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"The Idea of the Domesticated Animal Contract"

Palmer, Clare

Palmer, Clare. "The Idea of the Domesticated Animal Contract." *Environmental Values* 6, no. 4 (1997): 411–25. doi:10.3197/096327197776679004 .

Some recent works have suggested that the relationship between human beings and domesticated animals might be described as contractual. This paper explores how the idea of such an animal contract might relate to key characteristics of social contract theory, in particular to issues of the change in state from 'nature' to 'culture'; to free consent and irrevocability; and to the benefits and losses to animals which might follow from such a contract. The paper concludes that there are important dissimilarities between a domesticated animal contract and other theories of social contract; and that contract language may be used to legitimate relationships of domination over domesticated animals.

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Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/5731
Print date: 10 November 2026 14:06:57