

## MAKING KIN: POSTHUMAN IDENTITY IN ANNE HAVERTY'S *ONE DAY AS A TIGER* AND KAREN JOY FOWLER'S *WE ARE ALL COMPLETELY BESIDES OURSELVES*

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**ABSTRACT.** *Making Kin: Posthuman Identity in Anne Haverty's One Day as A Tiger and Karen Joy Fowler's We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves.*

Through discussions on anthropomorphism, animal research and posthuman sensibilities, this paper intends to analyse how identity is shaped within the human characters so as to account for practices of kinship and to promote a posthuman model that emancipates from the anthropocentric milieu. In the encounter with narratives that have at their core human-animal interactions, we are generally placed in the position to inquire about the development of identity. Paying closer attention to the emergence of new sensibilities within the human subject in relation to the otherness of the animal, we discover that these narratives can have a tendency to instantiate posthuman becomings and introduce characters that transgress the discriminating “*line*” that is discussed by Margo DeMello. The “*line*” itself, although operating through a process of othering, is essentially prejudicial as it aids the creation of species hierarchies. Such is the case with Anne Haverty’s protagonist Marty in *One Day as a Tiger* and Karen Joy Fowler’s character Rosemary in *We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves*. The human subjects in these narratives enter relations of kinship with their animals and in doing so, they manage to build patterns for kin-making as a key to eradicate speciesism. Therefore, looking at the differing reactions to animal alterity in the eyes of the human, I hope to capture the plurality of these encounters.

**Keywords:** *posthumanism, speciesism, kinship, identity, becoming, anthropomorphism*

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**REZUMAT. Înrudirea: Identitatea postumană în *One Day as a Tiger* de Anne Haverty și în *We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves* de Karen Joy Fowler.**

Prin intermediul discuțiilor despre antropomorfism, cercetarea asupra animalelor și sensibilitățile postumane, această lucrare își propune să analizeze felul în care se modelează identitatea personajelor umane, astfel încât să ofere o explicație pentru practicile de înrudire și să promoveze un model postuman care să se emancipeze de mediul antropocentric. Atunci când ne întâlnim cu narațiuni care au în centrul lor interacțiunile om-animal, suntem în general puși în situația de a investiga dezvoltarea identității. Acordând o atenție sporită apariției unor noi sensibilități pentru subiectul uman în raport cu alteritatea animalului, descoperim că aceste narațiuni pot avea tendința de a instanția deveniri postumane și de a introduce personaje care transgresează "linia" discriminatorie pe care o prefigurează Margo DeMello. "Linia" în sine, deși operează printr-un proces de diferențiere, este în esență prejudiciabilă, deoarece ajută la crearea de ierarhii între specii. Acesta este cazul protagonistului Marty al lui Anne Haverty din *One Day as a Tiger* și al personajului Rosemary al lui Karen Joy Fowler din *We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves*. Subiecții umani din aceste narațiuni intră în relații de rudenie cu animalele lor și, în acest fel, reușesc să construiască modele de înrudire ca o cale de eradicare a speciismului. Prin urmare, analizând reacțiile diferite la alteritatea animalelor prin ochii oamenilor, sper să surprind pluralitatea acestor întâlniri.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *postumanism, speciism, înrudire, identitate, devenire, antropomorfism*

## Introduction

There is a pressing need for changing the way in which humanity interacts with otherness. The constant assumption that the human is the quintessential sovereign of all that stands to represent life must be uprooted in order to accelerate the blossoming of a more ethical, equitable and vital framework, whose qualities are defined by the posthuman condition. Posthumanism stands to presage an ethos centred on the abolition of human exceptionalism, anthropocentrism and the rationalist justification of species supremacism. In doing so, it employs a vital materialist approach to relationality and emphasizes the dynamic force of all life, thus creating a horizon of interactions between the entirety of zoetic beings:

the posthuman condition introduces a qualitative shift in our thinking about what exactly is the basic unit of common reference for our species, our polity and our relationship to the other inhabitants of this planet. This issue raises serious questions as to the very structures of our shared identity – as humans – amidst the complexity of contemporary science, politics and international relations. (Braidotti 2013, 1-2)

Following the definition given by Rosi Braidotti, the present paper elaborates on the possibility of fiction to display instances of posthuman identities. As such, I will be looking into Anne Haverty's *One Day as a Tiger* and Karen Joy Fowler's *We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves* in order to show how the novels' protagonists enter becoming processes that are based on human-animal interactions with the purpose of ascertaining to what extent anthropomorphism and kinship coordinate the development of (post)human identity. In doing so, I will be constantly measuring the characters' progress based on their position in relation to the "line" that delimitates the species. To this extent, I will follow Danielle Sands' resolution about anthropomorphism:

arguing that both anthropomorphism and empathy are inescapable components of cross-species relations, [...] we should welcome anthropomorphic empathy in its capacity to stimulate new ethical and political responses to nonhuman life from affective responses to cross-species similarity, while acknowledging its lingering anthropocentrism and generating new kinds of response to nonhuman life. (Sands 2019, 25)

These cross-species relations are visible in both of the chosen narratives. While Haverty's novel explores the limitations of a newfound sensibility within the human, Fowler's text uses the identity question as the main drive force in the discovery of species similarities. The differing responses to anthropomorphism will be discussed as alternative ways of making kin, with the intent to ascertain whether anthropomorphism is a suitable means of creating spheres of interaction between the human and the nonhuman animal. It is here where the "radical posthuman subjectivity, resting on the ethics of becoming" (Braidotti 2013, 49) is making its presence felt. The identity issue at hand is closely tied with the development of such subjectivity, while its particularities are being assembled, in these cases, by the reactions to anthropomorphism and the approaches towards kinship. Such literary responses to cross-species relationality as found in these two novels, being openly productive in their interpretations, manage to clearly iterate the responsibility of the human subject towards the otherness of the animal and to be sensitive to its effects, keeping in mind that "cross-species kinship has consequences" (Haraway 2016, 106).

### **1. "Fields breed fatalism": The Emergence of the Posthuman Farmer**

In Anne Haverty's 1997 novel *One Day as a Tiger*, identity seems to take a pluralistic tone: starting with the Tibetan proverb, "It is better to have lived one day as a tiger than a thousand years as a sheep" (Haverty 1997, epigraph), the author introduces into the discussion varying levels of self-awareness. Marty, the narrator, finds himself investigating the possibilities of being a tiger

or a sheep. These existential questions can be seen as the fundamental requisites for the discovery of identity, possibly establishing a direct correlation between a criterion for being human and the apparent differentiation with the nonhuman other. At the core of it all are these binary articulations that become even more relevant when the very ontology of a real sheep is anthropomorphised in the novel. Thus, Missy the sheep is a genetically engineered hybrid that manages to awake in Marty the realisation that he wants to have her “not for meat or to breed from, but to watch and understand” (25). It could be argued that through Missy, the entire evolution of human identity can be subsequently deconstructed. The hybrid animal stands on the “*line*” predicated by Margo DeMello, differentiating humanity from non-humanity while addressing a myriad of questions that arise from the biopolitical implications of genetic engineering and furthermore, from the identity issue that is at hand:

Just as humans on one side of the line have more rights than those on the other side, animals on one side of the line have more rights than those on the other side. And the line itself may be shifted in such a way that some humans are lumped together with some animals below the line, and other humans remain separate. The danger lies in the existence of the line itself – as long as there exists in society a line separating some from others, then no group is truly safe from being on the losing side of it. (DeMello 2012, 260-261)

One of these questions is formulated by Michael Cronin, asking “what will be the constants in our debates around identity and will debates around identity in Ireland centre not so much around the postnational as the posthuman?” (2004, 9). As such, Marty is a contender for becoming posthuman, drawing closer and closer to that invisible “*line*” that represents the species division. His uncertainty in the beginning of the novel further emphasizes the necessity of animal studies as a means of discovering one’s identity, seeing that “the last thing we want is for any of us to have too rigid an idea about what constitutes Irish identity or even about what it means as humans to have an identity” (9). Another argument in favour of the narrator’s quest is his decision to move to the countryside, at his brother’s farm. As “[u]noccupied spaces; exposed rural fastnesses; unproductive farmland all became transvalued in an economy that became motored by the unreflective fetishization of property” (Flannery 2013, 1), Marty’s decision also upholds the importance and necessity of environmental agents in the revelation and preservation of a posthuman mindset that can care for one’s heterogeneity.

In the first chapter, Marty already intends to describe himself and is doing so in a manner that sets a hopeful tone for the rest of the novel. The ambiguity of his initial description allows for an open interpretation:

I am a flawed character. Riddled with flaws. One small virtue in my favour however may be that I do not regard my own self with any more importance than I regard others. Except for those who are dead. The dead have earned their self-importance, it seems to me, and an infinite pathos, and a life of form and brilliance even if there was nothing of apparent brilliance about their earthly life. [...] Who was I, living and deficient in sympathy and understanding, to rake through the bones of the dead? (Haverty 1997, 4)

At no point during this description does Marty strictly refer to human or nonhuman agents, tolerating thus the plurality of awareness that it conveys. We discover here another instance of something that I have termed “testimonial kinship”. What it implies is an observation, a gaze towards the dead that upholds a sort of reverence, however trivial it may be. This does not refer to allusions of one’s life achievements or their paths, but it intends to place significance on the event of death. It is like the entirety of one’s being becomes amassed into one event, where the integrity of an agent is iterated as a whole within the definiteness of the event. As such, not only does it convey a sort of singular experience of the event of death, but it also brings about reiterations of past experiences stemming from the four pillars of testimonial kinship: suffering, death, mourning and remembrance. With that said, we can observe how Marty is already approaching a stance in which his attentiveness, although “deficient in sympathy and understanding” is unmistakably directed towards otherness. Moreover, as we are to find out later, he is referring here to the death of his parents, and most likely, to the bigger scope of death in terms of history, as his background is that of a former aspiring history professor. Marty’s sensibility towards the dead causes him to transgress the line that DeMello predicated. In doing so, not only does he become aware of the shared qualities between humanity and the natural world, but also prompts him to engender a frame of mind that is alert to the future prospects of kinship.

The novel makes for a transparent discussion about the spaces of interaction between humans and nonhuman animals. Marty is not entirely convinced of the opportunities that lay ahead in the pastoral land in which he ended up. Finding himself in a “blankness of peace and abnegation of action” (Haverty 1997, 10), Marty tackles farm life with a modesty that tends to subjugate the potential found in rural Ireland. His resignation in the face of future prospects provides a pessimist overtone towards the abundant natural allure of the land. Marty’s attitude is at first constructed on pillars of uncertainty, where “[f]ields breed fatalism” (10) while the born and raised farmer is “cute about these matters” (8). At the same time, Missy’s “birthplace” is seen as an explicitly human domain, as the space becomes a platform through which the representation of the sheep compels the human spectator to reconsider the ordinariness of the nonhuman. Since Missy is not born at the farm, the particular fatalist doctrine seems to escape her. The “progressive, tidy, scientific” (22) laboratory expels any association with

the natural world, making it difficult for animal behaviour to develop in its instinctive manner. Moreover, the comment about such laboratories or farms being reminders of concentration camps seems to be a quite common remark, as Coetzee makes use of the same argument in *The Lives of Animals* (1999, 19-22). The argument, although being deemed excessive numerous times, can still make for a practical discussion about the cruelty imposed on both humans and animals, which creates another horizon of interaction between the species.

In the discussion about spaces of interaction, it is fitting to also relay the relations of power and dependence that both Marty and Missy are subjected to. After his arrival at the farm, Marty surrenders his part of the inheritance to his brother:

Locking Pierce and myself into a relationship in which the burden of goodness lay on him, I might as well have challenged him to a duel, a fight to a spiritual death. In handing him the freedom to cast out without hindrance his brother from his inheritance, I gave him the freedom to despise me and his children to despise me. Making myself dependent, an object of charity, I forced him to be the good, the charitable, the noble day after day, season after season. This I put up to him. (Haverty 1997, 42)

The becoming of Marty continues by subjecting himself to his brother's will, giving him the half of the property that he was entitled to and becoming a guest voluntarily. Here we encounter a second instance of Marty's emergent posthuman sensibility: he realises that Missy is also in the same situation as he is, being left at the patriarch's disposition. Missy's fate is "hopeless and beyond [his] resolution" (Haverty 1997, 136) and, therefore, she is found to be part of the same power relations that Marty entered in. The sheep is also dependant since "[s]he had little choice, I admit, but to love me" (99), but Marty becomes aware of the state of their relationship and resorts to return the feeling as "affection, simple, tender, paternal" (98). He also makes sure to differentiate between the love for Missy and his secret love for his brother's wife, awakened as passion. While making these remarks, Marty reconsiders his initial argument:

It was like having a beloved, inexorably sickening child in the house whose days in this world, its kin are aware, are numbered. But who, coming from a fatalistic race, accept without protest such outrages and misfortunes as life flings at them. (Haverty 1997, 98)

The narrator-character identifies the seemingly fatalistic trait in the animal's race, but places himself within their realm: first, by announcing that both humans and animals are found to co-exist within the same doctrine, and second, by showing that both Missy's kin and he himself, as a human, are capable of realising that the state of the sickening animal is precarious. Encountering here, once again, the first stage of testimonial kinship – suffering – we can ponder upon Judith Butler's consideration that:

To be injured means that one has the chance to reflect upon injury, to find out the mechanisms of its distribution, to find out who else suffers from permeable borders, unexpected violence, dispossession, and fear, and in what ways. (Butler 2004, XII)

It is through such otherness found in Missy's suffering that the horizon of interaction can be brought into discussion. It furthermore allows for a reconsideration of the "dispossession" that both Marty and Missy went through, renewing here the position in which both are encountered. From this standpoint, we can further indulge into examining the anthropomorphism on which the novel's infrastructure is settled. Initially, the description of the lamb is done in a sort of terminology borrowed from human clinical research:

There followed then a longish discourse on the genes as the building-blocks of life and DNA and all the rest of it. And about the radical developments in the science, where the genes of one species were being incorporated into another at an early stage of foetal growth. (Haverty 1997, 23)

After a parade in which the genetically engineered animal is defined by numbers and processes, we arrive at a stage in which its ontology is almost entirely re-evaluated. Missy is becoming a "bit less sheeplike," with the intent of developing a "trouble-free" animality. As observed previously, this particularly desired effect does not come to fruition, as Missy is found to be continuously suffering because of her newly acquired genes. The protagonist is also keen on identifying, from the beginning, the differences preached by the lab engineers. However, to Marty, they were "[s]heep that were not sheep. Human sheep. But they did not look any different" (Haverty 1997, 24). This apparent anthropocentric blindness is later corrected through Marty's becoming, when he admits to having been "treacherous and cruel and weak" (68), making "persistent attempts to induce in Missy a credible sheepiness" (47) or to "impose meek ovineness on a creature bent on rejecting her sheep's costume" (68). Later in the novel, after Missy "had forsaken sheep nature" (99), Marty becomes aware of the relations of dependability that they have both developed. From this acquired kinship, Missy further gets anthropomorphised, seemingly of her own accord, by realising that her position in the human world where she resides is inconvenient. Her only choice is to become as human as possible, with the intent of surviving, while the human subject continues to observe the transition: "It was me she identified with, me she wanted to be" (99). Apart from inducing "sheepness" into Missy, there are various indirect descriptions of the animal that can be correlated with characterisations of Etti, Marty's sister-in-law. Etti is seen to be constantly behaving "like a child" (195), while Missy, through her displays of curiosity and fear, can be said to be acting the same. Another most descriptive similarity is seen in the following examples, where Marty is seen to correlate both human and nonhuman subjects through

the specificity of their gazes. If for Etti he observes how “her eyes met [his] with a tortuous expression of empathic sorrow” (37), the situation becomes remarkably similar in the case of Missy: “She would follow me or stand at my knee, her head cocked and her glistening eyes gazing into mine, their look not anguished then but considering, alight, the look of an intelligent child” (47). Anthropomorphism can also be discussed from the specificity of one particular performance: the gaze. John Berger signals the implications of the event:

The eyes of an animal when they consider a man are attentive and wary. The same animal may look at other species in the same way. He does not reserve a special look for man. But by no other species except man will the animal’s look be recognised as familiar. Other animals are held by the look. Man becomes aware of himself returning the look. (Berger 1980, 4-5)

Such awareness denounces Marty’s ultimate becoming: in returning the gaze and also describing it in terms that are similar to the expression coming from Etti, Marty builds the bridge over the aforementioned “*line*”. Lastly, there exists another instance of demarcation between Marty and the traditional farmer. By comparing the narrator with Young Delaney, a self-made rural farmer that has lived his entire life in Fansha, we observe the startling discrepancy in attitudes towards animal care. If for Marty the animals “were not in [his] care. [He] had little feeling for them. Mute, despite all their bawling and mooing, sometimes a nuisance, sometimes objects of curiosity, but rarely of [his] affection, a backdrop to [his] life” (Haverty 1997, 48) in the beginning, for Young Delaney “the air of neglect around [him] displays his industry. All those animals have to be foddered. Housed and watered. Dosed and dipped. Milked and sheared and slaughtered. All this he does himself” (50) Apart from the pronounced differentiations found in the finality of farming, the most appealing point of interest in the treatment of animals is proven Delaney’s illusory care only reinforces the separation between the species. Delaney is acting within the frames of what Erika Cudworth terms “anthroparchy” (Cudworth 2008, 156). From discussions about production relations, domestication, politics, systemic violence, and the exclusive humanism found within a character such as Young Delaney, we can extrapolate that Marty does not, evidently, gravitate towards such patriarchal ideals. His initial incompetence and inexperience allows Marty to engender a new type of farmer, one that can care (initially through ignorance) for the heterogeneity of the cattle and whose sensibility can only awaken the ideal of an inter- and intra-species relationship based on kinship.

In conclusion, Anne Haverty’s novel does not only instantiate the powerful bond that can arise from the willingness to understand otherness, but also builds a vocabulary for the emergence of the posthuman farmer. By contacting Missy’s alterity, Marty awakens a posthuman sensibility that can become a model for human-animal relationality. Through the questioning of animal ontology or

by reiterating the similarities between species, Marty creates and upholds a horizon of interaction that goes beyond meat consumption or power relations, with the intention of emancipating from the anthropocentric milieu that is becoming ever more threatening.

## 2. "The counterfeit human": Rosemary's Anthro- and Zoomorphisms

Karen Joy Fowler's 2013 novel *We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves* exhibits another instance of kin-making and anthropomorphism (along with zoomorphism), exposing how the delimitation between species fuels the emergence of a particular bond between the human and the non-human. The grand-narrative of the novel, an experiment in which a family is cross-fostering a chimpanzee and raising it as if it were their own child, quickly becomes the territory of discussions about species difference, co-existence and relationality, responding to Braidotti's claims regarding the "becoming-animal" of the posthuman subject and arguing for "the recognition of trans species solidarity on the basis of our being environmentally based, that is to say embodied, embedded and in symbiosis with other species." (Braidotti 2013, 67)

One of the most important premises of Fowler's novel lies in the initial framing of the entire experience as a scientific experiment. As a psychologist, Rosemary's father oversees the project, making it his life's work while being constantly attentive to the results of Fern and Rosemary's co-evolution. Crucial to note is not the father's involvement in the process, but the way in which he interacts with the subjects and the initial reaction to the alterity of the animals:

Was my father kind to animals? I thought so as a child, but I knew less about the lives of lab rats then. Let's just say that my father was kind to animals unless it was in the interest of science to be otherwise. He would never have run over a cat if there was nothing to be learned by doing so. He was a great believer in our animal natures, far less likely to anthropomorphize Fern than to animalize me. (Fowler 2013, 83)

Much like the scientist found in *One Day as a Tiger*, Rosemary's father is interested solely in the data extracted from his "experiment". The narrator further emphasises the clear hierarchical distinction in which her father places himself, as he "was always saying that we were all animals, but when he dealt with Fern, he didn't start from that place of congruence" (Fowler 2013, 174). Not only does he start from a biased assumption of species superiority, but he also places all the failures of his project onto the nonhuman animal, being predisposed to denounce how "[i]t was always her failure for not being able to talk to us, never ours for not being able to understand her" (174). Moreover, he is seen as "[r]epresenting the intransigent rejection of anthropomorphism" (Sands 2019,

82), denoting a sort of stubbornness that can be derived either from categorical beliefs in the relevance of hard sciences or from a complete disregard of the animal's agency. In relation to this, Rosemary's brother posits himself in contrast to the attitude of their father, resisting both the patriarchal and speciesist arguments and asserting that "[i]t would have been more scientifically rigorous to start with an assumption of similarity" (Fowler 2013, 174), thus defining a first instance of the narrator's identitary outline as she is trying to align with her brother's convictions. Matthew Calarco further highlights the limitations of such a restricted attitude:

this kind of search for and insistence on a sharp anthropological difference still dominates large swaths of the humanities and social sciences. Rosemary grows up in an intellectual and institutional environment that is dominated by a search for the anthropological difference and the metaphysical assumptions and dogmas that ground such a project. (Calarco 2014, 618-619)

Therefore, Rosemary's upbringing maintains a relatively controlled connection to the clear distinction made between humans and nonhuman animals. However, her closeness to the nonhuman animal itself gives way to the emergence of a space of interaction that is fully capable of accommodating this co-evolution and of lessening the explicit anthropological differences. Just as Danielle Sands further argues, the anthropomorphic allure of the narrative "need not be narcissistic or appropriative, but might facilitate a dynamic negotiation between one's own and others' identities" (Sands 2019, 81). Accordingly, being part of such a project represents for Rosemary a way of closing the gap between the species, bringing to the table a new array of sensibilities that can be predicated upon in order to generate both human and nonhuman modes of inclusion. By means of this newly established relationality, the purpose of humanity should be to "find the language and ethico-political sensitivity to acknowledge that these codings and modes of institutionalized differences are formative in the processes of subjectification" (Calarco 2014, 629) in order to accentuate how identity is shaped in relation to seeking kinship with nonhuman animals. Lowell, the brother-turned-activist who in an attempt to destabilise the entire foundation of these scientific experiments decides to embark on a mission to destroy labs and release the captive animals, is first and foremost a defendant of this relationality. Joining the Animal Liberation Front, Lowell becomes an elusive figure and is seen to have found a way to dissolve the separating "*line*" between the species: "*They*, my brother said, whenever he talked about humans. Never *us*. Never *we*" (Fowler 2013, 197).

At this stage it is important to clarify the position of the patriarchal standpoint for the sake of this argument. Seeing that the father in the novel is an architect of species hierarchies, it could be argued that Cudworth's anthroparchy can easily make its way into the discussion. However, Lowell's presence in the novel manages to advocate, at least on his part, for the discontinuation of male

dominance over any form of alterity. Moreover, it is Rosemary who cannot distinguish the implications of male sovereignty in lab practices, believing that “[t]he women who should have stood with Fern – my mother, the female grad students, me – none of us had helped. Instead, we had exiled her to a place completely devoid of female solidarity” (Fowler 2013, 145). Failing to recognise how “women and animals are similarly positioned in a patriarchal world, as objects rather than subjects” (Adams 2010, 219), Rosemary falls victim to a system that is admittedly keen on subjugating any trace of female kinship. She does seem to have an idea of what the system is able to provoke, as she finds in her readings “daughters indulged and daughters oppressed, daughters who spoke loudly and daughters made silent” (Fowler 2013, 72) while also admitting that “Fern’s treatment fit easily inside [a wide range of possibility]” (72). In this case, one of the responses that could ideally rearrange such hierarchical positions comes from Donna Haraway, who ascertains that within primatology there is a need to use stories in order to:

shift the webs of intertextuality and to facilitate perhaps new possibilities for the meanings of difference, reproduction, and survival for specifically located members of the primate order – on both sides of the bio-political and cultural divide between human and animal. (Haraway 1989, 377)

One of the ways in which these differences are to be made into affirmative means of making kin is through anthropomorphism. Throughout the entire novel, the narrator discusses her upbringing in relation to her chimpanzee companion Fern. Being aware of the reader’s intent of either fully anthropomorphising Fern into a human sister or perceiving her as a member of the companion species, Rosemary deliberately withholds Fern’s chimp nature. Additionally, by mentioning that she “spent the first eighteen years of [her] life defined by this one fact, that [she] was raised with a chimpanzee” (Fowler 2013, 71), Rosemary questions her identity in relation to the animal. There is also a discussion about the ethical implications of her insistence on keeping Fern’s nature a secret, but “the narrative takes Fern’s absence as a structuring premise to meditate on the discourses that render animals as silent” (Parry 2017, 202). The novel showcases numerous times how Rosemary intends to become human, as a result of her close proximity with Fern during the first years of her life. In this instance, having “co-constituted each other’s subjectivity in fundamental and deep ways” (Calarco 2014, 625), Rosemary sees herself in need to define and discover her (human) identity. In her quest, she is continuously made to reminisce about the closeness she used to have with the chimp, borrowing and appropriating various qualities that subsequently make her become the “monkey girl” (Fowler 2013, 77) and part of one of the “chimped-up families” (73). With this in mind, Catherine Parry argues that: “Her breach of the boundary between the proper human and something else is not a distortion of any supposed essentially human properties, but a failure to perform the role of human

girl in the socially approved and expected way” (Parry 2017, 204). Similarly to Missy’s situation, Rosemary is made to accept and work on her altered identity, submitting to the societal constraints imposed by her surroundings. The aforementioned boundary correlates with the existence of the line predicated by DeMello. Rosemary proves to be an almost perfect example of humanity’s transgression of the limit imposed by speciesism. Her initial zoomorphism, followed by a second-hand anthropomorphism, calls for the eradication of such finite constructions of identity and maintains that the hereditary qualities of both human and nonhuman subjects should be subjected to a far greater liberty. The ontologies of both Fern and Rosemary are allowed to become with each other, while simultaneously kinship is seen to regain its autonomy from the initial forms of domestication. As Calarco argues, the demarcating “*line*” between human and nonhuman subjectivity becomes more and more blurred:

That Rosemary has to go through this process of normalization, humanization, and domestication speaks to the fact that making a clear distinction between human beings and animals is less a matter of denotation and more a matter of performativity. (Calarco 2014, 624)

Rosemary’s behaviour is deemed to contain “classic chimp traits” (Fowler 2013, 121) that she intends to forget. However, in regards to Fern, she is being “treated like some kind of animal” (110), despite her demonstrated “human” abilities as in the case of sign language. Moreover, Fern’s clothing is seen by the mother as a form of “self-expression” (87), while for the father it is an “anthropomorphism [he] dislikes” (87). These distinctions manage to create additional spheres of interaction between the species, repeatedly implying that the ties between the human and the nonhuman animal grow stronger and that their absence is felt, at least for Rosemary, as “an ache, a hunger on the surface of [her] skin” (95). Seeking to feel closer to her lost sister, Rosemary begins to find herself in situations where she is being held captive. As such, different forms of incarceration (prisons and cages) manage to create additional ties between the two, as Rosemary seeks (although not entirely deliberately) to be subjected to the same treatment as Fern. Physical space seems to be of importance both here and in the case of Marty and Missy. The human and non-human subjects of both novels are actively implying that in order for kinship to prevail, there is a necessity of co-habitation with one another. Additionally, there are numerous instances when the theme of the mirror between Fern and Rosemary is brought into discussion. I would argue that such mirror is exactly the opposite of the “*line*” that DeMello mentioned. The mirror allows for the integration of both characters’ traits, qualities and conditions and to be compared, analysed and ultimately exchanged from one to the other with the purpose of becoming “Restored and repaired. Reunited. Refulgent” (32).

The novel manages to demonstrate how the human's identity is closely tied to the animal other. Through her upbringing and the immediate affirmative responses to otherness that Rosemary showcases, she develops posthuman sensibilities that are bound to care for the nonhuman's "radical alterity" (Calarco 2014, 628). As such, the identity question at hand is indeed predicated upon the demarcation of differences between species, but *We Are All Completely Besides Ourselves* is making it so that the same differences cannot be attributed to either the human nor the animal, since they both possess them. The anthropomorphism that Fowler employs in the novel is attentive to the possibilities that can stem out of it, while the non-linear narrative allows for the exploration of identity in regenerative ways

### Conclusion

In trying to ascertain whether the (post)human identity can be influenced by a nonhuman other, I have sought to analyse how Marty and Rosemary became in relation with their animal companions. What is to be noted is that the implication of anthropomorphism in these novels is crucial in the formulation of co-evolving histories of care and awareness:

As readers and writers, we are responsible for rewriting anthropocentric histories – for example that of canine domestication – and constructing alternative cross-species futures, not authored by Man under the misapprehension that language and aesthetic production separate humans from the natural world, but fully alert to the fleshiness of the word. (Sands, 72-73)

One of these histories is that written by Anne Haverty, whose characters are found in situations that are more than appropriate examples of cross-species relationality. I have detailed Marty's becoming in terms of acquiring posthuman sensibilities that transgress the speciesist boundary. Moving to the countryside, Marty becomes attentive to other environmental agents and renounces his patriarchal responsibilities so as to be able to dedicate himself more thoroughly to the care for Missy. He shares the suffering of the sheep and they become co-dependant. Moreover, he learns how to return the gaze of the animal and to further concern himself with the modification of the sheep's ontology. His differentiation from the traditional farmer is instantiated thoroughly by the author, and in doing so, it appeals to the posthuman framework by means of empathetic responses to Missy's otherness. While *making kin* with the animal, Marty's identity is admittedly re-evaluated through accessing an ethos fully conditioned by empathy. The second example, found in Fowler's *We Are All Completely Besides*

*Ourselves*, maintains a similar rhetoric, with the most discerning variation being that of Rosemary's apparent zoomorphism. However, such an instance is only capable to aid in the becoming of the human character, positioning her even closer to the alterity of the animal. The co-evolving process is positively reinforcing the prospect of kinship, while at the same time it is fighting to eradicate the finite constructions of identity. Anthropomorphism and zoomorphism are processes that aid in the initiation of kinship, which in turn allows for the development of a posthuman sensibility that ultimately rewrites one's identity. Both novels manage to iterate processes of making kin, which should be able to raise awareness of the vital force of life that deterritorialises anthropocentrism and gives way to posthumanism – an open gate towards the liberation from the pernicious and conservative attitude of the self-centred man.

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