zoo Owner Settles Lawsuit Over Wolf Killing," *Star Tribune*, December 19, 2019, accessed 20 March, 2023, https://www.startribune.com/dakota-county-wolf-case-ends-with-settlement/566343102; Joe Kelly, "Animal Rights Group Sues Over Conditions at Wisconsin Roadside Zoo," *Courthouse News Service*, February 12, 2020, accessed 20 March, 2023, https://www.courthousenews.com/animal-rights-group-sues-over-conditions-at-wisconsin-roadside-zoo; Alissa Thibault, "Wolf Escape Reignites Vancouver Humane Society Calls to End Captivity of Animals at Zoos," *CTV News Vancouver*, August 20, 2022, accessed 20 March, 2023,

Throughout the years, wolves were studied both in captivity and in the wild, each of the methods bringing different pieces of knowledge together to form the understanding of the species we have today. Collectively, they influenced how wolves are perceived and how we relate to them. While the Crislers might be admonished—and rightfully so—for taking wild wolf pups from their den to film them, Adolph Murie, who took a wolf pup from a den as well, did not have innocent connections that were based purely on observations in the wild, either, yet his study was an inspiration to many. The results of Lois Crisler's observations and interactions with wolves are similarly widely referenced by biologists. The general public, too, was greatly influenced by her first memoir. The importance of the message she communicated through the narrative lies in approaching Lady and Trigger as individuals, subjects, and nonhuman persons, which provided a glimpse into "new worlds," as she called them,[99] substantially Uexküllian, neither human- nor doglike, but of which she was part of.[100] Troubling as they are, such stories of living with wolves are inextricable parts of our shared histories with them. The ethical choice is to move away from captivity when it is not necessary. Indeed, the direction taken by future scientists would be that of studying and observing wolves in the wild as well as engaging in restoration projects.

4.4. AFFECTIVE ENCOUNTERS

"I remember my first wolf," wrote Margaret Murie in a foreword to James Greiner's *The Red Snow: A Story of the Alaskan Gray Wolf* (1980), "[h]e was silver-gray, […]

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https://bc.ctvnews.ca/wolf-escape-reignites-vancouver-humane-society-calls-to-end-captivity-of-animals-at-zoos-1.6035223.

[99] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 158.

[100] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 91, 197.

trotting unconcernedly through the short willows along the banks of Alaska's Porcupine River." It was 1929, long before Lois Crisler came to the Brooks Range and even before Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher arrived at Driftwood Valley. "I remember too the gray wolf crossing a still-frozen lake in the Brooks Range," Murie continued, "[a]nd the black one, hunting along the banks of the Toklat River in Mount McKinley National Park." From all the unforgettable experiences of seeing wolves and listening to their musical calls arose a profound belief "that *they belong there*."[101] Margaret Murie was well known for her conservation efforts and her role in establishing the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. In her correspondence with Crisler, she shared experiences and sentiments about the places they both sought to protect.[102] The conviction that wolves belong in the wild and have the right to live in the environments which were home to them prior to the many eradications carried out over the years in various regions was expressed by Stanwell-Fletcher and Crisler as well, even though the latter's wish for the preservation of wolves in their habitat did not quite extend to Lady, Trigger, Alatna, Arctic, Barrow, Killik, and Tundra.

Vera Norwood thought Crisler's approach outdated, with no option beyond death or captivity for the wolves. Since then, conservationists and biologists such as Jane Goodall have been moving toward reintroductions as their ethical responsibility.[103] Crisler had felt it too, but her attachment to the wolves prevailed even though Alatna, Arctic, Barrow, Killik, and Tundra had a chance to return to the wild when Trigger tried to lead them away from the pen and toward his mate, Silver-mane.[104] In the end, Trigger alone returned to the life of freedom on the tundra

[101] Margaret E. Murie, Foreword to: James Greiner, *The Red Snow: A Story of the Alaskan Gray Wolf* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), vii.
[102] Margaret E. Murie, *Two in the Far North* (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Books, [1962] 1997), 267.
[103] Norwood, *Made From This Earth*, 245.
[104] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 263.

before being killed for a bounty. "Back of us we left destruction," Crisler confessed, noting that one of the structures they had built and where they stayed was later used by wolf hunters.[105] Upon her arrival in the Arctic, she thought that civilization would be the ultimate downfall of wilderness, and this conviction resonated with her even more profoundly after leaving the place.[106] Martino, too, felt that wilderness was "becoming islands with civilization caging it in." Rewilding Mckenzie "meant returning her to the natural environment of a wolf. To a place fairly untouched by the modern world where wolves can live as they were meant to."[107] Whether such untouched wilderness truly exists or existed in the past remains a moot point. Rolf O. Peterson, a wildlife biologist who led the wolf-moose study at Isle Royale for decades, argued that "leaving humanity out of nature is simply naïve. Absolute wilderness (where the effects of humans are absent) is a myth; human influence pervades every corner of the earth."[108] Sometimes, restoration projects may be the only way to maintain wilderness in this world—not the mythic pristine wilderness of the past, but the one that exists today.

Such restoration projects, however, often prove controversial. When the reintroduction of wolves to the Olympic National Park was proposed in 1975, Lena Fletcher, who lived with her sister Dora Richmond on a homestead in the 1900s, wrote in a column for *The Daily News*:

> anybody who knows wolves or knew them as our pioneers did cannot conceive […] reintroducing an animal with such potential for harm that, thank goodness, we are by now well rid of […]. Yes, when my parents and other homesteaders first entered the forests of the west Olympics there were wolves here; not the puny Rocky Mountain and plains kind known as the Buffalo wolves, Ontario wolves or brush wolves, but the huge Olympic timber wolves even larger than the arctic wolves. […] One comfort, no matter what […] ideas they get they

[105] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 300.
[106] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 37-38.
[107] Teresa Martino, "Interview," *NewSage Press*, February 27, 1998, accessed 20 March, 2019, http://www.newsagepress.com/wolfwomanwilderness.html.
[108] Rolf O. Peterson, *The Wolves of Isle Royale: A Broken Balance* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 171.

> won't be able to find any Olympic timber wolves to introduce. The coyotes have […] replaced those.[109]

The issue returned time and again. In the 1980s, a rapid expansion of the mountain goats, a species not native to the Olympics, served as a reminder of the wolf's absence. The goats were introduced to the Olympic Peninsula by hunters in the 1920s, around the same time the last wolves were being killed. No major predator was left to balance the population of ungulates who were damaging the endemic flora,[110] and it took almost a century before the goats were removed and relocated.[111] The late 1990s saw yet another unsuccessful campaign to reintroduce wolves to the Olympic National Park;[112] this time, the local residents opposed the idea for fear the predators would attack their pets and livestock.[113] In 2013, David Moskowitz, an environmentalist and wildlife photographer, wrote that although the Olympic Peninsula offers more than adequate habitat for wolves, it is unlikely that they would return there on their own, making the reintroduction perhaps the only way to restore wolf populations in the Olympics. "[R]estoration of extirpated native species is part of the national park mandate," he argued, "and wolves are the only native mammal species currently missing."[114] Adolph Murie suggested the reintroduction as far back as 1935,[115] with Herbert Crisler following suit in 1977.[116] Although still absent from the Olympic Mountains and unlikely to be reintroduced, wolves nevertheless

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[109] Lena Fletcher, "Let's Put Wolves in Their Place—Out of the Park," *The Daily News*, January 11, 1976, 9.
[110] Larry Pynn, "Park Officials Grapple with Growing Goat Woes," *The Vancouver Sun*, March 21, 1986, 24.
[111] Brandon Block, "Mountain Goat Removal from Olympic National Park More Than Halfway Complete," *The Olympian*, November 12, 2020, accessed 29 March, 2021, https://www.theolympian.com/news/state/article247150061.html.
[112] Seattle Times, "Endangered Wolves Find a Friend in Congress," *The Spokesman-Review*, July 15, 1997, 22.
[113] Danny Westneat, "Wolves May Return to Olympic Park," *Tallahassee Democrat*, March 14, 1999, 10.
[114] Moskowitz, *Wolves in the Land of Salmon*, 260.
[115] Moskowitz, *Wolves in the Land of Salmon*, 263.
[116] Seabury Blair Jr., "The Return of the Wolf: Herb Crisler, Olympic Filmmaker was First to Propose Reintroduction," *Kitsap Sun*, October 7, 1997, accessed 4 March, 2021, https://products.kitsapsun.com/archive/1997/10-07/0035_the_return_of_the_wolf__herb_cris.html.

returned to the Washington state, where Lois Crisler was born and where Teresa Martino lived with Mckenzie. Today, Martino is ranching alongside wolves. Range riding in the Selkirk Mountains, she keeps the predators from eating livestock. Some of these wolves, she claims, are descendants of Mckenzie. The Grey One, as she calls her, had found a mate and reared pups.[117] Martino does not speak of wolves openly, aware of the controversies surrounding their presence. The return of these predators is rarely calmly accepted, whether human assistance is involved or not.

Oppositions to reintroduction projects were no doubt partially built on narratives about wolves that dominated public opinion, at least until some of them were replaced by Adolph Murie's *The Wolves of Mount McKinley*, Stanwell-Fletcher's *Driftwood Valley*, and Crisler's *Arctic Wild*. After all, in the absence of encounters with wolves, we either invent them or inherit stories about them. Through her interactions with Lady and Trigger, Crisler realized she herself was not free of such "prefabricated pattern for wolves,"[118] made up of narratives that provided fixed answers instead of asking new and different questions. Crisler was in a unique position to ask such questions in highly articulate environments through interactions and encounters with wolves both captive and wild. More than that—through giving the wolves a chance to respond, she was also open to receiving unexpected answers.

One of the questions Crisler kept asking throughout her time with wolves was whether they would attack her.[119] The first answer came soon after the Crislers' arrival in Alaska, when they encountered wild wolves in the middle of the night. For the first time in her life, Lois heard their howling. "Impulsively I imitated the sound […]. I was answered. Not by one voice but by a wild weird pandemonium of deep-pitched voices. We stood awestruck," she recalled. Her reaction was not unlike

[117] Personal communication with Teresa Martino, January 30, 2021.
[118] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 97.
[119] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 141-142.

Stanwell-Fletcher's, deeply moved by the sound, driven to understand it, to connect with it, faintly fearful yet thrilled at the same time. The Crislers moved toward the wolves, and the wolves, whose curiosity was aroused by the strange human howling, moved toward the Crislers. They watched each other. Lois then heard one of the animals moving closer, and all the wolf stories she knew, no matter how fictional, flooded her in an instant. She howled again. "This time I was too close, the wolves were not deceived. […] One or two answered briefly but the main result of my howl was that the wolves rose and in desultory fashion trotted away upriver on their night's hunt."[120] The second answer to her question came when she had witnessed a pair of wolves hunting caribou. When the two came closer after a failed hunt, Crisler felt a thrill rather than fear or panic; they looked on curiously, then left their human observers as they found them.[121] The third and final answer was provided by Lady and Trigger, who, according to Crisler, posed no real threat despite her many failed communications and arguably dangerous situations with them.[122]

Crisler described the caribou hunt in detail in an article published in *The Journal of Mammalogy*,[123] and it was her only strictly scientific or "objective" publication regarding wolves. The separation of the objective and subjective perspectives in science promotes attributing value and importance to observations or studies based mostly on the scientist's approach. According to Smuts, however, they should be complementary:

> Ever since I began studying animal social behavior, […] I have wondered what might happen if we reconfigured this rigid demarcation. In particular, I am interested in how intersubjective experiences (i.e., experiences arising through interactions between subjects) might inform the study of social relationships, and

[120] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 292-293.
[121] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 99-106.
[122] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 287.
[123] Lois Crisler, "Observations of Wolves Hunting Caribou," *Journal of Mammalogy*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (1956), 337-346.

> how the scientific study of social relationships might influence the way we think about our interactions with others and thereby alter intersubjective experience.[124]

Crisler's experience described in *Arctic Wild* is an example of the former way of influence, for the latter was hindered by the lack of sufficient knowledge; her own findings, meanwhile, would influence others in their scientific studies.

One of them was Gordon Haber, who continued Adolph Murie's research in Mount McKinley starting in 1966. Mount McKinley, now called the Denali National Park, is home to around 120 wolves in a dozen or so wolf families.[125] Out of those who were formerly frequenting the areas where tourists passed most often—making these wolves the most visible, photographed, and well-known ones—the Savage River Pack was hunted or trapped to extinction in 1983, and the Headquarters Pack ceased to exist in 1995 when the breeding female 307 was snared; two years before, her mate, 251, was killed during the researchers' attempt to dart and radio-collar him.[126] The Sanctuary Pack moved into the Headquarters Pack's territory in 1995, but they did not last long. In 2002, a trapper killed the Sanctuary's last female, whose mother died in another darting incident at the hands of the National Park Service the year before.[127] The Mount Margaret Pack, identified by the researchers in 2000, was gone by 2010.[128] The East Fork Pack, otherwise known as the Toklat wolves—the subject of Murie's study, which he began in 1939 and continued into the 1960s—was later studied by Haber, who followed them for forty more years.[129] The Toklat wolves' demise came in 2016, with most of the family members killed by hunters in

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[124] Barbara Smuts, "Between Species: Science and Subjectivity," *Configurations*, Vol. 14, No. 1-2 (2006), 116.
[125] Denali Wolf Project, *2021 Annual Wolf Report*, National Park Service, accessed 30 March, 2023, http://npshistory.com/publications/dena/wolf/2021.pdf.
[126] David L. Mech, *The Wolves of Denali* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 64.
[127] Elizabeth Manning, "Trapper Kills Last Wolf in Denali Pack," *The Desert Sun*, May 5, 2002, 21.
[128] Marybeth Holleman, "Wolves of Denali Deserve Our Protection," *Anchorage Daily News*, January 8, 2010, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.adn.com/voices/article/wolves-denali-deserve-our-protection/2010/01/08.
[129] Marybeth Holleman, "It's Long Past Time for Alaska to Protect Denali Wolves with Buffer Zone," *Anchorage Daily News*, July 6, 2016, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.adn.com/voices/commentary/2016/05/17/18holleman.

prior years.[130] While packs often disappear without human interference and the vacant territories are always occupied by new wolf families, some biologists believe that more than population numbers should be considered. Marybeth Holleman, who co-authored *Among Wolves*, likens the seventy-year-long continuous study of the Toklat wolf lineage to Jane Goodall's study of chimpanzees;[131] the loss after the pack's disappearance cannot be grasped only in ecological terms.

In his efforts to stop wolf culling practices in Alaska, Haber spoke out about the ethical considerations of wolf management. In particular, he emphasized the importance of cultures in wolf families, which are often lost due to killing individuals who had not yet had a chance to pass down, for instance, the hunting traditions to their pups. While the population as a number is likely to recover, the unique stories of each and every killed wolf are lost.[132] What inspired Haber to become a wolf biologist was *Arctic Wild,* in which Crisler described "with great sensitivity" wolves with and alongside whom she lived in northern Alaska, emphasizing not only their ecological importance but also the emotional capacities and strong social bonds of individuals whose stories she wrote down. "Almost 40 years later," Haber wrote in his 1996 article, "I am obliged to also read the sterile National Park Service summaries […] of the 15-20% annual wolf harvests that are currently allowed within the same area." He was often branded a "wolf lover" whose science was not objective; aware of this, Haber firmly stood by his opinions:

> I recognize that my strong opposition to the way wolves are managed in Alaska and elsewhere involves more than pure biology. I receive frequent criticism for this position from my peers. Nevertheless, Aldo Leopold did not hesitate to venture into such areas of overlap between biology and ethics, to distinguish

[130] Elise Schmelzer, "Storied Alaska Wolf Pack Beloved for Decades has Vanished, Thanks to Hunting," *The Washington Post*, August 9, 2016, accessed 31 January, 2023, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/08/09/storied-alaska-wolf-pack-beloved-for-decades-has-vanished-thanks-to-hunting.
[131] Gordon Haber and Marybeth Holleman, *Among Wolves: Gordon Haber's Insights into Alaska's Most Misunderstood Animal* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2013), 17.
[132] Haber and Holleman, *Among Wolves*, 121-128.

> between right and wrong in advocating improved management of natural systems. Other wildlife scientists who regard his ideals as a guiding light for the profession should not hesitate to do the same.[133]

To Haber and to others, Crisler's memoir was another one of such guiding lights. Conservationists Margaret Murie, Margaret Mead, and Ansel Adams deemed *Arctic Wild* "a historic breakthrough in the wildlife protection movement." Before Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* could inspire people to support wolf conservation efforts, Crisler's book was being read "during those crucial years […] when the fight to save the Arctic was particularly intense."[134] It was her portrayal of wolves as gentle, intelligent, and family-oriented creatures that really moved the readers. By prompting others to see and study wolves as individuals, Crisler had an important role in changing the narratives in ways that would unmake the killable status of these animals. Above all, it was a call to take responsibility for violent human-wolf relations.

David Mech called *Arctic Wild* a new genre of wolf literature, neither a scientific record nor a fictional story, but a personal account with a focus on Crisler's interactions and relationship with wolves.[135] Through the intersubjective experiences conveyed in her memoir, individuality and agency of wolves were made more visible, and in their embodied communication, whether it was in or out of synchronization, they created a new narrative—shared one—that reconfigured the boundaries between the objective and the subjective, dissolving at least some of the old patterns about *what* wolves are to ask *who* they are instead. What followed was a dance of relating between individuals of different species and contexts, whose behaviors and life stories depended on a rapport of forces with their companions, in

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[133] Gordon Haber, "Biological, Conservation, and Ethical Implications of Exploiting and Controlling Wolves," *Conservation Biology*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (1996), 1076.
[134] Brinkley, *The Quiet World*, 351.
[135] David L. Mech, Foreword to: Lois Crisler, *Arctic Wild* (New York: Lyons Press, [1958] 1999), ix-xi.

their significant otherness. Through their becoming-with, scientific knowledge, as well as the history of their species, were affected. Stories to come would be marked by the one Lady, Trigger, and other wolves co-created with Crisler, just like their own story was influenced by those which were told before.

Fascinated by the wolf's place in such narratives of the past, Crisler had soaked in them even prior to meeting Lady and Trigger. She had read all that she could on wolf biology and beyond, including Murie's *The Wolves of Mount McKinley* but also, with great interest, passages about wolves in *Gilgamesh, Beowulf,* Homer's *Iliad,* Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, and Shakespeare's plays.[136] Yet just like Stanwell-Fletcher, Crisler could not find literature that would resonate with her experience in the wilderness, words that conveyed the hardships and the raw beauty of such a life:

> Had no poet ever backpacked up and camped by his rock-slab cache on the mountain ridge, slept on hard ground by the drop-off till the sun crossed the waves of pale-blue ridges and clouds parted on the glaciers and a bull elk bugled faint and pure from timberline far below? Nothing I knew, neither music nor poetry, had the right flavor or smell. I wanted wild glory, some strange strain never heard yet, poetry of a million years from now, when we are human instead of adumbrating humanness—something that caught the piercing, close-to-your-being, "personal-impersonal" aspect of nature.[137]

Writing as if in a prelude to her life with wolves caught between wildness and captivity and with herself caught between the realms of personal relation and impersonal observation, Crisler was starting to find words that eluded her before. In a sense, she found them through co-constitutive relations with other species, especially the individuals with whom she shared closer connections. In her "naïve trust in words,"[138] she looked to those to communicate with wolves; it was only because Lady and Trigger used gestures with her that Crisler learned of a different way to navigate their relationship. The recognition of the possibility of embodied communication with nonhuman others, as well as developing polite responses to the

[136] Brinkley, *The Quiet World,* 350.
[137] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 42.
[138] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 158.

animal presence and agency, more often than not begins with encounters. As was the case with Aldo Leopold, who read Ernest T. Seton's "Story of Lobo" but needed to experience the fateful encounter with a green-eyed wolf to become an advocate for the species, so did Lois Crisler read about wolves before meeting them face to face—and, she found, encountering wolves on the pages was not enough. "We had […] read a book and read it like a bible, but it did not 'take,'" wrote Crisler. "[A]s we first came to Alaska, we had read Dr. Adolph Murie's book, *The Wolves of Mount McKinley*. But you need experience to make it come alive."[139] Yet because living with wild animals in such close connections is neither advisable nor possible in most cases, we should rely, at least in part, on the shared histories others had co-created with wolves. Reading such narratives is not tantamount to real encounters, but inheriting the right ones sets the stage for more polite responses in any potential encounters, relationships, and studies to come, paving the way for new negotiations in partial connections, particularly in the era of reintroductions and recolonizations.

[139] Crisler, *Arctic Wild*, 65.

CHAPTER 5: PARTIAL CONNECTIONS

5.1. NAVIGATING NEW HISTORIES

She knew not of international borders or what her act of crossing them meant both for the history of her species and for the people who followed her movements. In the distinctively wolfish trot, the female traveled from British Columbia to Montana, a state that was thought to be wolfless for half a century, save for occasional ventures of lone wolves such as herself through the area—wolves who nevertheless would not settle there. In April 1979, this silver-furred wolf was captured twice within two weeks and radio-collared by Joe Smith of the Wolf Ecology Project on the first occasion.[1] Named Kishinena after a creek that flowed through British Columbia where the first capture took place,[2] and assigned a scientific number 114, the she-wolf went on to wander between the Canadian and the American wilderness following her release.[3] As the wolf's story was unfolding, the signs of her presence were being read with an endless fascination and her travel routes recorded with scientific scrutiny by Diane Boyd, a young biologist who joined the Wolf Ecology Project in September of the same year. What field notes and journal articles could not contain due to their rather restrictive nature, Boyd wrote down in more personal essays over the years. The partial connections that arose in the course of this study, and the co-created story of the wolf and the biologist that followed, signified an important development in the history of human-wolf relations in North America,

[1] Diane Boyd, "Food Habits and Spatial Relations of Coyotes and a Lone Wolf in the Rocky Mountains," Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Montana, 1982, 19.
[2] Diane Boyd, "The Return of the Wolf to Montana," in: *War Against the Wolf*: *America's Campaign to Exterminate the Wolf*, ed. Rick McIntyre (Stillwater: Voyageur Press, 1995), 360.
[3] Diane Boyd, "Sage's Story," in: *Wild Wolves We Have Known*, ed. Richard P. Thiel (Minneapolis: International Wolf Center, 2015), 29.

heading toward coexistence that was built upon past narratives while seeking new paths forward—still imperfect, with varying degree of harmony in the ever-ongoing dance of relating, but nevertheless intent on negotiating the relationships in a way that would not exclude wolfish agency in matters that concern them.

Kishinena displayed her agency by coming to Montana, but what brought her there is unknown; perhaps she dispersed from her family group in search of a mate and a new territory. Diane Boyd, meanwhile, came to Montana in her pursuit of working with wild wolves and carving out a piece of her own territory in the field of wolf research. Born and raised in the suburbs of Minneapolis, Boyd could encounter wolves only in captivity, and those were indeed kept a short way from her home—at Como Zoo in Saint Paul. In 1967, two of the wolf pups born there were offered to David Mech for his studies, and the pair, named Thunder and Lightning, briefly lived with the researcher and his family. Thunder soon died of canine distemper, and given Lightning's many escapes from her containment and resistance against the chain that held her, Mech could not bear to keep her in his backyard. She was returned to the Como Zoo, and Mech expressed his wish to have her euthanized if she could not be moved to a place with more space for the wolf to live in.[4] In the final words of his preface to the 1970 classic, *The Wolf: The Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species*, Mech wrote: "to Lightning—if it is permissible to address a wolf in print—the only thing I can say is, 'I'm sorry.'"[5] He was apologizing, perhaps, not only to the she-wolf but also to all the wolves he would keep in captivity for research

[4] Laurence Pringle, *Wolfman: Exploring the World of Wolves* (New York: Scribner, 1983), 30-36.
[5] David L. Mech, *The Wolf: The Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species* (New York: Doubleday Publishing, 1970), xx.

purposes in the future. In 1976, Mech indeed started a study with about forty captive wolves, and the project eventually evolved into the Wildlife Science Center.[6]

Boyd would see both the wolves at the Como Zoo[7] and those Mech kept as part of his captive wolf project. In fact, in 1976, she worked with the latter as a volunteer; it was her first initiation into the world of wolves. "Some of these captive animals were socialized to people, acting like a dog in wolf's clothing," she recalled. "But the shy, untamed ones restlessly pacing in the back of the wooded enclosures stirred fantasies of watching wild wolves pursuing a deer along a birch-lined lakeshore."[8] In the winter of 1974, the Como Zoo wolves were released into a new enclosure that, similar to the wooded areas in Mech's captive study, was supposed to resemble the animals' natural environment. The one acre of space provided for them[9] nevertheless seemed insufficient in size when compared to Kishinena's home range of approximately 330 square miles[10]—but this was a conclusion one could reach only by recording the she-wolf's locations in the field with the aid of radio-telemetry. Its use in wolf research was started in November 1968, when David Mech, with the help of Robert Ream, radio-collared a wild wolf for the first time in the United States. Tracking this wolf and several others in the Superior National Forest, Minnesota,[11] Ream was gaining experience he would later need when founding the Wolf Ecology Project in 1973. Two years before Boyd joined his team, Ursula Mattson was looking

[6] Greg Stanley, "State of Wolves," *Star Tribune*, July 10, 2022, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.startribune.com/minnesota-wolves-predators-research-survival-extinction-preservation/600184286.
[7] Debra Mitt-Smith, "Women and Wolves," *International Wolf Magazine*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (2019), 9.
[8] Diane Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," in: *Intimate Nature: The Bond Between Women and Animals*, eds. Linda Hogan, Deena Metzger, and Brenda Peterson (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1998), 90.
[9] "Como Zoo Wolves Ran From Their Cage to a New Freedom Yesterday," *The Minneapolis Star*, November 22, 1974, 39.
[10] Boyd, "Food Habits and Spatial Relations of Coyotes and a Lone Wolf in the Rocky Mountains," 22
[11] Robert R. Ream, "Minnesota Wolf Range: Past, Present, and Future," in: *The Wolves of Minnesota: Howl in the Heartland*, ed. David L. Mech (Stillwater: Voyageur Press, 2000), 29.

for signs of wolf presence in Montana, whether it was tracks, scat, or reports from locals, eventually collecting enough data to convince the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Endangered Species to provide funding for the project.[12]

In the meantime, Diane Boyd was volunteering for Mech's study of wild wolves in northern Minnesota, where wolf populations remained stable despite the species' disappearance from other states; it was there, too, that she saw her first wild wolf. Then, in 1978, she moved on to monitoring wildlife in Alaska but turned down the offer to study gulls there, as her mind was still set on studying predators, whether in Alaska or elsewhere.[13] The next year, Boyd worked as a trapper for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service back in Minnesota again, this time as part of the depredation control program, tasked with radio-collaring wolves for research purposes and investigating depredations if such occurred. Being a wolf trapper professionally and a hunter privately provided her with "a more balanced perspective about wolves,"[14] which proved particularly useful for a biologist who would have to grapple with old and new ways to view and live alongside wolves during their comeback to the American West, not only through natural recolonization but also through reintroduction.

Perhaps it was fitting, then, that her shelves were lined with Ernest Thompson Seton's animal stories and Barry Lopez's *Of Wolves and Men* (1978),[15] for the former were the beginning of wolf biographies, while the latter represented a new type of narratives about wolves. Boyd subverted the older ones, most importantly the hunters' stories about outlaw wolves, at the same time writing narratives befitting the

[12] Will Michael Wright, "Nature Unbound: What Gray Wolves, Monarch Butterflies, and Giant Sequoias Tell Us About Large Landscape Conservation," Ph.D. Dissertation, Montana State University, 2021, 104.
[13] Michael Link and Kate Crowley, *Following the Pack: The World of Wolf Research* (Stillwater: Voyageur Press, 1994), 102-103.
[14] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 92.
[15] Barnaby Conrad, *Ghost Hunting in Montana: A Search for Roots in the Old West* (San Francisco: Harper Collins West, 1994), 142.

new era in human-wolf relationships. In one of these, the biologist described her attempts to capture a white female wolf in a battle of wits befitting the one between Seton and Lobo. "Sometimes she would carefully dig out my camouflaged traps, exposing them without triggering them," Boyd recalled. "Other times she would leave a fresh, steaming scat within a few feet of the trap to let me know that she was not fooled by my efforts."[16] Aware of the kind of stories that dominated the West when the last wolves were being killed, she wrote, as if in a reenactment of a successful hunt:

> The lanky, black wolf frantically tried to escape the approaching human, but was restrained by the trap on its foot. The trapper walked toward the captured wolf slowly, admiring the sleek fur and the wild spirit that flashed in the wolf's gaze as their eyes met. Weapon loaded, the trapper silently approached the frightened animal. As the wolf faced away in a futile attempt to flee, it presented itself for the perfect shot. The trapper quickly poked the wolf in the rump with a jabstick that she had loaded with a fast-acting tranquilizer. The hit was on target, and the wolf was asleep in three minutes. I have replayed this scene many times since coming to Montana.[17]

Unlike the hunters' stories from the turn of the twentieth century, this one did not end with Boyd killing the wolf. She was a hunter but did not hunt for trophies, which left predators out of her pursuits. Her moment of epiphany, too, came not from looking into the eyes of a dying wolf like for Aldo Leopold but from looking into the eyes of wolves who would go on living their lives after their encounter with Boyd and whose stories she could then follow. This was a trophy far greater than a wolf's hide on the wall or as a carpet, and held a different meaning from meeting the gaze of a wolf who would remain in captivity.

The story nevertheless held some of the past narratives within. While times differed and so did the goal, the methods and the traps remained similar. Boyd and other researchers set up the same Newhouse No. 4 steel traps that were used for

[16] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 94.
[17] Boyd, "The Return of the Wolf to Montana," 358.

eradicating wolves,[18] after modifying them to hold the wolf's paw but not cause major injury—yet not always succeeding.[19] The fear and trauma were always present during the capture, as Boyd found out on her very first attempt in Minnesota. Approaching a female wolf "struggling to free [herself] of the foreign thing holding [her] fast," Boyd saw the animal stop in her struggles and look up at her captors "from her vulnerable position." Still new to this experience, Boyd "gazed into her wild, wheat-colored eyes and felt astonishment and pity." She then assisted the lead biologist in radio-collaring the she-wolf, "wishing her well when [they] left the site."[20] Scientific research in the field was never innocent, but the history of human-wolf relations was not built on innocence. It was, however, built on the sometimes intimate, sometimes violent encounters. While Boyd might not have been the one to trap and radio-collar Kishinena (although she did end up trapping and radio-collaring many of her descendants), she would co-create the story with this transboundary female—one of them a wolf who started the recolonization of the American Rockies, the other a biologist who recorded the process. From this point onward, their stories would be told together in a way that preserved scientific objectivity while welcoming the presence of sentiment and attachment to the studied animals.

5.2. BETWEEN OBJECTIVITY AND SENTIMENT

Boyd's arrival in Northwest Montana in 1979 was just as unusual as Kishinena's, for both of them were pioneers. At the time, women biologists in the field of wolf research were largely unheard of. Although Jane Packard and Cheryl Asa were

[18] Barry Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men* (New York: Scribner, 1978), 190.
[19] Karen R. Jones, *Wolf Mountains: A History of Wolves Along the Great Divide* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2002), 260; Boyd, "The Return of the Wolf to Montana," 358; Conrad, *Ghost Hunting in Montana*, 143.
[20] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 90- 91.

studying wolves in captivity, Boyd might have been the only woman studying them in the wild in this part of the world. Kishinena, meanwhile, was assumed to be the only wolf in Montana. She arrived there alone and wandered alone for the next two years, during which Boyd tracked her, recording the wolf's habits and travel routes for her master's thesis. Kishinena's radio-collar stopped transmitting in July 1980, but signs of her presence in the same areas she used to frequent proved that the wolf chose to stay in her home range.[21] Boyd, too, chose to stay in hers, in the abandoned homestead close to Glacier National Park, even after the funding for the project ran out and she had to resort to selling oil paintings and doing odd jobs, just so she could continue to track Kishinena in her free time.[22] She became attuned to the rhythms of life in this shared space. "Wild places became the fabric of my life, and wolves became the threads that wove place and heart together," wrote Boyd.[23] At times, the wolf and the biologist were both alone out there—Kishinena with no mate or family group, and Boyd with only two dogs sharing her cabin and no humans in sight for dozens of miles[24]—and this, perhaps, made them such unusual companions.

Studying wolves in the field is markedly different, after all, from doing so in captivity, as wild wolves have more freedom in choosing how the study develops. Boyd and Kishinena shared no physical closeness in a way that Crisler had with Lady and Trigger, but there was nevertheless a connection between them. It was intermittent, at first, in the form of the radio-collar and the signal it was transmitting that allowed Boyd to locate Kishinena in the vast wilderness, and after the collar's malfunction, it was entirely without proximity, in the form of following Kishinena's tracks and "sensing" where the wolf might have gone to, "regardless of how

[21] Boyd, "Food Habits and Spatial Relations of Coyotes and a Lone Wolf in the Rocky Mountains," 69-75
[22] Link and Crowley, *Following the Pack*, 103.
[23] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 90.
[24] Boyd, "The Return of the Wolf to Montana," 359-362; Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 92.

'unscientific' that might be."[25] Years of experience rather than intuition were likely helping the biologist with the latter method of tracking the wolf. There was more to it, however, as Boyd was open to adopting a partial, situated perspective of the other. "The most pleasant days of my life have been spent following wolf tracks in winter, taking in the natural world around me from the pseudoperspective of a wolf," she wrote.[26] Being open to different ways of relating, too, allowed for partial connections to be formed and for the scientist and the animal to become attentive to one another.

Sightings of the female were sporadic and mostly due to aerial observations,[27] not only because Kishinena was elusive and could hardly be followed on foot but also because Boyd did not wish to disturb or habituate the wolf by following her on the ground. Only once did she decide to follow the female's tracks instead of backtracking, coming upon a freshly killed moose calf and no wolf in sight; Kishinena never returned to that carcass, and Boyd never again tried to approach in this manner.[28] Boyd could be called a "polite guest" in the wolf's home range, yet this description might not be entirely accurate. Her actions were indeed polite in the sense that she made sure not to cause unnecessary disturbance to the wolf; beyond that, however, they shared this space. To call one merely a "guest" would be implying the place rightfully belonged only to one of them. Thinking of wilderness as Kishinena's and the homestead as Boyd's is akin to deepening the nature-culture divide and alienating the human from the animal. Rather, being a "polite guest," just as Stanwell-Fletcher was in the Driftwood Valley wilderness, meant acting responsibly and responsively. Perhaps, being a polite companion-agent is a more

[25] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 93.
[26] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 95.
[27] Boyd, "Food Habits and Spatial Relations of Coyotes and a Lone Wolf in the Rocky Mountains," 22.
[28] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 93; Peter Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 6.

accurate description in this situation, and not only Kishinena but wolves who came after her certainly proved it with their agency over the years.

Mutual responding between the scientist and the wolves, in whatever form the responses were made, ultimately shaped the meanings and results of the study, and this companion-agency became particularly visible when more wolves appeared in the study area. In late 1981, for the first time, Boyd examined a set of tracks that did not belong to Kishinena. The female was still around, and a black-furred newcomer with a three-toed paw joined her. The male was sighted several times in the Flathead drainage in British Columbia since 1978, but Boyd did not personally find signs of his presence until he and Kishinena formed a pair.[29] The wolves appeared to be investigating signs of the biologist's presence, too, when they traveled nearby her cabin, pausing on their way "as if considering at length something that was going on there."[30] Soon, Boyd would see seven pups born to Kishinena and her mate in 1982. Just two months after they were born, however, the black male was caught in a bear snare set up by a researcher and died despite the efforts to save him, leaving Kishinena to fend for the family alone. Still, they all survived,[31] and Boyd got to develop a personal attachment to some of the pups as they grew up. It was not only Boyd who sought them out, it seems, for wolves kept visiting her homestead, prompting the question of what kind of relationship she could develop, or was allowed to develop, with the animals she studied.

One of them was Phyllis, number 8550, a she-wolf "with a coat the color of backlit frost,"[32] who became the breeding female of the Magic Pack, as her family became known in 1985. Phyllis denned in Glacier National Park the next spring, her

[29] Boyd, "Food Habits and Spatial Relations of Coyotes and a Lone Wolf in the Rocky Mountains," 19, 72; Wright, "Nature Unbound," 108.
[30] Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves*, 8.
[31] Boyd, "Sage's Story," 30.
[32] Douglas H. Chadwick, "Montana's Wolf Recovery," *Defenders*, Vol. 70, No. 20 (1995), 21.

pups being the first documented litter born in Montana in over fifty years; Boyd later climbed into this den,[33] reading the signs of the wolves' presence and becoming part of their story, in the same space if at different moments. The female came by Boyd's home as well, easily recognizable from a distance, with the black radio-collar that was not transmitting anymore stark against her white fur; it was the same wolf who repeatedly outsmarted the biologist during the attempts to capture her. Within a distance of 25 yards, Phyllis stood looking at the place where Boyd lived. "She clearly went out of her way to approach my cabin, as if to say 'Hi, I'm still here and more clever than you.' And of course she was."[34] Recognizing wolves as individuals allowed Boyd to acknowledge that they co-shaped the study and its results, and so she welcomed wolfish agency as part of the research. Instead of limiting her expectations of how wolves could or could not (re)act based on the existing knowledge about the species, the biologist remained open to letting the wolves respond with *who* they were. Barbara Smuts argued that once we look past the human-animal divide to consider individuals of other species as persons, we can relate to them as such—but it is not tantamount to anthropomorphism. Rather, it means "recognizing that they are social subjects like us, whose idiosyncratic, subjective experience of us plays the same role in their relations with us that our subjective experience of them plays in our relations with them."[35] While careful not to habituate wolves to human presence, Boyd nevertheless allowed such relations to be formed, and this shaped how their shared stories unfolded.

The other wolf who appeared in proximity to the homestead where Boyd stayed was grey-furred Sage. In November 1983, he howled outside of her cabin.

[33] Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves*, 15.
[34] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 94.
[35] Barbara Smuts, "Reflections," in: J. M. Coetzee et al., *The Lives of Animals*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 118.

Where years of tracking wolves in their home range yielded little to no opportunity of actually seeing them, let alone sharing any meaningful encounters, the wolf's choice to come near the biologist's own home range provided her with the most memorable trophy signifying their being alongside. "[T]his wolf came to me," marveled Boyd, recalling the "special relationship" that developed between them. On that day, Sage gazed at her. "I stared back, mesmerized, and we looked at each other for what seemed a very long time."[36] Just like following tracks and reading signs of the wolves' presence was a polite way of getting to know them, perhaps the look that Sage and Boyd exchanged could be considered a "polite greeting" between them—not in a wolfish or human sense, but one that was nevertheless layered with their respective histories and the possibilities of those yet to develop.

"To knot companion and species together in encounter, in regard and respect," wrote Haraway, "is to enter the world of becoming with, where *who and what are* is precisely what is at stake."[37] In a sense, Boyd and Sage indeed became with and through one another. The wolfish agency in the encounter and ensuing relationship in partial connection was further emphasized when Sage kept coming back near the homestead over the next two months. He was not, however, coming to meet the gaze of the biologist who was studying him—although he was likely curious about Boyd, the wolf's primary interest lay in the two dogs, Stony and Max, with whom she lived. Boyd kept an eye on the unusual companions, but Sage displayed only playful behavior without a hint of aggressiveness. In this respect, he was similar to the Alaskan Romeo, their stories developing in different directions but nevertheless heading toward a predictable ending.

[36] Boyd, "Sage's Story," 28.
[37] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 19.

Sage received scientific number 8401 when he was radio-collared near Sage Creek in British Columbia in August 1984.[38] Then, in the fall of 1985, Boyd happened upon a body of a wolf, skinned off his hide, his head gone; "I felt sick when I thought it was Sage," Boyd confessed.[39] Not a week went past, however, before she captured him alive and well. Fitting him with a new radio-collar allowed her to follow the wolf as he traveled back and forth through the international border, found a mate, and fathered pups over the next years. Then, on the night of New Year's Eve that welcomed 1988, Boyd almost bid farewell to Sage. He was found in a trap that was set outside of the legal trapping season, with the hunter's horse shot for bait, seemingly so intent on killing a wolf that the past stories of relentless eradication in Montana seemed to still be alive at the scene that Boyd had witnessed.

When the biologist worked tirelessly to free him, Sage looked up at her, just like that time when he came near her cabin all those years prior.[40] Another "knot of species coshaping one another in layers of reciprocating complexity" was tied at that moment. "Response and respect are possible only in those knots," according to Haraway, "with actual animals and people looking back at each other, sticky with all their muddled histories."[41] In the case of biologists working with wolves in the field, these knots are also sticky with blood, sweat, freezing water, and mud, as well as the responsibility that permeates every such relationship, for every trapping is intrusive, in one way or another.[42] "There's some trauma and a little blood in the capture," Boyd admitted.[43] This time, however, Sage was not trapped for research purposes, and the intrusion was meant to save his life. The wolf's paw was frozen stiff; Boyd

[38] Wright, "Nature Unbound," 110.
[39] Boyd, "Sage's Story," 32.
[40] Boyd, "Sage's Story," 32-35.
[41] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 42.
[42] Jones, *Wolf Mountains*, 260.
[43] Link and Crowley, *Following the Pack*, 112.

and her teammate spent over an hour warming it up with their bare hands. "When the toes were pliable, we gently worked our fingers between the wolf's toes while wrapping another warm hand around the paw," she recalled.[44] Having spent the next few hours tucked inside Boyd's own sleeping bag, Sage left to rejoin his family. Just like trapping influences wolf behavior,[45] so do the entanglements such as these have an impact on scientists and wolves, all individuals "full of the patterns of their sometimes-joined, sometimes-separate heritages both before and lateral to *this* encounter."[46] The shared stories of Boyd, Kishinena, Phyllis, and Sage became part of these heritages, the epilogues to the lives of the wolves affected by the old patterns.

Sage recovered from the trapping incident only to die the next year, presumably at the hands of the same hunter.[47] After eight years of following Phyllis's story, Boyd had to contend with her death at the hands of a hunter as well.[48] No more signs of Kishinena could be found by that time—perhaps she was displaced from the position of the breeding female back in the 1980s, left the pack, and died of natural causes. The majority of deaths among the wolves Boyd studied, however, were caused by humans. While not all of them were due to hatred,[49] killing wolves is rarely an emotionless matter, as evidenced by the history of violent human-wolf relations. If hunters are allowed a whole gamut of emotions when shooting, snaring, poisoning, or trapping a wolf—for there exists no standard for "objective" or "sentimental" killing—biologists should not be restricted by an emotionless approach to studying those same animals. "Objectivity and passion about study animals are not

[44] Boyd, "Sage's Story," 35-36.
[45] Nuno Santos et al., "Characterization and Minimization of the Stress Response to Trapping in Free-ranging Wolves (*Canis lupus*): Insights From Physiology and Behavior," *Stress (Amsterdam, Netherlands)*, Vol. 20, No. 5 (2017), 513-522.
[46] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 25.
[47] Boyd, "Sage's Story," 36-37.
[48] Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves*, 28.
[49] Boyd, "Sage's Story," 37; Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 94.

mutually exclusive,"[50] wrote Boyd. Like Jody Emel, she believed that "[s]entiment and feeling are necessary for struggle."[51] At the same time, she found her attachment to individual wolves not to be a limiting factor impeding her studies or her objectivity as a scientist—she still documented the mortalities, took the measurements, and handled the bodies of the killed wolves, even when the loss of certain animals she was particularly attached to was akin to "losing a friend."[52]

Wolves might have been endangered in the contiguous United States at the time, but their population remained relatively stable in Canada, making their presence and their deaths carry different meanings depending on which side of the border they walked. What came across most vividly in Boyd's approach was that she recognized wolves not merely as study subjects or population numbers but as individuals with whom she was forming partial connections in the course of her research. This meant that whether wolves were considered endangered or a species of least concern, their lives and deaths mattered. "Radically rethinking our relations with other species can change the future," wrote Smuts; "in the context of an endangered species, what if we expanded our concerns about the disappearance of an abstract category to include the concrete reality of death by starvation or disease or poaching of multitudes of feeling, thinking, *relational* individuals?"[53] Such questions posed by scientists became increasingly important in debates about coexistence as the canines returned to their former habitats in the contiguous Unites States both by crossing the border themselves and by being brought over from Canada through

[50] Boyd-Heger, "Living with Wolves," 96.
[51] Jody Emel, "Are You Man Enough, Big and Bad Enough? Ecofeminism and Wolf Eradication in the USA," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 13, No. 6 (1995), 730.
[52] Conrad, *Ghost Hunting in Montana*, 145.
[53] Barbara Smuts, "Between Species: Science and Subjectivity," *Configurations*, Vol. 14, No. 1-2 (2006), 125-126.

reintroduction—a process that depended as much on wolves themselves as it did on science, symbolism, and sentiment where people were concerned.

5.3. THE QUESTION OF REINTRODUCTION

Over a decade after Kishinena made her historic journey, another wolf undertook an even longer yet just as meaningful one. He was heading toward Yellowstone, the famous National Park where his species was eradicated back in the 1920s, but the lone traveler knew nothing of this history or how it would entangle with his own. He dispersed from one of the family groups in Montana and arrived just south of the Park's boundary. There, the wolf's story ended when a bullet pierced his body. Genetic analysis later confirmed the wolf was closely related to 8962 female, granddaughter of Phyllis.[54] As Renée Askins stroked the black fur of the dead wolf she posthumously named Odysseus, she realized the symbolism of the wolf's presence, as well as the harsh reality of his death—for wolves were absent from Yellowstone National Park since the last pack was killed in 1926, and their restoration has been considered for over a decade before the lone wolf was killed. "For the four years preceding Odysseus's death," wrote Askins, "I had spent my time […] talking endlessly about the *idea* of wolves, the possibility of a multitude of scenarios all built on the mythic, imagined wolf. Here he was, dead."[55] She realized, too, that wolfish agency alone might not be enough against the reluctance to accept wolves in their former habitats, which meant that human-aided recovery would be necessary.

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[54] Rick McIntyre, *A Society of Wolves: National Parks and the Battle over the Wolf* (Stillwater: Voyageur Press, 1996), 110-111.
[55] Renée Askins, *Shadow Mountain: A Memoir of Wolves, a Woman, and the Wild* (New York: Anchor Books, [2002] 2004), 172.

Odysseus's arrival near Yellowstone in the fall of 1992 held different meanings for those who wanted to see wolves back in the Park. Some thought it was evidence that wolves could recolonize Yellowstone on their own, while others saw his death as yet another proof that without reintroduction, there was little chance for this species' recovery. Although Kishinena, Phyllis, Sage, and all the other wolves crossing from Canada to Montana "made a powerful statement about lupine agency" in reestablishing wolf populations in the contiguous United States,[56] it was debatable whether these wolves' relatively silent comeback was enough to challenge the attitudes the general public held about them. Whether they would be allowed to survive in the areas outside of Glacier National Park depended on changing attitudes toward their presence. The lupine agency in recolonizing Montana was a powerful statement indeed, but it might not have been *visible* enough. The Yellowstone reintroduction, on the other hand, made wolves more visible as individuals, and the act of accompanying them on the journey to recovery—unlike not being privy to Kishinena's or Odysseus's lone travels, save for fleeting signs of their presence—made the stories of humans and wolves inseparably entangled, with the resulting companion-agency just as symbolic as it was embodied.

The reintroduction efforts began in the mid-1970s, but the final plan was not ready until 1987.[57] To help with the project, Askins moved to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in 1981. She chronicled the following twenty years in her memoir *Shadow Mountain* (2002), its title encapsulating both the always-controversial wolf issue that came in different shades of grey and the essence of the real place in the shade of a mountain, where Askins lived in a log house with the surrounding space she felt was a sanctuary for wildlife in the same sense that Stanwell-Fletcher had

[56] Jones, *Wolf Mountains*, 97.
[57] Thomas McNamee, *The Return of the Wolf to Yellowstone* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998), 34.

considered Driftwood Valley. "The place was aptly named," Askins reminisced about Shadow Mountain. "There I was forced to confront and accept the dark side of the wild, […] [its] luminosity and grace […] matched by [the] ferocious darkness, harshness, and isolation."[58] It was there, too, that Askins would experience not just the idea of wolves, but their embodied presence as well following the reintroduction.[59]

Like for many others, including Diane Boyd, Askins's first contact with wolves—a pivotal one at that—came from working with them in captivity. In 1980, the young undergraduate in biology spent three months at Wolf Park in Battleground, Indiana, a research facility founded by Erich Klinghammer, where she studied a wolf pack's interactions and socialized pups. The first of those was Natasha, just a few days old when she was taken from her mother:

> I kept notes on her as she grew; when I sat eyeing her and recording comments in my journal, I felt she was doing the same to me. No paper, no ink, but an observation and record so indelible and accurate that our entire race might be re-created from this creature's perception. It was the first time I felt the utter limitations of language, and the first time I truly began to face and fathom the capacity of another species.

In Natasha's presence, Askins realized the meaning of significant otherness—the wolf was neither a pet nor a study subject, making her feel "accompanied rather than ascendant."[60] This recognition prompted Askins to question the ethics of keeping wolves in captivity, considering a number of them who are kept for profit rather than research, and in case of those who are kept for the latter purpose, whether the results are useful for understanding wolves in the wild and to what extent such results might benefit the species. This entailed another question, just as important one, regarding what wolves such as Natasha might want. Askins knew, for one, that the she-wolf did not want to be confined, and much like Tussa fleeing before she could be shipped to

[58] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 6.
[59] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 285.
[60] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 15.

a menagerie by the Camerons, Alatna with her siblings who kept escaping the pen the Crislers had built for them in Colorado, and Lightning who kept discarding David Mech's care in favor of freedom, Natasha, too, did not approve of the fence that prevented her from leaving. Soon the female was taken to another facility, where she lived for several months until she was euthanized, along with three other wolves, after contracting rabies from a skunk who managed to slip inside their pen. "On one hand I think I was grateful that she hadn't had to endure a long life of captivity, so contrary to her nature; on the other, the finality of her absence was crushing."[61] From that personal relation between Askins and Natasha grew an intent to aid the Yellowstone wolf restoration efforts, and Askins did so by educating the public about wolves and their potential comeback, and by founding the Wolf Fund in 1986, which provided financial support for the project.[62]

In light of the wolf recolonization in Montana and their dispersals, the proposed Yellowstone reintroduction was hotly debated. Askins was an ardent supporter, while Boyd believed wolves could return to Yellowstone and other areas on their own. There was merit to both approaches. On the one hand, natural recolonization in the way Boyd witnessed it in Montana was possible; Ream thought it could take years, but dispersals such as Odysseus's were proof that wolves were capable of making that journey.[63] On the other hand, whether they could reach Yellowstone safely and chose to stay there, establishing enough breeding pairs to repopulate the area and other regions, was uncertain, as evidenced by Odysseus's death. Provided he lived and crossed into the Park, Rick McIntyre pointed out that a single animal did not equal a recovered population; in fact, the Yellowstone proposal

[61] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 158.
[62] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 109-135.
[63] Diane Boyd, "To Reintroduce or Not to Reintroduce, That is the Question," in: *Yellowstone Wolves: Science and Discovery in the World's First National Park*, eds. Douglas W. Smith, Daniel R. Stahler, and Daniel R. MacNulty (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020), 19-20.

assumed ten or more breeding pairs before the restoration could be considered successful.[64] Sightings of individual wolves—likely just passing through—were reported for years after the last pack was killed in Yellowstone National Park, yet no breeding population could be found in Yellowstone even into the 1990s.[65] Of course, this point, too, could be debated, especially in view of Kishinena's story.

At the very least, natural recolonization starting with Kishinena and dispersals of wolves such as Odysseus proved how faulty the arguments about the wrong subspecies of wolves being released in Yellowstone truly were. After all, whether relocated or dispersing on their own, those would still be wolves from Canada. In truth, the question seems to have been not about the method of the wolves' arrival into Yellowstone but about the prospect of meeting them halfway. In the end, the only meaningful difference between relying on lupine agency and human intervention lay in the status the Yellowstone wolves would be afforded and the degree of control involved. The canids who came to the Park on their own would be labeled as endangered and fully protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, with some of them staying anonymous, much like the wolves who lived in Montana at that time, while the reintroduced ones were to be designated an experimental, nonessential population. In other words, the latter meant the wolves would be ear-tagged, radio-collared, and monitored, and if they caused problems outside of the Park boundaries, they had to be managed—meaning, either relocated or killed. It was a compromise that took into consideration human interests, given the opposition to the wolf recovery. The status the wolves were afforded in the end did not differ significantly in practice[66]—after all, wolves in Montana were being radio-collared as

[64] McIntyre, *A Society of Wolves*, 110.
[65] Hank Fischer, *Wolf Wars: The Remarkable Inside Story of the Restoration of Wolves to Yellowstone* (Helena: Falcon Press, 1995), 148-150; McIntyre, *A Society of Wolves*, 110.
[66] Fischer, *Wolf Wars*, 131-157.

well, and killings still occurred; if they dispersed into Yellowstone like Odysseus, they could still be shot even though it was illegal to do so. In effect, the greater control and more flexible management of the reintroduced Yellowstone wolves seemingly leaned toward the symbolic.

What wolves represented, and not what or who they were, was the crux of the issue. "The Yellowstone wolf-recovery debate is fundamentally an expression of a culture in transition; it is the struggle that accompanies old assumptions clashing against the new," noted Askins.[67] If opposing the reintroduction meant fidelity to the old ways that resounded with gunshots, resistance in relinquishing control, and reluctance to adapt to changes brought about by wolfish presence, then supporting the wolf recovery meant atoning for the past violence, writing a new chapter, and changing the genre. The matter was, of course, neither black nor white but came in all shades of grey, as Askins called it,[68] just like the wolves who might have been too often forgotten in debates about the reintroduction. "Wolves […] are symbolic," wrote Askins. "Yellowstone is symbolic; restoring wolves to Yellowstone is a deeply and profoundly symbolic act."[69] At the same time, the process was anything but symbolic for the wolves, for it took into consideration only the population as a whole rather than individuals.

In the winter of 1994, trappers in Alberta, Canada, were contracted for catching wolves who would be later reintroduced, $2,000 per animal, provided they were alive. The snares used for live captures were supposed to be modified to hold the wolves in place instead of strangling them, but not everyone adhered to this rule, using traditional snares that were designed only for keeping the pelt intact, not

[67] Renée Askins, "Releasing Wolves from Symbolism," *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 290, No. 1739 (1995), 17.
[68] Renée Askins, "Shades of Grey," in: *Intimate Nature: The Bond Between Women and Animals*, eds. Linda Hogan, Deena Metzger, and Brenda Peterson (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1998), 375-378.
[69] Askins, "Releasing Wolves from Symbolism," 17.

keeping the wolf alive.[70] One of the wolves caught in December was a young grey female, a "Judas wolf" whose radio-collar would betray the location of her pack for later capture, according to the plan to transport the family groups together. As it turned out, the grey, who later became 7F, belonged to the McLeod Pack, and she was recaptured with her mother in early January 1995. Unfortunately, attempts to capture the latter's mate failed, and the remaining pups were killed by hunters and trappers. 7F's mother, at the time still not bearing any name or alphanumerical code, then awaited her transport to Yellowstone. During that time, like all of the other wolves, she was examined, measured, ear-tagged, and radio-collared.[71]

> At first she seemed black, but in this ice-blue light the dark wolf's fur can be seen to be silver-tipped, her undercoat gray, lighter gray, fawn. Human fingers search her coat and skin. […] Through a shallow incision in the wolf's skin [a technician] inserts a Personal Identification Tag—essentially an invisible bar code, just like those available for pets—so that in future she (or her body) can be unmistakably identified. He punches a plug of flesh out of each of the wolf's ears and slips them into a glass tube for DNA analysis. He clips a red plastic tag securely through each hole, bearing the letter Y, meaning that she is bound for Yellowstone, and the numeral 9.[72]

Mesmerized by the wolf's presence, Renée Askins watched the whole process, staying with the animal until it was just the two of them left in the room. A feeling akin to the one she experienced in Natasha's presence arose in Askins and settled between her and the wolf as she was waiting for 9F to come to after anesthesia. "I whispered stories about this magical place called Yellowstone with its bounty of elk, bison, deer, and moose," she recalled. "I told her the truth about the chain-link pens she would have to endure for a few months." Against the rules and better judgment, Askins leaned over the wolf and ran her fingers through the fur that was "not exactly black but a sort of sooty warm darkness, grizzled and highlighted in a beautiful interpretation of dusk," all the while whispering to the female she privately called Natasha, to commemorate the wolf she had raised all those years before. "I leaned

[70] Carter Niemeyer, *Wolfer: A Memoir* (Boise: Bottlefly Press, 2010), 209-221.
[71] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 213-217.
[72] Thomas McNamee, *The Killing of Wolf Number Ten* (Westport: Prospecta Press, 2014), 4-5.

close to her ear, buried my nose in the snowy scent of her neck, and told her we needed a mother of Yellowstone wolves. I guess I should tell you that she didn't respond," Askins wrote. "The biologists teased me all week about my attachment to this wolf."[73] On January 11, 1995, 9F and the other wolves were on their way to Yellowstone.

What should have gone smoothly from that moment on became another stressful experience for the wolves when a legal hurdle prevented the project team from releasing the animals from their cramped steel kennels, designed only for transportation, into the acclimation pens. After being chased by a helicopter, darted, processed, trucked, flown, and rattled inside the kennels, which they began to chew at some point, the wolves had to stay inside for 38 hours more, fed only ice cubes pushed through the ventilation holes. Finally, the wolves were released into the one-acre acclimation pens, where they would spend several weeks before being set free in the Park. 9F was joined by 10M, or Arnold, a lone male transported to Yellowstone along with thirteen other wolves that year, and the pair formed the Rose Creek Pack.[74] Askins visited them while dragging a bison carcass into their pen. "I got to watch Natasha, now unanesthetized and full of flight and power, race around the chain-link perimeter," she wrote. "Arnold held himself like a proud dancer. Snowy golden, alert and undaunted by the visitors to his enclosure, he circled us in a show of curiosity and belligerence."[75] Three months later, Arnold was the first reintroduced wolf to be killed by a hunter. 9F, left alone with the pups 10M had fathered, had to be recaptured and placed inside the pen again. The gate was opened soon after 8M, from another pack, chose to join 9F and adopt her six-month-old

[73] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 218.
[74] Douglas Smith and Gary Ferguson, *Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2012), 29-47; Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 219-225; McNamee, *The Killing of Wolf Number Ten*, 10-15.
[75] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 226-227.

pups, forming another family group in Yellowstone—but when and how the wolves left the acclimation pen was their own choice.[76] It was due to human intervention coupled with lupine agency that the wolves not only managed to survive but thrived.

A number of people were involved in the Yellowstone reintroduction project over the years, joining these wolves on their journey as companion-agents. Their histories were inseparable, both symbolic and mundane, their connections partial and embodied. While the stories of wolves in Glacier National Park were compelling for those who followed and co-created them, they might not have been compelling enough for the vast majority, especially those outside of Montana. Some of the Glacier wolves had names, but their presence was confined to the wilderness, largely unseen and elusive. "If we have no wolves in view, we shall go on inventing them," wrote naturalist Peter Steinhart.[77] Wolves in Yellowstone, meanwhile, had their stories not only widely known but also well-documented, and there were opportunities to co-create parts of these stories with them, whether as biologists, wolfwatchers, wildlife photographers, or writers. Because of this, wolves were made more visible as individuals and agents, and the literature that portrayed them as such could no longer be dismissed as purely sentimental.

In 1903, Theodore Roosevelt and John Burroughs discussed the issue of sentimental nature writing on their shared trip to Yellowstone National Park.[78] It was only a year before that the president called wolves "beasts of desolation;" clearly, they were unwelcome in the Yellowstone wilderness. With this in mind, Roosevelt laid the cornerstone and dedicated the arch that was being built at the north entrance

[76] McNamee, *The Killing of Wolf Number Ten*, 62-103; Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 234.
[77] Steinhart, *The Company of Wolves*, 339.
[78] Michael R. Canfield, *Theodore Roosevelt in the Field* (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 239; Gerald Carson, "T.R. and the 'Nature Fakers,'" *American Heritage Magazine*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1971), 60-65.

to the Park in Gardiner, Montana.[79] Roosevelt never returned to Yellowstone after 1903—but wolves did, with the support of the same agencies that were responsible for eradicating them.[80] The symbolism of the reintroduction was complete when the first fourteen wolves, 9F among them, passed under the Roosevelt Arch in January 1995 on the way to the acclimation pens. Renée Askins stood near the arch, as yet unaware that 9F's genes would flow in over 70% of the population by 1999,[81] fulfilling the wish she had whispered to the wolf; with this wish still fresh in her mind, she welcomed the wolves to the Park.[82] This boundary crossing signified a new era in the history of the human-wolf relations in the United States, one that required negotiating the ethical concerns and human interests in ways that respected animal agency and rights without disregarding the other part of the equation.

5.4. NEGOTIATING THE COSTS OF COMPROMISES

When wolfwatchers looked at O-Six—perhaps the most famous descendant of 9F—roaming the Yellowstone wilderness in the final months of her life, they could see the fur in different shades of grey, as well as a black GPS collar she was not supposed to be carrying around her neck—at least according to some. A proper heir to the wolves from hunters' stories, O-Six managed to repeatedly outsmart the biologists who attempted to capture her, spending the first six years of her life without any transmitting devices. At one point, Douglas Smith, the lead biologist in the project, gave up on trying to catch the female, in part due to the pleas from the

[79] Aubrey L. Haines, *The Yellowstone Story: A History of Our First National Park*, Volume 2 (Wyoming: Yellowstone Library and Museum Association in cooperation with Colorado Associated University Press, 1977), 229-236.
[80] Fischer, *Wolf Wars*, 160-161.
[81] Smith and Ferguson, *Decade of the Wolf*, 42.
[82] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 219.

wolfwatchers who wanted to see her free of a clunky-looking collar;[83] she was not the only wolf on whom radio-tagging was forfeited for aesthetic, symbolic, or personal reasons.[84] This lasted until February 2012, when O-Six was mistaken for her daughter and darted. "I didn't want to collar her," said Smith. "[W]hen you get to know an individual of another species like we all did her, you just begin to […] respect that individual; in this case, that wolf, because she was worthy of just being left alone."[85] Renée Askins shared this sentiment ever since the joy of seeing wolves in the wilds of Yellowstone for the first time was dampened upon glimpsing the radio-collars around their necks, for these represented the human inability to relinquish control of the animals who had just been set free. While radio-tracking became the source of scientific knowledge about wolves and helped mitigate potential conflicts with humans, this and other forms of monitoring and management raised ethical concerns about intrusion in the lives of individual animals. It would seem that the opportunity to study the Yellowstone wolves, to observe, co-create, and learn their stories, comes with inherent contradictions that need to be negotiated.

In the years following the reintroduction, telemetry became one of the main tools for research, conflict management, and recording data that would be used for recreating biographies of individual wolves, adding scientific objectivity to findings that might have been otherwise dismissed as nature faking. At least some questions about who these wolves are in relation to each other, how they interact with other species, including our own, how they co-produce shared space, and how their embodied presence affects the environment were answered because of the information gained from radio-collars. Ranchers could be notified when wolves were

[83] Rick McIntyre, *The Alpha Female Wolf: The Fierce Legacy of Yellowstone's 06* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2022), 104.
[84] Susan Imhoff Bird, *Howl: Of Woman and Wolf* (Salt Lake City: Torrey House Press, 2015), 232.
[85] Joe Rosenberg, "06 Female," *Snap Judgment, NPR*, May 23, 2014, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.npr.org/2014/05/23/314974039/06-female.

coming close to their properties, preventing potential conflicts and wolf deaths.[86] The mortality signal the collars emitted when animals were not moving for longer periods of time alerted the biologists of wolf deaths that did occur, which contributed to finding the bodies, learning the cause of death, and even prosecuting the guilty in case of illegal killings, as happened in the case of 10M.[87] After O-Six's death just outside of Yellowstone National Park in December 2012, the data from radio-tracking proved invaluable in designating an emergency closure zone where hunting and trapping wolves would be banned, for too many of the collared wolves, beloved by the Park visitors, were killed in this area when they left the protection of the preserve. In fact, the GPS collar O-Six wore for nearly a year revealed a rather discomforting piece of information: that she was killed on one of only ten days she spent outside of the Park borders.[88] Complete with these sometimes gruesome epilogues, the lupine stories are recorded, interpreted, and retold by scientists with the help of radio-collars. "They're how we connect ourselves to the wolves," said Smith.[89] Co-created narratives emerge through these partial connections.

Yet when Askins watched the Crystal Creek wolves in Yellowstone all those years before, wearing the black collars sponsored by the Wolf Fund—incongruous even with the black fur of some individuals—what struck her the most was the dissonance the devices signified in our relationship with wolves in this post-reintroduction era: that wildness, supposedly synonymous with freedom and autonomy, was ultimately controlled. "Perhaps it was the sterile straight line on a

[86] Paula Wild, *Return of the Wolf: Conflict and Coexistence* (Madeira Park: Douglas & McIntyre, 2018), 127-128; Becky Kramer, "Cattle Ranchers Track Wolves with GPS, Computers," *The Spokesman-Review*, November 10, 2013, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2013/nov/10/cattle-ranchers-track-wolves-with-gps-computers.
[87] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 275.
[88] McIntyre, *The Alpha Female Wolf*, 161-164.
[89] Jeff Hull, "The Death of 832F, Yellowstone's Most Famous Wolf," *Outside*, February 13, 2013, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/environment/out-bounds-death-832f-yellowstones-most-famous-wolf.

wild, organic creature," Askins wondered. "Perhaps it was the limber, sinewy movement that contrasted with the square black box attached to each collar, the battery-driven transmitter which allowed biologists to locate the wolves at any time, day or night."[90] The same collars helped locate "problem wolves" who repeatedly preyed on livestock, making it easier to kill them.[91]

Years later, the question of radio-tagging and wildlife management remains without a simple or comfortable answer, partly because it tends to be dismissed when done in the name of science and compromise, and partly because the problems concerning the degree of freedom and rights nonhuman animals are allowed seem easier to avoid rather than confront. In the midst of debates around the wolfish presence and what it meant for people—symbolically, financially, emotionally, scientifically—in her memoir, Askins dared to ask questions that were rarely raised: namely, how the reintroduction process and handling for research affected the wolves:

> How far should man be willing to go to save a species? To what degree should we so-called stewards be willing to compromise the autonomy of individual animals in order to benefit the long-term survival of a species? (We are very uncomfortable when this question applies to humans, yet decisions are routinely, even casually, made with animals.) Where are the limits to manipulating one animal to favor the fortunes of another? In terms of ethics, what are the costs?[92]

The acceptable limits seem to be different for everyone. Biologists want to collar as many wolves as possible to ensure that at least one animal in a pack is traceable at any given time, collaring up to 50% of all pups born each year in some areas.[93] Considering wolf mortalities, the project team's objective is to have about 20% of

[90] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 237.
[91] Jim Yuskavitch, *In Wolf Country: The Power and Politics of Reintroduction* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2015), 32-34.
[92] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 99.
[93] Douglas W. Smith, Daniel R. Stahler, and Matthew S. Becker, "Wolf Recolonization of the Madison Headwaters Area in Yellowstone," in: *The Ecology of Large Mammals in Central Yellowstone: Sixteen Years of Integrated Field Studies*, eds. Robert A. Garrott, P. J. White, and Fred G. R. Watson (San Diego: Academic Press, 2008), 286-287.

the entire Yellowstone population radio-tagged at all times.[94] For Askins, the research and management objectives fail to take into consideration lupine agency. "Some of the wolves have actively, physically rejected the collars. At least three of Yellowstone's packs have chewed each other's collars off," she wrote. "Clearly these animals are asserting their will. […] The response to this act of willfulness was […] adding brass brackets to the straps so the wolves couldn't chew through the leather."[95] Askins was not alone in expressing her concerns about radio-tagging. When Teresa Martino set Mckenzie free in the early 1990s, she feared the wolf would be collared. "How pompous to think that this will not interfere with her life,"[96] she later wrote. Deby Dixon, devoted to advocating for Yellowstone wildlife through photography and journalism, is similarly unsettled by the prevalence of radio-tagging: "I am not […] completely opposed to the collars—although I don't believe that they need 7 collars on a pack of 14 wolves. That feels greedy."[97] At one point, a research team responsible for tracking wolves in Wyoming had about 95 collared animals out of 195 present in the population.[98] Moreover, while biologists claim the process of radio-tagging is carried out in a way that ensures minimal contact with people, this seems to not always be the case. "Those who are doing the processing often hold the wolf's head and pose for photos," Dixon pointed out,

[94] Kira Cassidy, "Research Report: Using Radio Collars to Study Yellowstone Wolves," *National Park Service*, August 28, 2019, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/articles/using-radio-collars-to-study-yellowstone-wolves.htm.
[95] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 275-276.
[96] Teresa Martino, *The Wolf, the Woman, the Wilderness: A True Story of Returning Home* (Troutdale: NewSage Press, 1997), 143.
[97] Deby Dixon, "Collaring Wolves in Yellowstone," *Yellowstone's Wild World*, December 16, 2018, accessed 8 October, 2022, https://yellowstoneswildworld.com/collaring-wolves-in-yellowstone.
[98] Philippa Forrester, *On the Trail of Wolves* (London: Bloomsbury Wildlife, 2020), 229.

having witnessed and filmed such operations. "And, there are times when the wolf gets a big hug from some of the project crew."[99]

It might be argued that the effects of intrusion in the form of darting, trapping, netting, capturing, handling, ear-tagging, and radio-collaring are negligible on animals who encounter danger on a daily basis and suffer injuries when hunting or during conflicts with other wolves, and that improvements to collars are being sought as well as non-invasive alternatives tested, such as scat and hair collection for DNA analyses[100]—yet this assertion takes into consideration wolves as a population, not as individuals. At least one wolf is documented to have suffered from symptoms resembling a post-traumatic stress disorder after being chased by helicopter, translocated, and darted twice by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists; her name was Tenino, and she was eventually placed in captivity.[101] Relocations, trapping, and darting for research purposes are accountable for wolf deaths as well, although unintentional. Wolf 002F captured for relocation to Isle Royale in 2018 died due to an adverse reaction to anesthetics and stress,[102] 251 from the Headquarters Pack was one of several wolves who died during research-related captures in Denali National Park,[103] and a young wolf was killed when her chest was pierced by a dart during the capture operation for the Yellowstone wolf project in

[99] Dixon, "Collaring Wolves in Yellowstone;" Deby Dixon, "Wolves: The After Collar Party," *YouTube*, February 23, 2023, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Juf60maaEag.
[100] David L. Mech and Shannon M. Barber, *A Critique of Wildlife Radio-Tracking and its Use in National Parks, US National Park Service Report* (Jamestown: U.S. Geological Survey, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, 2002), 8-12.
[101] Jay S. Mallonée and Paul Joslin, "Traumatic Stress Disorder Observed in an Adult Wild Captive Wolf (*Canis lupus*)," *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2004), 107-126.
[102] Tanda Gmiter, "Captured Wolf Dies During Isle Royale Relocation Effort," *MLive*, September 29, 2018, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.mlive.com/news/2018/09/captured_wolf_dies_during_isle.html; Tanda Gmiter, "Necropsies Detail Deaths of 2 Wolves in Isle Royale Relocation Effort," *MLive*, April 8, 2019, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.mlive.com/news/2019/04/necropsies-detail-deaths-of-2-wolves-in-isle-royale-relocation-effort.html.
[103] The Associated Press, "Wolves Die in Park After Dart Shooting," *The New York Times*, March 25, 2001, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://www.nytimes.com/2001/03/25/us/wolves-die-in-park-after-dart-shooting.html.

1995;[104] in 25 years since the reintroduction, three more wolves died in radio-collaring attempts in Yellowstone National Park.[105] Nowadays, collars represent something other than science as well. In British Columbia, wolves are collared as part of a cull program "Capture, Betray, Kill," in which over 1,700 have been killed in seven years since its initiation in 2015. Recently, one of these "Judas wolves" had to be euthanized when found strangled by an ill-fitted collar.[106]

In truth, the start of the new era in the relationships between humans and wolves was signified not by stopping wolf killings entirely, but by making the violence toward wolves no longer socially acceptable. Certainly, wolves are still being killed, and not only through hunting. The difference is that, while deaths are still deaths, someone is held accountable for them, and researchers feel responsibility for those deaths. In other words, even though wolves are killed, they are no longer killable. The question is not whether to radio-collar or manage wolves, but to what extent doing so is justifiable, what are the costs, and how ethical are the resulting compromises. Crucially, individual animals should not be disregarded when these costs are calculated and decisions about compromises are made. Finding the right balance may require some relinquishing of control and letting go in order to coexist more politely, which means granting wolves a respite from the constant pressure of both research and tourism and drawing "an ethical boundary," as Robisch suggested,[107] that would allow us to stay in partial connections without repeatedly chasing after wolves for data, photographs, and encounters—all of which,

[104] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 216.
[105] Cassidy, "Research Report."
[106] Pacific Wild, "Dead Wolf Linked to B.C. Cull Found Collared and Struggling to Breathe," *Pacific Wild*, February 23, 2023, accessed 4 April, 2023, https://pacificwild.org/dead-wolf-linked-to-b-c-cull-found-collared-and-struggling-to-breathe.
[107] S. K. Robisch, *Wolves and the Wolf Myth in American Literature* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2009), x.

although done from affection and fascination toward the animals, can be deadly for them.[108]

Monitoring coupled with management is only one of the ways to negotiate coexistence with predators; education is another. Whether wolves can be met halfway depends as much on compromises as it does on our understanding of who they are, not only as a species but also as individuals, and this entails challenging the ways in which they are often portrayed. "Wolves have never been just wolves: the wolf is the devil's keeper, the slayer of innocent girls, the nurturer of abandoned children, the sacred hunter, the ghostly creature of myth and legend," wrote Askins.[109] Of course, wolves are none of these, but such narratives follow their presence wherever they choose to go. It is not their task but ours to educate ourselves in those narratives and navigate them accordingly. We are currently in the process of redefining our relationship with wolves, heading toward recognizing them as companion-agents rather than pests or pets.

The literature written after the reintroduction reflected this shift. Among a number of wolf biographies and personal memoirs, there was Helen Thayer's *Three Among the Wolves* (2004), about the time the author spent alongside wild wolves in Yukon with the objective to "share their home range, to feel their emotions," and to determine little-studied aspects of their lives shared with other species—a study that was informed by the fieldwork of Diane Boyd, Renée Askins, Adolph Murie, David Mech, and Rick McIntyre.[110] In *Howl: Of Woman and Wolf* (2015), Susan Imhoff Bird chronicled her travels through wolf country—including a visit to Yellowstone—alongside the story of OR-7. Journey, as the wolf was also known, was famous for

[108] Günther Bloch, *The Pipestone Wolves: The Rise and Fall of a Wolf Family* (Victoria: Rocky Mountain Books, 2016).
[109] Askins, "Releasing Wolves from Symbolism," 17.
[110] Helen Thayer, *Three Among the Wolves: A Couple and their Dog Live a Year with Wolves in the Wild* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2004), xi-xii.

his travels between Oregon and California. Growing up in a wolfless place, Bird was not drawn to wolves through contact with captive animals, nor did she see them in the wild before; in fact, she heard about the controversy surrounding wolves before she could hear them howling, and she read about them before she encountered them.[111] More recently, in *Takaya: Lone Wolf* (2020), Cheryl Alexander described the companionship she developed with a wild wolf who lived on uninhabited islands near Vancouver, British Columbia. To better understand Takaya, Alexander traveled to Yellowstone to learn more about wolves, and there, she watched O-Six's daughter, Spitfire, leading her family across a river.[112]

Even as our craving for lupine stories grows, and more narratives are being co-created, some authors express a wish for the mystery surrounding wolves to remain partially undiscovered. Askins is one of them. In *Shadow Mountain*, she suggested the direction in which our relationship with wolves should develop—a direction she understood to be the most ethical and respectful one. This understanding, of course, came from recognizing Natasha and 9F as companion-agents with whom the story was created.

> After six years, the battery in Natasha's radio collar has just gone dead. No attempts will be made to recollar her. Her dense silver gray coat has now turned snow white except for a hint of black on her tail. Translucent swan-flight white, luminous burning white, as though she penetrated the colors of cream and fleece and pearl and ivory white to reach through to the steel blue on the other side. This is an earned white. From that fated day in Alberta […] she has passed through all the complicated shades of gray, […] and now she will at last be able to slip back into mystery, […] free of the meddling of our race, free from our good intentions. When the mother of the Yellowstone wolves dies, where she dies, and how, I hope we will never know; it should be that way.[113]

Karen Barad pointed out that restoration projects ought to be viewed as questions rather than answers, and the Yellowstone reintroduction indeed prompted many. From respecting wolfish agency to assessing the ethical accountability in imperfect

[111] Bird, *Howl*, 144-145.
[112] Cheryl Alexander, *Takaya: Lone Wolf* (Victoria: Rocky Mountain Books, 2020), 156.
[113] Askins, *Shadow Mountain*, 292-293.

human-wolf relations, these questions can be asked only in view of stories of individual wolves caught in such restorative cuts and joinings. Then, and only then, can any answers be considered. They were, and are, not symbolic wolves roaming fictional landscapes, but real animals, with their embodied presence affecting others within and across species, co-producing space, co-shaping meaning, involved in the dance of relating, and co-creating the narratives we share with them. We are in the middle of our ongoing story with wolves; what direction the story takes is ours and theirs to decide—as companion species. Since we are in the middle, it is imperative we look at the past, navigate the narratives and history we inherit, and look toward the future with those in mind, aware that more polite coexistence will require, at least for the time being, negotiations.

CONCLUSIONS

A fitting way to end a story is to trace it back to its beginning. This one began with Chitto and our entangled gaze, the context of it imperfect, for he was a captive wolf, born and raised at a research facility. Such experiences are not uncommon with the number of captive animals kept at wildlife parks, and with the wolves' return to their former habitats, encountering them or signs of their presence is certainly a possibility. How humans relate to wolves in this context is influenced by literature such as the one analyzed in this study, all of it encapsulating the importance of personal narratives in transforming our relations with other animals.

This particular selection of works is tied by a common thread of recognizing wolfish agency and responding to it, which resulted in the emergence of narratives that were co-created by women and wolves. The thread weaves through Evelyn Cameron's ranch, where she lived with Tussa and Weecharpee in the early 1900s, an experience she described in her diaries in ways that portrayed the two pups as individuals with whom she could form affective connections. Tussa and Weecharpee's story leads through the cages in Frank Bostock's menagerie as well, where the two wolves were shipped to, and arrives at the pens where Edward H. McCleery kept their brethren. The latter—progeny of the legendary outlaws of hunters' stories—were remnants of the almost completely eradicated population, and in the later 1930s, they were curiously watched by Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher's husband. The naturalist couple traveled to British Columbia soon after to live with wild wolves as neighbors. Although Stanwell-Fletcher never saw them, she shared space with them in a way that, in her memoir *Driftwood Valley* (1946), the wolves emerged as companion species.

At the time of the Stanwell-Fletchers' stay in British Columbia, Adolph Murie was also beginning his observations of a family of wolves in Denali National Park; years later, Gordon Haber continued the study, his approach inspired by Lois Crisler's *Arctic Wild* (1958), in which she recounted her relationship with Lady and Trigger. Not only for Haber but for others as well, the memoir signified the emergence of a new type of wolf literature at the time—a personal story shared and co-created with wolves as companions who responded to human others. Even though times have changed and parts of the memoir raise questions about the ethics of human-animal relations, *Arctic Wild* proved to be so influential that, to this day, the traces of Crisler, Lady, and Trigger can be found across literature on wolves. A decade after the author's second memoir was published, another woman entered the field of wolf research. Diane Boyd followed the wolves who were returning to Montana in the late 1970s and wrote about the partial connections that arose between her and the animals—specifically, Kishinena, Phyllis, and Sage—in a way that welcomed their unexpected responses about who they were, as individuals, as well as their wolfish agency in shaping the results of the study. Within her essays, Boyd also subverted the past stories told by hunters and wrote new ones that proved more fitting in the new era of human-wolf relations in the United States. Finally, the thread arrives at Renée Askins's *Shadow Mountain* (2002), in which the author reminisced about her connection with a captive wolf named Natasha and a wild one known as 9F, both of whom she recognized as companion-agents in the creation of this particular narrative. These entanglements inspired her efforts to return wolves to Yellowstone National Park, where the story of O-Six, whose presence ties the chapters together, later had its beginning.

What comes across far too vividly from those stories is the predictable epilogue to the lives of wolves who played an essential role in changing the human-wolf relations as well as the history of their species, as most of them were killed or died due to human-related causes. For this reason, where possible, I included the names of individual animals and emphasized their presence and their active role in the encounters and research. Far too often, literature about animals focuses more on the human part of the story; yet if one were to read autobiographical narratives about living with, alongside, or in partial connections with wolves while paying attention to their agency as well as the ways in which they affected the authors, these animals would become visible not only as individuals but also co-creators of such narratives. The stories we share with wolves remain integral to our continued coexistence; after all, it matters what stories we create together and how they are told. The key is to recognize their importance and learn how to navigate them so that, in the future, we can rely on these past experiences in seeking new ways to coexist more politely.

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SUMMARY

This study discusses the role of more-than-human agency in selected works of North American literature authored by women who shared part of their lives with wolves. Each of the analyzed narratives offers a different perspective on living with, alongside, or in partial connections with wolves both wild and captive, all of them tied by a common thread of making the animal others visible as individuals and agents. Chronologically, the texts also represent the ever-changing human-wolf relations, forming a context for the examined stories in which the authors challenged how wolves were perceived, studied, and written about during their time. In effect, such narratives played an important role in redefining our relationships with wolves, an essential step toward coexistence.

The intricacies of such relationships, as evidenced in the analyzed works, call for methods that would be open to various theories, concepts, and viewpoints, whose common focus is recognizing nonhuman animals as individuals and agents in literary and embodied encounters. With this in mind, I engage with multiple notions, with a particular focus on the concepts of companion species as described by Donna Haraway and that of companion-agents as outlined by Vinciane Despret.

Chapter One introduces both the historical and literary context of human-wolf relations in North America and, in greater detail, the theories I engage with, examining the role of nonhuman individuality, subjectivity, and agency in the creation of animal biographies as well as autobiographical accounts that describe more-than-human connections. I suggest that the latter narratives in particular can be recognized as co-created by the authors as well as wolves. This section also provides an overview of such literature and the recent state of publications on the subject,

justifying my selection of works and specifying the methods that are used in their analyses.

Chapter Two and Three explore literature written between the 1890s and 1940s in which the authors wrote about wolves in ways that challenged the dominant narratives of their time—specifically, the ones portraying these animals as outlaws and pests with whom no relationship other than that of the hunter and the hunted was possible. Thus, Chapter Two broadens the context outlined in the previous section while focusing on Evelyn Cameron's diaries, in which she described her life with two wolves she raised during the era of wolf eradication. Cameron's account was markedly different from others at the time, writing about wolves in a way that made their individuality and agency visible. The subject of Chapter Three is Theodora Stanwell-Fletcher's *Driftwood Valley* (1946), which similarly challenged how studying, relating to, and living alongside wolves could look like. The co-produced space and co-shaped meanings of the study formed the basis of their becoming as companion species.

Chapters Four and Five address the narratives that had a significant impact on how the wolf was perceived, for the authors described their interactions with individual animals in a manner that welcomed questions such as *who* wolves are and how they might respond to human others. One of those authors is Lois Crisler, whose memoir *Arctic Wild* (1958) is the focus of Chapter Four. In it, I look at the role that embodied communication, as defined by Barbara Smuts, played in both Crisler's relationship with wolves and the creation of the memoir. Here, I demonstrate how crucial such personal narratives are to changing the public's perception of wolves. Just as important in promoting coexistence were Diane Boyd's essays and Renée Askins's *Shadow Mountain* (2002), which are discussed in Chapter Five. In this part,

I consider the values and costs of partial connections formed with wolves during the recolonization of and reintroduction to their former habitats and propose that the entanglements, such as the ones narrated by Boyd and Askins, resulted in a wider recognition of wolves as companion-agents.

In concluding the study, I bring attention to the way the discussed works influenced how wolves are perceived. At the same time, I emphasize the importance of looking at this literature from a perspective that welcomes animal others as co-creators of such narratives.

Keywords: wolves, nonhuman agency, animal biographies, women's autobiographical narratives, companion species

STRESZCZENIE

Celem rozprawy jest omówienie roli pozaludzkiej sprawczości w wybranych dziełach literatury północnoamerykańskiej autorstwa kobiet, które dzieliły część swego życia z wilkami. Każdy z analizowanych tekstów oferuje inną perspektywę na mieszkanie wspólnie, w sąsiedztwie, bądź w pośrednich powiązaniach z wilkami zarówno dzikimi, jak i żyjącymi w niewoli, wszystkie jednak łączy wspólny wątek uwidocznienia sprawczości zwierząt oraz ich statusu jako jednostek. W ujęciu chronologicznym teksty przedstawiają również stale zmieniające się relacje między ludźmi a wilkami, tworząc kontekst dla badanych historii, w których autorki kwestionowały to, jak postrzegano, badano, oraz pisano o wilkach. W efekcie takie narracje odegrały ważną rolę w redefiniowaniu naszych relacji z wilkami, co stanowiło istotny krok w kierunku współistnienia.

Zawiłość tych relacji, jak wynika z analizowanych prac, wymaga zastosowania metod otwartych na różne teorie, koncepcje, i punkty widzenia, których wspólnym celem jest uznanie zwierząt pozaludzkich za jednostki i podmioty sprawcze w bezpośrednich i literackich spotkaniach. Mając to na uwadze, zajmuję się wieloma pojęciami, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem koncepcji gatunków stowarzyszonych opisanej przez Donnę Haraway oraz koncepcji stowarzyszonych podmiotów sprawczych przedstawionej przez Vinciane Despret.

Rozdział pierwszy jest wprowadzeniem zarówno w historyczny i literacki kontekst relacji człowiek-wilk w Ameryce Północnej, jak i bardziej szczegółowym opisaniem teorii, którymi zajmuję się przy analizie roli pozaludzkiej odrębności, podmiotowości, i sprawczości w tworzeniu biografii zwierząt oraz autobiograficznych utworów opisujących więcej-niż-ludzkie powiązania. Sugeruję

tu, że zwłaszcza te ostatnie narracje mogą być uznane za współtworzone przez autorów i wilki. W tym rozdziale zawieram również przegląd wyżej wspomnianej literatury oraz najnowszy stan badań na ten temat, uzasadniając swój wybór utworów i określając metody, które są stosowane w ich analizach.

Rozdziały drugi i trzeci badają literaturę powstałą od roku 1890 do lat 40. XX wieku, w której autorki pisały o wilkach w sposób, który podważał dominujące w tamtych czasach wyobrażenie tych zwierząt jako zabójców i gatunków szkodliwych, z którymi nie była możliwa żadna inna relacja niż ta między myśliwym a ofiarą. Drugi rozdział poszerza kontekst zarysowany już w poprzednim, skupiając się na pamiętnikach Evelyn Cameron, opisujących jej życie z dwoma wilkami, które wychowywała w czasach zwalczania tego gatunku. Relacje Cameron znacząco różniły się od innych w tamtym czasie, gdyż pisała o wilkach w sposób, który uwidaczniał ich sprawczość oraz odrębność jako jednostek. Przedmiotem rozdziału trzeciego jest natomiast *Driftwood Valley* (1946) autorstwa Theodory Stanwell-Fletcher, która w podobny sposób kwestionowała to, jak mogą wyglądać relacje, badania, i życie w sąsiedztwie wilków. Współtworzenie przestrzeni oraz współkształtowanie znaczenia badań stanowiły podstawę ich wspólnego stawania się gatunkami stowarzyszonymi.

Rozdziały czwarty i piąty dotyczą utworów, które miały znaczący wpływ na to, jak postrzegano wilka, ich autorki bowiem opisywały swoje interakcje z poszczególnymi zwierzętami w sposób, który zachęcał do stawiania pytań o to, *kim* są wilki i w jakie relacje mogą wchodzić z ludźmi. Jedną z tych autorek jest Lois Crisler, której *Arctic Wild* (1958) jest przedmiotem rozdziału czwartego. Przyglądam się w nim roli, jaką ucieleśniona komunikacja, według definicji przez Barbary Smuts, odegrała zarówno w relacji Crisler z wilkami, jak i w tworzeniu utworu.

Pokazuję tutaj, jak kluczowe są takie osobiste narracje dla zmiany publicznego postrzegania wilków. Równie ważne w promowaniu współistnienia były eseje Diane Boyd oraz *Shadow Mountain* (2002) autorstwa Renée Askins, które omawiam w rozdziale piątym. W tej części rozważam korzyści i koszty pośrednich powiązań tworzonych między ludźmi a wilkami podczas ich powrotu i reintrodukcji do dawnych siedlisk. Sugeruję, że uwikłania jak te opisane przez Boyd i Askins zaowocowały szerszym uznaniem wilków jako stowarzyszonych podmiotów sprawczych.

W podsumowaniu zwracam uwagę na to, w jaki sposób omawiane utwory wpłynęła na postrzeganie wilków. Podkreślam jednocześnie znaczenie przyjrzenia się tej literaturze z perspektywy, która pozwala uznać zwierzęta pozaludzkie za współtwórców tychże historii.

Słowa kluczowe: wilki, sprawczość pozaludzka, biografie zwierząt, narracje autobiograficzne kobiet, gatunki stowarzyszone