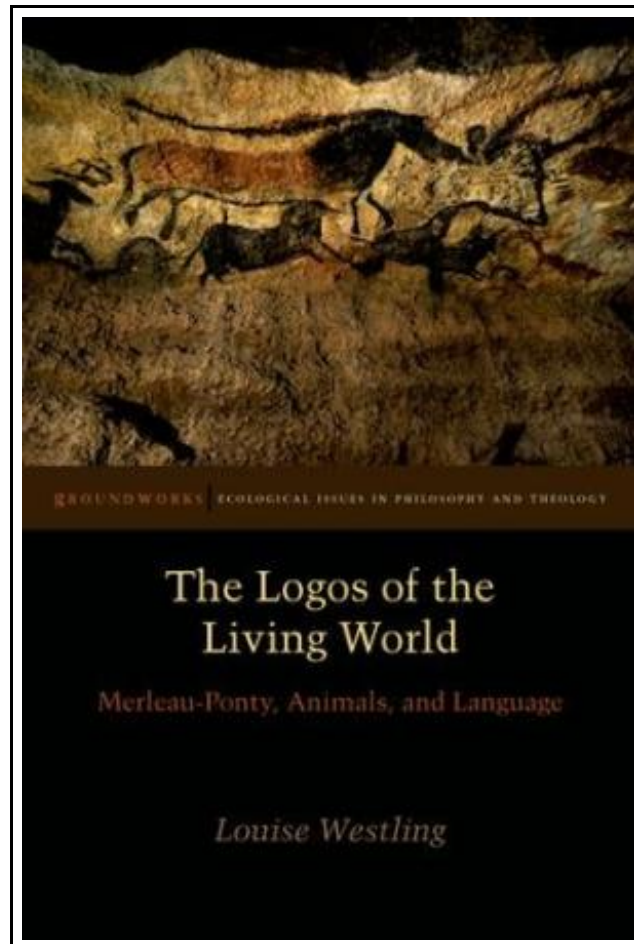


## The Logos of the Living World: Merleau-Ponty, Animals, and Language



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## THE LOGOS OF THE LIVING WORLD: MERLEAU-PONTY, ANIMALS, AND LANGUAGE



Fordham University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Logos of the Living World: Merleau-Ponty, Animals, and Language, Louise Westling, Today there is an urgent need to reevaluate the human place in the world in relation to other animals. This book explores complementary developments in a number of related disciplines, putting Maurice Merleau-Ponty's philosophy into dialogue with literature, evolutionary biology and animal studies. In a radical departure from most critical animal studies, it argues for evolutionary continuity between human cultural and linguistic behaviors and the semiotic activities of other animals. In his late work, Derrida complained of philosophers who denied that animals possessed such faculties but never bothered to investigate the wealth of scientific studies of actual animal behavior. Most animal studies theorists still fail to do this. Yet more than fifty years ago, Merleau-Ponty carefully examined the philosophical consequences of scientific animal studies, with profound implications for human language and culture. For him, "animality is the logos of the sensible world: an incorporated meaning." Human being is inseparable from animality. The Logos of the Living World differs from other studies of Merleau-Ponty's work by emphasizing his lifelong attention to science and shows how his attention to evolutionary biology and ethology anticipated recent studies of animal cognition, culture and communication. It also explores literary questioning of human-animal relations from The Epic of Gilgamesh and Euripides' Bacchae to Yann Martel's Life of Pi. Merleau-Ponty saw literature and art as part of a continuum including communicative and aesthetic behaviors of many other organisms. His thinking about language anticipated recent scientific studies of animal semiotic behavior, cognitive neuroscience, and research on the evolution of language. His work contributes new philosophical and scientific emphasis to cultural studies of the animal question by previous writers such as Donna Haraway and Cary Wolfe and to...



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