

Luanne Frank's "Heidegger, Captain Paul Watson, and the 'Look' of Leviathan" considers an encounter between anti-whaling activist Watson and a whale through the lens of Heidegger's 1942-3 *Parmenides* course. Frank points to Heidegger's influence on ecology, as well as his binary conception of the categories "animal" and "human," as contexts for her project. Noting the complexity of whales' brains and social networks, Frank begins a tripartite implicit critique of Heidegger's conception of the "animal": She begins with an elucidation of the concept of the "look" from the *Parmenides*, offers an account of Watson and the whale's encounter, then juxtaposes the two.

The *Parmenides*, Frank observes, is less "systematic" than many of Heidegger's earlier works and comprises numerous themes (586). The "look" is the first theme Frank addresses. Heidegger conceives of a look that is not a "look[ing]-at," which implies a subject-object relationship between looker and lookee, but a "look[ing]-upon," with the looker granting the lookee the freedom to "be" unhidden (587). Frank links this first theme to a second. The *Parmenides* sees Heidegger reconceptualizing *aletheia*, previously the abstract notion of "unhiddenness," as the "philosopher's deity" (589): *Aletheia*, a pointing and sign-giving deity equated with Being. While the Christian and Roman gods demanded, *Aletheia*'s pointing is the giving of Being and a shining forth into beings that allows for the manifestation of Being to beings via looking-upon. Frank clarifies that Heidegger's look necessitates a reciprocal look, the looked-upon's granting to be unhidden. Unlike the look between Hegel's master and slave, the sharers of a Heideggerian look make no utilitarian demands, but rather grant the other the opportunity to be.

Frank argues that Watson and a whale shared such a look in 1975, during Watson's first anti-whaling expedition. Watson, an eco-activist engaged in myriad causes, was attempting to navigate an inflatable raft between a whaling ship and its prey when the ship harpooned a female sperm whale. Her mate—male sperm whales have a reputation of aggression—charged the ship, was itself harpooned, and changed course toward the raft. Watson claims the whale "pulled back" at the last moment (597), sparing the raft's crew and returning Watson's look while sinking. Frank sees the look shared between Watson and the whale as fitting the criteria of a Heideggerian looking-upon. Though Heidegger would only grant humans the capacity for such looking, the whale's look clearly changed Watson's way of Being, turning a jack-of-all-trades eco-activist into a single-minded anti-Ahab. Though Frank acknowledges the ambiguous intentionality of the whale's look, she resists objections to her reading on a number of counts: (1) Watson's boatmate similarly read the whale's gaze as compassionate, (2) precedents exist for animals perceiving human ways of Being, including remarkable encounters between humans and whales, and (3) Watson is well-aware of the dangers of anthropomorphizing based on his past experiences and education. Ultimately, Frank notes that objections on the ground of ambiguity may be moot in any event: The lookers' subjective intention(s) are secondary to the granting and shining forth of Being for Heidegger, and the latter clearly occurred for Watson.

Frank thus provides an insightful extension of Heidegger's capacity for looking-upon to whales. Whales, however (as well as dogs and horses, Frank's other examples), are "charismatic megavertebrates," a group of species towards which humans show a marked proclivity (Leane and Nicol 1). David Foster Wallace's "Consider the Lobster" dwells upon a species that might induce less immediate sympathy—one he glosses as "giant sea insects" (237). Watson's reading of the whale's gaze was predicated on seeing "muscles pull back" (597). Even if he wasn't anthropomorphizing, the whale's possession of biological structures analogous to humans'—visible muscles—was central to Watson's interpretation of the whale's actions and subsequent gaze. Lobsters, however, are encased in an exoskeleton and possess eyestalks perhaps more opaque than "Leviathan's solitary eye" (Frank 600). As Wallace notes, even cooks who drive a knife into the lobster's head prior to boiling as a "merciful" alternative to the common live-boiling method may do so in vain, as "[l]obster's nervous systems operate off ... ganglia ... distributed all along the lobster's underside" (249). The difference between human and lobster biologies, that is, may make even an intentionally "merciful" act pointless at best and counterproductive at worst.

Given such phylum-level differences, (how) might one look upon the lobster? Does the human-lobster gap remain abyssal? Acknowledging many potential metaphors for understanding lobsters are "misleadingly anthropomorphic" (252), Wallace bridges the abyss with analogies of estrangement. In the context of the Maine Lobster Festival, he compares tourism to being "an insect on a dead thing" (240), implicitly connecting tourists with "insect[ile]" lobsters (237). He also refers to "mass tourist[s]" as "alien" (240), which echoes his earlier claim that lobsters "might as well be from another planet" (237). Instead of anthropomorphizing lobsters, he de-anthropomorphizes humans. Lobsters, the occasionally cannibalistic "garbagemen of the sea" (237), seem not so irreconcilably different from Wallace's "chewing and dribbling" (239), sun-reddened human tourists. Wallace presents lobster-human unity via alien-ness and the traditionally inhuman, thus opening a potential door for *Aletheia*. Such unification is vital when considering lobsters in a way it's not when considering whales. Frank's International Whaling Commission delegate who "didn't care if all the whales died" makes no attempt to deny the pain a whale experiences from an exploding harpoon (596). In the case of lobsters, however, Wallace points out a commonplace belief that's "incorrect" (245), but powerful insofar as it frames the lobster as a senseless object to be boiled: Lobsters cannot feel pain. To overcome this belief, Wallace depends not on a reclamation of subjectivity for lobsters via bio- or psychology, but on the (inhuman?) poverty of reason and empathy required to boil a creature "act[ing] as if it's in terrible pain" (248). Boiling a lobster requires the boiler to be more lobster-like insofar as the boiler insists to be lobster-like is to be unfeeling. Wallace's focus on this shift in ways of Being rather than the lobster's own subjectivity echoes Frank: What the lobster feels may not matter any more than "what the whale saw" (604). What matters is whether the grasping of a lobster at a pot's sides can occasion "the onset of a transformed ... way of Being" (605) for the looking cook. The fact some cooks abandon the kitchen for the boil's duration suggests the inability to look may be the human's, not the lobster's (248).

Leane, Elizabeth, and Steve Nicol. "Charismatic Krill? Size and Conservation in the Ocean." *Anthrozoos* 24.2 (2011): 135-46. Web.