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a rich and nuanced picture of the phenomenon in question. McCue successfully creates a multidimensional context for her focused readings and moves between disciplines with exceptional ease. Her book makes a valuable contribution to interdisciplinary research into the Romantic period. 

Jakub Lipski  
*Kazimierz Wielki University*  
 <<https://doi.org/10.18573/j.2017.10164>>

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Chase Pielak, *Memorializing Animals during the Romantic Period* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 178pp. ISBN 978-1-4724-4146-1; £60 (hb).

CHASE PIELAK'S *MEMORIALIZING ANIMALS DURING THE ROMANTIC PERIOD* explores the disruptive potential of animals in British Romantic literature and the surprising encounters that they induce, both in life and from beyond the grave. For this book, 'beasts matter because they appear in Romantic literature at points when its authors figure moments of ontological category rupture—when being itself is challenged' (p. 3). Poetry has a privileged role in such crises, since it 'is the ideal medium to convey the linguistic disturbances that accompany ontological disturbance' (p. 3). *Memorializing Animals* is a philosophically ambitious attempt to juxtapose materials from literary theory and animal studies with Romantic literature. It wants to unearth 'the beasts that reside within us as well as those buried during the Romantic Period' and to explore 'the spaces in which we can encounter [the] animals whose corpses litter our literary landscape' (p. 12). In the process, Pielak covers a number of well-trodden areas from a fresh perspective and also focusses on some comparatively neglected texts from the period, such as Wordsworth's *The White Doe of Rylstone* (1815).

The opening half of *Memorializing Animals* might be seen as primarily looking at different modes of relation between humans and nonhumans. The first chapter traces literal and figurative animals in Charles Lamb's writing, attempting to demonstrate an aspiration to sociability in Lamb's encounters with nonhuman animals. However, since many of these encounters occur at the dining table, Pielak argues that the desire for communion often masks the impossibility of assimilating, processing or remembering individual animals. The second and third chapters argue for more successful connections between human and animal lives in John Clare's poetry. Nonetheless, these more productive meetings are also accompanied by psychological difficulties: Pielak claims that Clare's cascading reflections on nature are frequently disturbing and create a sense of melancholia that 'threatens to do away with the coherent self' (p. 55).

In its second part, *Memorializing Animals* is more explicitly concerned with death and absence in poetry's confrontations with the nonhuman. The fourth chapter considers the proximity of death to life in Coleridge's poetry, tracing ideas of putrefaction and exhumation through 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', 'The Raven', 'To a Young Ass' and 'Christabel' by placing them alongside a discussion of contemporary burial reform. Pielak then focusses on Byron as pet-keeper via the ubiquitous elegy for Boatswain, before returning to animal consumption in his discussion of scenes of dog-eating and cannibalism in *Don Juan*. Finally, and perhaps most successfully, the book looks at the productive connections between place, memorialisation and animals in Wordsworth's verse. In particular, Pielak explores how what he calls 'animemorials' are also frequently 'antimemorials' that frustrate or displace adequate memorialisation (p. 136).

*Memorializing Animals during the Romantic Period* is part of a growing and welcome number of critical works that take seriously the role of animals in Romantic writing and, in the process, offer new ways to think about conceptions of nature in the period and the centrality of the nonhuman to Romanticism's most philosophic concerns. However, despite rich material and a dynamic range of stimulating interests, the experience of reading this book is often frustrating. There are many references to disparate examples of theory without discussion of a single approach or idea in adequate depth. Many of the chapters depend on complex expression and theoretical jargon, but there are few pointers to help readers understand the broader moves that are being made. Furthermore, Pielak's arguments occasionally boil down simply to chains of metaphorical association, sometimes expressed in jarringly informal language.

Part of the problem arguably lies in what might have been one of the book's strengths: its breadth. Alongside questions of the animal, Pielak introduces a wide-ranging conceptual framework, involving—among others—constellating questions of exhumation and memorialisation, diet, community and friendship. These concepts are more or less persuasively deployed in different parts of the book and it is undoubtedly impressive to see such a variety of questions opened up by considering animals in Romantic texts. Nevertheless, I wonder if many of Pielak's arguments might have been expressed more directly and elegantly if they had been developed with single-minded attention to a more coherent and delimited set of interests. 

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**Alison Cardinale** is the Assistant Head of Learning and Curriculum English at MLC School where she teaches the International Baccalaureate alongside senior English courses. Alison is commencing the third year of research for a PhD at the University of Sydney in 2015, focusing on the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge under the supervision of Professor Will Christie. Recently, Alison has worked as an undergraduate English tutor at the University of Sydney and has ten years' experience teaching English in independent Sydney secondary schools.

**James Castell** is a Lecturer in English Literature at Cardiff University, where he teaches courses on Romantic and twentieth-century poetry and poetics. He has articles on Wordsworth in *The Oxford Handbook to William Wordsworth* and *The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature*, and is currently completing a monograph on Wordsworth and animal life.

**Mary Chadwick** is an Associate Research Fellow in the Department of English and Creative Writing at the University of Huddersfield where she worked on *The Anne Clifford Project*. Mary's research interests include women's writing, manuscript cultures, book history and Welsh writing in English from the very long eighteenth century.

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*Century*, funded by the Research Foundation, Flanders (FWO). Before that, he was a Leverhulme Postdoctoral Research Associate on the project *The Lady's Magazine: Understanding the Emergence of a Genre*, led by Prof. Jennie Batchelor at the University of Kent. His first monograph, a history of the late-Victorian little magazine, is under contract with Edinburgh University Press. He is the managing editor of the open-access journal *Authorship* <[www.authorship.ugent.be](http://www.authorship.ugent.be)>.

**Mary-Ann Constantine** is Reader at the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. She works on Welsh and British literature of the long eighteenth century and has also written on travel writing, folk song, authenticity debates and the Romantic movement in Brittany. Her book on the Welsh stonemason poet Edward Williams, *The Truth against the World: Iolo Morganwg and Romantic Forgery*, appeared in 2007. With Dafydd Johnston, she is general editor of the multivolume *Wales and the French Revolution* series. She is currently leading an AHRC-funded research project, *Curious Travellers: Thomas Pennant and the Welsh and Scottish Tour 1760–1820*.

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**Jakub Lipski** is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz, Poland. Before obtaining his PhD in English literature, he studied English, Art History and Cultural Studies. He is the author of *In Quest of the Self: Masquerade and Travel in the Eighteenth-Century Novel—Fielding, Smollett, Sterne* (2014) and co-editor (with Jacek Mydla) of *The Enchantress of Words, Sounds and Images: Anniversary Essays on Ann Radcliffe (1764–1823)* (2015). He is currently working on a monograph on the correspondences between the eighteenth-century English novel and the fine arts.

**Nicola Lloyd** is Senior Lecturer in English Literature at Bath Spa University. She specializes in fiction of the Romantic period, with a particular focus on the Irish national tale and the interactions between Romanticism and Enlightenment. Her doctoral thesis, which she is currently preparing for publication, considered the influence of Enlightenment discourses of moral philosophy and perception on Romantic-period fiction. Nicky has published articles on the Irish novelist Lady Morgan and is one of the authors of *The Palgrave History Gothic Publishing: The Business of Gothic Fiction, 1764–1835*, due for completion in 2017. She is currently preparing a scholarly edition of Mary Julia Young's gothic-national tale *Donald; or, the Witches of Glenshiel* (1805).

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**Corrina Readioff** is studying for a PhD at the University of Liverpool on the history and function of pre-chapter epigraphs in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels. She manages the social media pages for *Digital Defoe: Studies in Defoe and his Contemporaries* and maintains a personal blog, *The Age of Oddities: Reading the Eighteenth Century* <<http://ageofoddities.blogspot.co.uk>>, to encourage readers of all tastes and backgrounds to enjoy the delights of eighteenth-century literature. She has written for the *Johnsonian Newsletter* and the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies *Criticks* website.

**Joanna E. Taylor** is Research Associate in Geospatial Innovation in the Digital Humanities at the University of Lancaster. She recently completed her PhD at

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**Jane Wessel** is an Assistant Professor of British Drama at Austin Peay State University. She has published articles in *Theatre Survey* and *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700* and is currently working on a book project on literary property and dramatic authorship in eighteenth-century England. She tweets about theatre history, pedagogy and eighteenth-century culture @Jane\_D\_Wessel.

