

TRACES OF THE ANIMAL PAST: METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES IN ANIMAL HISTORY

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Hidden in Plain Sight: How Art and Visual Culture Can Help Us Think about Animal Histories¹

J. Keri Cronin

How can studying images of animals help us think about animal histories? While, of course, animals have been the focus of countless images throughout the history of art and visual culture, more often than not these images use animals as symbols of human ideas, politics, and culture. For instance, equestrian portraiture, a genre of imagery in which powerful leaders are depicted astride suitably powerful-looking horses, is intended as a tribute to the human subjects of these images—the horses are, for the most part, symbolic details intended to support this larger meaning.² Further, when we consider how images of animals have been collected, valued, and displayed, we are, of course, presented with a distinctly and unavoidably anthropocentric pattern. These images, in other words, were created, consumed, collected, and curated by humans. However, as Jay Young and Dolly Jørgensen have argued elsewhere in this volume, these anthropocentric patterns of collection and display can be interrupted by interventions and inquiries that destabilize expectations in

museums, archives, and galleries. There is much potential for innovative animal history scholarship to take place when we revisit these histories and collections.

What can historical images teach us about the lives (and deaths) of non-human animals from previous time periods? Is there any value in turning to art and visual culture as we attempt to piece together their histories? In the following discussion, I argue that visual culture can be a very valuable tool in these endeavours. However, if we are going to consider how these kinds of visual texts can help us think about non-human animal histories, we have to also consider such things as the complex relationships that exist between material animal bodies and visual imagery. Further, we also need to be attuned to some of the methodologies used by scholars in the history of art and visual culture.

Art History Is (in Many Cases) Animal History

When we consider the plethora of imagery that we can draw on as we attempt to “trace the animal past,” one of the first points to remember is that the history of art and visual culture is intertwined with animal histories on a very material level. For centuries, the production of art and art-making supplies has relied on the bodies (or body parts) of non-human animals. The literal entanglement of imagery and animal bodies goes back as long as people have been making pictorial records. For instance, throughout history, many pigments have been made from animal bodies: Indian Yellow has historically been made with concentrated cow urine;³ Tyranian Purple was derived from shellfish (*Thais haemastoma* and *Murex brandaris*);⁴ and the red pigment obtained from the body of an insect, known as the cochineal (*Dactylopius coccus*), continues to have widespread applications to the present day.⁵ Likewise, paint brushes have been made with animal hair and many textile objects are made of wool derived from sheep and other animals raised for this purpose. Egg yolks have been used as binding agents in tempera paints, and egg whites (or, more specifically, the albumen protein contained within egg whites) were used in making albumen prints, an early form of photography. As the name suggests, another photographic process, the gelatin silver process, relies on gelatin (typically derived from animal bones) as a key ingredient. And, of course, we must consider the vellum and parchment derived from the skin of calves, sheep,

and goats that has served as the surface material for countless manuscripts and works of art.

While this is by necessity a brief discussion of the complex histories of the use of animal bodies in the production of art, I mention it here because when we consider imagery as a source of information for learning about animal histories, we cannot forget this material connection between the processes of picture making and the bodies of so many animals. And yet it is easy to forget that these key “ingredients” were essential to the production of so many of the world’s most revered cultural objects. This connection has become culturally invisible. We have become accustomed to not seeing this connection, and we typically view a painting, photograph, or a woven textile without seeing the traces of the animal bodies right in front of our eyes. In her discussion of medieval manuscripts, Sarah Kay describes this phenomenon as part of “the seemingly ahistorical existence of animals.”⁶ And this only increases as we look at and work with digital images. Of course, digitized collections have many benefits, including wider access and the preservation of fragile objects. However, looking at an image on a screen means we do not always have the opportunity to examine the material qualities of the picture. This means that it is more important than ever to be mindful of these connections.

Visual Analysis

In her study on the labour of horses in the United States during the nineteenth century, Ann Norton Greene talks about some of the difficulties in writing animal histories, including “keeping the animals at the centre of study.”⁷ What she means here is that it is important to go beyond the symbolic and cultural meanings that humans have attributed to animals. This is, of course, a central concern for all of us writing animal histories.

Echoing Greene’s point, I want to emphasize the importance of keeping images of animals centrally focused if we are using them as part of our source material for writing animal histories. Images need to be taken as seriously as any other source or text. Images are not neutral “windows onto the past.” Rather, images—be they famous works of art, snapshot photographs, or illustrated advertisements—are complex documents that require a researcher to pay close attention to such things as how the images were made, the context in which they were viewed, and how they

continue to generate meanings. Further, images can wield a lot of power: they can both support and challenge dominant discourses. As Nicholas Mirzoeff argues, “visual culture is the relation between what is visible and the names that we give to what is seen. It also involves what is invisible or kept out of sight.”⁸ When we work with images as our primary source documents, we must pay attention to the multiple ways in which meaning can be created through our engagement with imagery.

So, how do we do this? What does this actually mean? Many scholars have not been trained in the methodologies that underpin history of art and visual culture programs and can, understandably, feel a bit daunted by this. If we have never stopped to take images seriously as historical sources, we may not be sure where to begin nor feel confident in our ability to work with visual material.

The first step in working with images is to conduct a visual analysis. Visual analysis is a key skill that students in history of art and visual culture programs learn in their academic studies. It is also a skill that should be practiced by anyone working with images as source material. Simply put, visual analysis is a deep description of the image under consideration. This seems like it should be a simple task, but it can be surprisingly challenging when we sit down to do it. We are surrounded by imagery in our day-to-day lives, but how often do we stop to really notice these images in detail? What do we see when we look at the image? What choices has the image-maker made? Which colours are used? Which materials? When I am teaching, I frequently give my students a few minutes to write a brief visual analysis of an image projected on the screen as a warm-up exercise. When we start to discuss their answers, it quickly becomes apparent that not everyone in the room has noticed the same details. As the discussion unfolds, some students add to their answers. Visual analysis requires deep concentration and critical engagement with the image under consideration, but ideally it also includes conversation and reflection. Regular practice can help deepen observational skills in a broader sense, and this is the primary reason that some medical programs now require their students to take courses in the history of art and visual culture.⁹

Visual analysis can also help us in our efforts to “trace the animal past.” This kind of exercise can train us to look closely and critically at the representations of animals we are working with. For example, if we

take a close look at Franklin Brownell's 1916 pastel drawing *Frozen Meat, Byward Market*, we can see the artist has included representations of a couple of different types of non-human animals in the scene. The artist has used compositional details to ensure that our eye is drawn to the frozen body of the dead pig laid out on the sled in the foreground of the image. The lines of the sled, the central placement, and the light-coloured pigment used to render this animal's body are intended to focus the initial attention of the viewer to this aspect of the picture. At the opposite end of the sled, we have a compositional detail that foreshadows the next step in this pig's journey—she will be rendered into cuts of meat, her body less and less recognizable with each violent slice. This, of course, is reinforced through the title given to the picture, *Frozen Meat*, although the actual moment of dismembering this pig's body is not represented here.

The loose application of the pastel pigment in this image coupled with the somewhat informal groupings of human figures gives this scene a casual, almost snapshot feel. This is very much in keeping with the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist styles of art-making that Brownell was drawn to in his career. This kind of art is intended to offer a “fleeting glimpse” of modern life, and certainly in a city like Ottawa the market square would be an excellent place for Brownell to find this kind of subject matter for his work.¹⁰ This was a space that would be full of hustle and bustle, with conversations and commerce overlapping. In spite of the cold weather (as indicated by the rosy red cheeks and the layers of warm clothing worn by the people gathered in the market square), Brownell, in all likelihood, sketched this scene while outdoors at the market, as this was keeping with the practice of artists working to capture a “fleeting glimpse” of a scene such as this.

The pink, naked, scarred body of the pig contrasts sharply with the bundled-up human figures in this scene. The casual way in which the fully clothed human figures gather in conversation so near the body of this animal normalize this death. This is not a shocking scene for those gathered at Byward Market on this day; it barely even merits a second glance.

The hooves of the upturned pig's body also direct our eye toward two other non-human animals in this scene—two horses, both wearing harnesses and tack indicating their status as workhorses in this urban environment. The brown horse on the left side of the composition has been



Fig. 15.1 Franklin Brownell, *Frozen Meat, Byward Market, Ottawa* (pastel drawing, 1916). Source: National Gallery of Canada.

covered with a bright orange blanket, protection against the Ottawa winter chill. The grey horse in the middle of the picture, however, has not been given the same courtesy. I wrote about the tradition of equestrian portraiture at the start of this essay, about the symbolic equation of powerful leaders with powerful steeds. This is not the aesthetic tradition Brownell draws on here. In this picture, the horses are part of the everyday landscape of Ottawa, as they were in most urban centres in Canada in the early twentieth century.¹¹ These are but two ways that artists have represented horses throughout history, but at the risk of belabouring the point, I draw attention to the differences as a reminder that picturing non-human animals is a dynamic process that resists easy categorization.

In spite of the central placement of this dead pig, when we look around the composition, we can see that we are the only viewers paying any attention to this animal's body. Here she is rendered as simply another market commodity and not as an individual animal. But what if we wanted to

know more about that particular pig? What if we wanted to know further details of her life and her death, details that this painting cannot immediately offer us? Likewise, if we wanted to know more details about the lives of the horses in this image, we may find ourselves coming up a little short if all we have to go on is this picture. Brownell's picture provides us with many visual details, but there is a lot this picture does not tell us. As art historian Patricia Johnston has argued that "visual images provide views of historical moments, but they are not transparent windows."¹² Many questions remain to be answered. Does this render imagery like Brownell's sketch useless for our understanding of animal histories? Not at all! Pictures like this can help direct the next phase of our inquiry—contextual analysis.

Contextual Analysis

When we are working with images as historical texts, visual analysis and contextual analysis must go hand-in-hand. Contextual analysis involves taking the detailed description generated in the visual analysis stage and using that as a launching point for specific and tailored research. As anyone who has tried to piece together the life story of an animal from a previous era is well aware, there are significant gaps in the historical record when it comes to individual details of animal lives.¹³ So, where do we turn?

In addition to searching libraries and archives for texts and reports detailing things like the agricultural histories of Canada and specific references to this kind of economic activity in the Ottawa area at this time, we can also read about pigs—specifically, pigs who have been bred for human consumption. Farmed pigs have very different life histories than their wild ancestors, although as Brett Mizelle reminds us, they do have some common origins.¹⁴ It would also be prudent to search for farming manuals and "how to" books for raising livestock from this era and location, similar to those Hodgins examines in Chapter 5. Local Ottawa newspapers might have a list of market prices. Archival documents from organizations such as the Ottawa Humane Society and the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals can also offer a glimpse into what counted as "cruel" or "humane" behaviour toward non-human animals in this specific context. As is the case today, these frameworks tended to be species-specific in the time period Brownell was painting. In other words,

horses and pigs were not seen as equals in the eyes of the law nor of the officers tasked with preventing cruelty to animals. With this information in mind, the compositional relationships that exist between the two horses and the dead pig in Brownell's sketch become more complex than the formal arrangement of figures within the frame.

In addition to reading the history of human-pig interactions, we may also find books like Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson's *The Pig Who Sang to the Moon: The Emotional World of Farm Animals* to be useful in our contextual analysis. Granted, the cognitive ethology framework that Masson and others have taken in their studies of farmed animals in recent years was not a dominant way of understanding pigs when Brownell made this painting. And yet, when we are thinking about animal histories, this kind of information can play a useful role.

We may never be able to piece together the exact life history of this specific pig, and yet learning more about the ways in which she very likely lived and died does a very powerful thing: it transforms her from compositional detail to subject. Here, I would argue, the combination of looking at the image and reading these varied sources is key. If we were to just look at this image on its own, we would have many gaps in our historical analysis of the scene. If we were to just read about agricultural history or even the cultural history of human-pig interactions, we may still be thinking about these topics in an abstract manner. The image filters the historical and contextual information through to a specific narrative that invites us to consider the non-human animals within the frame in a more focused light.

Looking for Animals in the Archives

One of the reasons I use the phrase "hidden in plain sight" when talking about "tracing the animal past" has to do with how we encounter and interact with the visual history of animal lives. How, in other words, do we actually locate and access the material we are looking for when we visit museums, galleries, and archives? The history of human and non-human animals is intertwined in many ways and yet, as anyone who is interested in exploring non-human animal histories is acutely aware, the ways in which documents, records, and visual material in the collections of museums, galleries, and archives have been organized typically privileges the human

over the non-human.¹⁵ Further, catalogues and metadata often gloss over textual mentions or visual representations of non-human animals found within collections, which can make it challenging for historians to locate and work with this material.

Last summer I was working with a research assistant trying to find information about the animal workers who were an integral part in building the Welland Canals in the Niagara region of southern Ontario during the nineteenth century. We spent a lot of time in the archives, going through files looking for evidence of the lives and deaths of the dozens upon dozens of oxen, horses, and mules who were integral to building these canals.¹⁶ We knew that these animals had been part of this project—the canals simply could not have been built without animal labour in this period—and yet there was, of course, no “animals of the Welland Canal” folder in the archives. That would have made our work too easy! We found brief references here and there, but it was only after several hours of digging that we started to find what we were looking for. My research assistant opened a file labelled “Construction and Management – Equipment” and it was here where we finally found multiple references to the animal labour used in the building of the first Welland Canal during the 1820s. This cracked our search strategies wide open, as we realized that we needed to be considering such keywords as “equipment” and “machinery” alongside the more obvious search terms and metadata. Now that we are aware of how this material is classified, it seems obvious, but this was not how we initially approached the archives. The animal workers were hidden in plain sight.

The material we found in this file included a diagram of an invention designed to make the work more efficient and to keep the workers (both human and non-human) safer as the enormous task was completed. As the first canal took shape, “thousands of tons” of excavated earth had to be hauled up the newly created banks to be removed.¹⁷ This was incredibly difficult labour and “as many as ten yoke of oxen” were required in places.¹⁸ However, this was also very dangerous work, and in response to a series of accidents in which human and non-human workers were injured or killed, new methods of working were sought. Eventually, the Board of Directors for the Welland Canal Company came up with a plan to “offer a reward of £125 to the person who would construct a machine that would remove

the greatest quantity of earth in a given time, at the least expense.”¹⁹ The winning design was submitted by Oliver Phelps who explained how the machine worked as follows:

A common wagon wheel fixed on an upright post, about seven feet from the ground on the top of the bank; a rope, with a hook on each end reaching from the bottom of the canal to the top, is fixed round this wheel which hooks on the back of the descending cart and to the tongue of the one below, so that the return team assists in pulling up the loaded one, thereby, in effect, reducing the ascent to a perfect level, as the loads are drawn up with more ease than they are removed from the level to discharge.²⁰

This description was reinforced through a two-part diagram, one of the few visual sources we have available to us for researching the history of the first Welland Canal. When we do a visual analysis of Phelps’ diagram, we can see that it is comprised of two separate but thematically related images. At the top of the diagram is a profile view of the canal as it might be seen by someone standing along the bottom of the ditch. On the far left we see three double teams of oxen yoked to wagons—the first two appear to have full loads of excavated earth heaped high in the carts behind them. Perhaps the third team is waiting for further material to be loaded. As our eye moves across the page toward the right, we can see an illustration of the crux of Phelps’ plan being demonstrated. Here, as he described, we have two teams of oxen attached to a tow rope, which is, in turn, affixed around a wheel—one team goes up the embankment, the other returns down for another load. In both cases, the driver of each wagon holds a whip in his hand—the raised position of the whip indicates that the use of force to urge these teams on was a common enough occurrence to be included as part of the iconography of this diagram. The implicit violence toward the bodies of the animal workers here is normalized as part of day-to-day operations. At the top of this first diagram, we see yet another oxen team attached to an empty cart awaiting their return journey back down to the lower part of the work site.

The bottom half of Phelps’ diagram shows the same process but from a bird’s eye view. Here, we are to imagine we are hovering over the job site

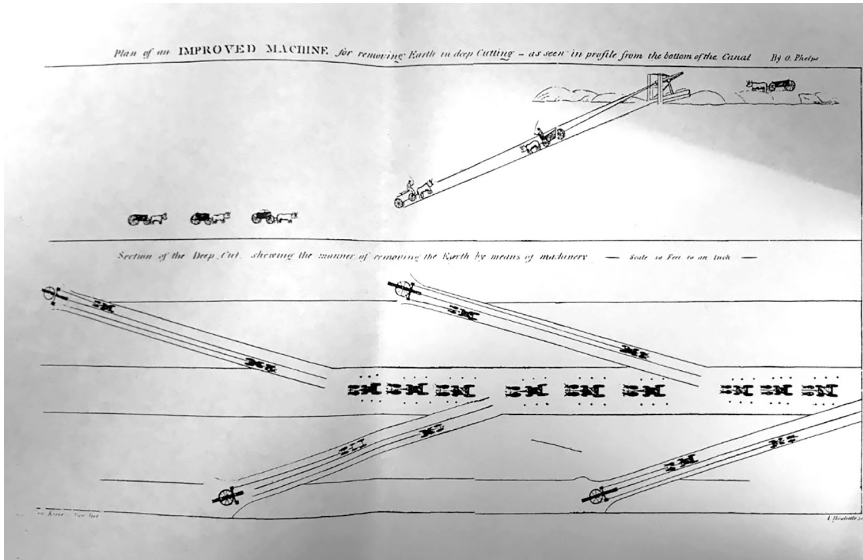


Fig. 15.2 Oliver Phelps' "Improved Machine" (ca. 1827). Source: St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre.

looking down at the work unfolding below. Once again, we see the teams of non-human animal workers engaged in the task of hauling wagons up and down the incline with the assistance of Phelps' invention, while other teams are lined up waiting for their wagons to be filled before being sent up the hill by their driver. The drivers (and their ubiquitous whips) are less visible from this vantage point, as are the bodies of the non-human animals hauling the loads. The small size of these workers in this representation stands at odds with the enormity of the massive construction project and the incredible physical exertion required by those working at the site, both human and non-human.

Phelps' method was, as Roberta Styran and Robert Taylor have noted, one of the many methods through which human and non-human animal labourers worked side by side to excavate and eventually build what would become the first Welland Canal.²¹ And yet we have very few visual sources to draw on if we want to get a sense of what this labour actually looked like. The building of the first Welland Canal took place prior to the development of photography as a viable means of recording visual

information. Further, the dirty, dangerous work of building a canal was not the kind of subject matter that easily lent itself to a commissioned painting in the nineteenth century, and as such, there is a “paucity of contemporary visual evidence” from this point in the project’s history.²² Therefore, surviving visual clues that we do have, such as Phelps’ diagram, become even more significant as we try to piece together what the lives of these animals might have been like. However, at the same time, the lack of colour or of any other detail in this image isolates this representation from the project in which it was a part and, in many ways, conceptually separates it from what we know would have been a noisy, messy, difficult, and dangerous history. This is an abstracted diagram intended to showcase the mechanical ingenuity of its author, Oliver Phelps. The oxen so essential to this labour have been reduced to the status of mechanical equipment, much like the wagon wheel upon which Phelps’ mechanism turned. This is reinforced by the filing system in which the diagram was archived. Like the Brownell picture, there are limits to what this image can tell us about what life was like for the non-human animal workers who helped build the Welland Canal.

What Do Pictures Want?

In both of these examples (Brownell and Phelps), we have images that were made to convey select pieces of information. For Brownell, the intention was to capture the dynamism of modern life in an urban centre in the early decades of the twentieth century. For Phelps, it was to illustrate the mechanical workings of his new invention in the late 1820s. These are two very different kinds of images made in different time periods under two very different kinds of circumstances and they rely on two very different methods of pictorial representation. In both cases, however, the non-human animal bodies were included as mere compositional details in the larger pictorial whole. If, in both of these examples, neither artist was driven by a desire to use their imagery as a way to convey detailed information about the animal bodies that feature so prominently in them, how do we, as historians looking to “trace the animal” past, work with this kind of visual material?

As is the case with any text or historical document, we need to be attuned to the various ways in which meaning can be derived from an

image. My students are often surprised and frustrated to learn that there is no single “key” for them to use as they attempt to decipher an image (“but just tell us what the artist meant,” they often implore when I ask them to analyze an image in class). I remind them that the intention of the artist is but one way in which an image generates meaning. The meaning of a picture is not static, nor is it handily embedded within an image for us to simply uncover. Rather, when we work with images, we need to consider such things as when the image was made, the types of technologies used, the intended audience, and our current context of viewing. It is also important to recognize that the background, socio-cultural position, education, and life experience of any individual viewer will also shape their understanding of any given image.²³

The context in which an image is viewed can and does shape the meaning-making process. The members of the Board of the Welland Canal Company would have understood Phelps’ diagram in a very different way than we are able to today. In the first instance, we have a group of people who would be scrutinizing the diagram with an eye toward making a very messy, expensive, and dangerous construction project go a little more smoothly. Those looking closely at Phelps’ schematic diagram in the late 1820s knew what was at stake in a very visceral way. Perhaps they knew some of the workers (human and non-human) who were killed or injured in the construction. Perhaps they felt the financial pinch of a project not going according to plan on a personal level. Their intimate knowledge of the work site and its challenges meant that this image would resonate in different ways for those viewers than it does for us today.

What do we see when we look at a scan of Phelps’ diagram on the monitors of our computers, tablets, and phones in the twenty-first century? What meaning can this image hold for us today? When I squint my eyes and try to make out further details in this image, I am acutely aware of all of the details this diagram cannot tell me. Are those horns of the oxen in the bottom register? Or is there a chance they are meant to be representations of the long ears of donkeys (another species of animals whose labour was integral to the building of the canals)? What did these animals eat? Where did they sleep? What was the process through which they were conscripted for this work? How long were their work days? Did any of them resist this work and exert a sense of agency that might be at

odds with what their whip-wielding drivers wanted them to do? Like the Brownell example, it is at this point in our inquiry that the image guides us toward contextual research. This image contains less visual information than Brownell's painting does, but the process by which we can use the image to frame our research remains the same. Visual analysis is a key part of working with images, but as noted above, it must always be accompanied by contextual analysis. The images provide important clues for guiding our research inquiries beyond the frame of the picture.

We are asking very different things of these images than previous viewers might have, but here is the important part: neither line of inquiry is necessarily more correct than the other. In his provocatively titled book *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images*, W. J. T. Mitchell argues that images need to be understood as "as complex individuals occupying multiple subject positions and identities."²⁴ What Mitchell's thoughtful analysis makes clear is that when working with images we need to consider how they can potentially make meaning from a number of different angles and in a number of different spaces and moments in time. Further, Mitchell also stresses another important point, namely that what is excluded from an image can be as significant as what is included. Thus, he asks:

What does this picture lack; what does it leave out? What is its area of erasure? Its blind spot? Its anamorphic blur? What does the frame or boundary exclude? What does its angle of representation prevent us from seeing, and prevent it from showing? What does it need or demand from the beholder to complete its work?²⁵

In other words, where are the gaps in our knowledge? What are the limits of working with pictorial sources? How will we use these gaps and limits to further guide our research inquiries?

As I work with my research assistant to continue to try and piece together the stories of these non-human animal workers who were so integral to the building of the Welland Canal, we are mindful of how Greene describes working animals as "living machines" who "made many demands on people."²⁶ Just as Mitchell argues that as viewers we need to ask ourselves about the "needs" of an image, Greene reminds us that we

need to consider what kinds of needs these non-human animal workers would have had and how the caregivers and co-workers who co-existed with them worked to meet these demands. There does not appear to be any central repository offering detailed information about the “living machines” who worked on the Welland Canal, but we do know that subcontractors—“often farmers who lived along the line of the canal and who owned ploughs, wagons, and teams”²⁷—were a key part of this process. Hopefully, our ongoing research will give us glimpses into the relationships these farmers had with the non-human animals in their care. As we dig through these documents, letters, and records we hope to uncover information to help animate Phelps’ diagram in new ways.

Conclusion

Visual culture can be an important tool in the toolkit of anyone looking to “trace the animal past,” but it is important to understand that it also has its limits. To fall back on cultural clichés, such as a picture offering a “window on the past” or being “worth a thousand words,” belies the complexity of an image as a cultural document. As this brief discussion has attempted to demonstrate, there are a number of significant ways in which visual culture is intertwined with animal histories—from the materials used to make images to the ways in which images can sanitize and normalize violence enacted on particular animal bodies. Images can also disrupt patterns of cultural invisibility and draw attention to some of the problems that might be entrenched in dominant ways of seeing and living with non-human animals. Detailed, descriptive visual analysis of imagery can draw our attention to aspects of a picture that we might not notice at first glance. It is, however, important to recognize that a single picture can never tell us the whole story, and that it is important to work from the image out as we seek further research. Visual analysis can help tailor our contextual research inquiries in important ways, and the two methods of inquiry necessarily go hand-in-hand. If we take images seriously—if we attend to Mitchell’s plea to consider what images might need from us—they can be helpful as we seek to write more detailed animal histories.

NOTES

- 1 Thank you to Jennifer Bonnell and Sean Kheraj for inviting me to be part of the “Traces of the Animal Past” conference at York University in November 2019. This was one of the most intellectually enriching and enjoyable conferences I have ever had the pleasure to participate in. I am also grateful to the other participants for the rich discussions that happened at that event. I also want to thank my excellent research assistant, Alicia Floyd, who has been an incredible help on this and many other projects. I am grateful to my colleagues Lauren Corman, Kendra Coulter, and Barbara Seeber for the many enriching conversations about human-animal studies, animal advocacy, and animal histories we have had over the years. Finally, a big thank you to Laurie Morrison for, well, everything.
- 2 Perhaps the most well-known example of this is Jacques-Louis David’s famous painting *Napoleon Crossing the Alps* (1801). In this painting, Napoleon—who famously did not enjoy sitting for portraits—is posed on the back of a spirited steed when, in actuality, we know from his journals that he made this crossing on the back of a mule. See Edgar Munhall, “Portraits of Napoleon,” *Yale French Studies* 26 (1960): 3–20.
- 3 Kassia St Clair, *The Secret Lives of Colour* (London: John Murray, 2016), 71–73. See also Victoria Finlay, *The Brilliant History of Color in Art* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2014); Diego Tamburini et al., “New Insights Into the Composition of Indian Yellow and its use in a Rajasthani Wall Painting,” *Microchemical Journal* 137 (March 2018): 238–49. In this article, the authors discuss the use of this colour in early seventeenth-century wall paintings in Rajasthan, India, as well as the use of this colour in Rajput-Mughal paintings dating back to the late sixteenth century.
- 4 St Clair, *The Secret Lives of Color*, 162. See also Dina Frangié-Joly, “Perfumes, Aromatics, and Purple Dye: Phoenician Trade and Production in the Greco-Roman Period,” *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology & Heritage Studies* 4 (2016): 36–56. In this article, the author discusses how places such as Beirut, Tyre, and Arados were important sites for the production of this colour as far back as the Bronze Age.
- 5 St Clair, 141–43. See also Elena Phipps, *Cochineal Red: The Art History of a Color* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010).
- 6 Sarah Kay, *Animal Skins and the Reading Self in Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 2.
- 7 Ann Norton Greene, *Horses at Work* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 7.
- 8 Nicholas Mirzoeff, *How to See The World* (Pelican Books, 2015), 11.
- 9 See, for instance, Casey Lesser, “Why Med Schools Are Requiring Art Classes,” *Artsy* (August 2017), <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-med-schools-requiring-art-classes>; and Kate Wheeling, “How Looking at Paintings Became a Required Course in Medical School,” *Yale Medicine Magazine* (Spring 2014), <https://medicine.yale.edu/news/yale-medicine-magazine/how-looking-at-paintings-became-a-required-course/>.
- 10 This is one of many images that Brownell made of the Byward Market area ca. 1916.
- 11 There is a significant body of scholarship on the multi-species nature of cities in previous historical eras. See, for instance, Diana Donald, “‘Beastly Sights’: The Treatment of Animals as a Moral Theme in Representations of London, c.1820–1850,”

- Art History* 22, no. 4 (1999): 514–44; Greene, *Horses at Work*; Katherine C. Grier, *Pets in America: A History* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2006); Hilda Kean, *Animal Rights: Political and Social Change in Britain Since 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998); Sherry Olson, “The Urban Horse and the Shaping of Montreal, 1840–1914,” in *Animal Metropolis: Histories of Human-Animal Relations in Urban Canada*, ed. Joanna Dean, Darcy Ingram, and Christabelle Sethna (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2017), 57–86; Sean Kheraj, “Animals and Urban Environments: Managing Domestic Animals in Nineteenth-Century Winnipeg,” in *Eco-Cultural Networks and the British Empire*, ed. James Beattie, Edward Melillo, and Emily O’Gorman (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 263–88; Sean Kheraj, “Living and Working with Domestic Animals in Nineteenth-Century Toronto,” in *Urban Explorations: Environmental Histories of the Toronto Region*, ed. L. Anders Sandberg, Stephen Bocking, Colin Coates, and Ken Cruikshank (Hamilton: L.R. Wilson Institute for Canadian History, 2013), 120–40.
- 12 Patricia Johnston, “Introduction: A Critical Overview of Visual Culture Studies,” in *Seeing High & Low: Representing Social Conflict in American Visual Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 1.
- 13 Two excellent examples of texts offering ways of thinking through these gaps are Susan Nance, ed., *The Historical Animal* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2015) and Joanna Dean, Darcy Ingram, and Christabelle Sethna, eds., *Animal Metropolis: Histories of Human-Animal Relations in Urban Canada* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2017).
- 14 Brett Mizelle, *Pig* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011).
- 15 In recent years, there has been more of a concerted effort to start using archival collections to tell the stories of non-human animals from previous eras. The multimedia *Beasts of London* exhibition at the Museum of London and the *ANIMALIA: Animals in the Archives* exhibit at the Archives of Ontario are two recent examples of this shift in curatorial practices. For discussion of the *ANIMALIA: Animals in the Archives* exhibition, see Jay Young’s chapter in this volume.
- 16 The first Welland Canal was built between 1824 and 1829; the second Welland Canal was constructed between 1841 and 1854; the third Welland Canal cut a significantly different route through the Niagara Peninsula and was constructed between 1872 and 1887; the fourth Welland Canal was built between 1913 and 1932. For more on the building of the canals as well as their precise routes, see Roberta M. Styran and Robert R. Taylor, *This Great National Object: Building the Nineteenth-Century Welland Canals* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2012) and Roberta M. Styran and Robert R. Taylor, *This Colossal Project: Building the Welland Ship Canal, 1913–1932* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016).
- 17 Styran and Taylor, *This Great National Object*, 125.
- 18 Robert Stanley Taylor, “The Historical Development of the Four Welland Canals, 1824–1933,” M.A. Thesis (University of Western Ontario, 1950), 26.
- 19 Styran and Taylor, *This Great National Object*, 125.
- 20 Quoted in Styran and Taylor, 137.
- 21 Styran and Taylor, 136.
- 22 Styran and Taylor, 134.

- 23 Students often struggle with this concept, so I refer them to the very thoughtful chapter called “Viewers Make Meaning” in Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
- 24 W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 47.
- 25 Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?*, 49.
- 26 Greene, *Horses at Work*, 7.
- 27 Styran and Taylor, *This Great National Object*, 121.