

UPPSALA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY & ETHNOLOGY
ENGAGING VULNERABILITY RESEARCH PROGRAM

Spring Term 2018

Thinking Vulnerable Animals

Venue to be determined

Instructors: professors Don Kulick & Tom Shakespeare

Email: don.kulick@antro.uu & Tom.Shakespeare@uea.ac.uk

Recent work in Disability Studies has begun to highlight parallels between the lives of people with disabilities and the lives of animals. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum, in *Frontiers of Justice*, compares people with disabilities and animals in order to highlight fundamental flaws in conventional conceptualizations of social justice. Disability Studies scholar Sanaura Taylor's book, *Beasts of Burden: animal and disability liberation*, discusses many ways in which issues of disability and animal rights are deeply entangled. Public intellectual Temple Grandin writes about how she as a person on the autism spectrum "thinks like a cow", and therefore is uniquely placed to advocate for the humane treatment of farm animals. The book *Loneliness and its Opposite* by anthropologist Don Kulick and historian Jens Rydström argues that Jacques Derrida's concept of "non-power", formulated in relation to animals, is also illuminating of people with significant disabilities, and of other people's relationships with them.

From having been perceived (often rightly) as degrading, comparisons between the lives of people with disabilities and the lives of animals are gaining increasing traction as a way of thinking innovatively about things like empathy, justice, interdependence, engagement, and the meanings and practices of vulnerability.

This course will provide an orientation to current philosophical, humanistic and social science thought on the relationship between the lives of people with disabilities and the lives of animals, with the goal of linking that work to a larger critical project concerned with the rethinking the concept of vulnerability.

REQUIREMENTS

1. *Active* class participation. This means that you have read all the assigned literature before class and have processed it. This will be assessed by how well, and how respectfully of others, you participate in discussion, and on how well you can summarize arguments in the literature when called upon to do so.

2. One reaction paper per week posted on the course site. The papers should be about one page in length and may deal with any questions the readings raise for you, such as criticisms you have of the authors' method or argument; connections to other readings; disparities among the readings; implications of the readings for important issues in anthropology or ethnography, and the like. The papers will not be graded, but will be evaluated by how clearly they demonstrate familiarity with the material. Reaction papers must be posted on the class website by 15.00 the day before class.

ABSENCES, LATENESS

Participation is mandatory and absences are not allowed. In the case of a documented medical emergency, the week missed must be made up by a 10-page paper summarizing the arguments contained in the literature in essay form. Only one such absence is permitted; more than that means that you fail the course. Please be in class on time out of respect towards your fellow students and the instructor.

POLICY ON COMPUTERS, CELL PHONES

All cell phones must be switched off during the entire duration of class. You may have your computer turned on in class only if you have read the assigned articles on your computer and need to refer to that during classroom discussion. Any other use of computers, such as Googling facts or checking emails or social media, is not allowed. If you want to take notes, do so on paper, and transfer your written notes into your computer after class.

REQUIRED BOOKS (THAT YOU MUST PURCHASE OR OBTAIN THROUGH A LIBRARY):

Coetzee, JM. 1999. *The Lives of Animals*. Princeton Univ. Press.

Grandin T, Johnson C. 2006. *Animals in Translation: the woman who thinks like a cow*. London: Bloomsbury.

Kalof, L, Fitzgerald A. eds. 2007. *The Animals Reader: The Essential and Classic Contemporary Writings*. London: Berg.

Nussbaum, MC. 2006. *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*. Cambridge, AM: Harvard Univ. Press.

Taylor, S. 2017. *Beasts of Burden: animal and disability liberation*. New York: The New Press.

WITH EXCEPTIONS THAT WILL BE NOTED IN CLASS, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO OBTAIN THE ARTICLES VIA YOUR UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

READ THE LITERATURE IN THE ORDER IT IS LISTED ON THE SYLLABUS

Class schedule

All classes meet 13.00-15.00 (note *no* “akademisk kvart”)

Note that the days on which classes meet are irregular, and that some weeks have two meetings.

Friday 6 April, 13.00–15.00**Meeting 1. Setting the scene (NOTE: YOU ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE READ THIS LITERATURE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS)**

Kalof, L, Fitzgerald A. eds. 2007. *The Animals Reader: The Essential and Classic Contemporary Writings*. London: Berg. Read the essays by Aristotle, Bentham, Spiegel, Regan, Montaigne, Descartes and Berger, pp 1-29, 57-62, 252-261.

Nagel, T. 1974. What Is It Like to Be a Bat? *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 83, No. 4, pp. 435-450.

Coetzee, JM. 1999. *The Lives of Animals*. Princeton Univ. Press. (Read the main text, not the commentaries that follow).

Monday 9 April, 13.00–15.00**Meeting 2. Philosophical debates about the animal/disability relationship**

Read the following contributions in the journal *Metaphilosophy's* special issue on “Cognitive Disability and its Challenge to Moral Philosophy” (2009, Vol 40, No. 3/4):

Singer, P. Speciesism and moral status.

McMahan, J. Cognitive ability and cognitive enhancement.

Carlson, L. Philosophers of intellectual disability: a taxonomy.

Nussbaum, M. The capabilities of people with cognitive disabilities.

Kittay, EF. The personal is philosophical is political: a philosopher and mother of a cognitively disabled person sends notes from the battlefield.

Thursday 12 April, 13.00–15.00**Meeting 3. Derrida on Animals**

Derrida, J 1991. ‘Eating well’, or the calculation of the subject: an interview with Jacques Derrida. In *Who Comes After the Subject?*, edited by E Cadava, P Connor and J-L Nancy. London: Routledge, 96-119.

2002. The animal that therefore I am (more to follow). *Critical Inquiry* 28 (2): 369-418.

2003. And say the animal responded? In *Zoontologies: the question of the animal*, edited by Cary Wolfe. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 121-46.

Note: Those last two essays are also printed in the book *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, NY: Fordham Press, pp. 1-51, 119-140.

Coetzee, JM. 1999. *The Lives of Animals*. Read Smut’s commentary, pp. 107-120

Monday 16 April, 13.00–15.00**Meeting 4. Disability and animality**

Taylor, S. 2017. *Beasts of Burden: animal and disability liberation*. New York: The New Press.

Arluke A, Sanders CR. 1996. *Regarding Animals*. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press. Read chapter 6, “Boundary work in Nazi Germany”, pps. 132-166.

Monday 23 April, 13.00-15.00**Meeting 5. Thinking Vulnerable Animals I**

Grandin T, Johnson C. 2006. *Animals in Translation: the woman who thinks like a cow*. London: Bloomsbury. Read chapters 1-4, and chapter 6, pp.1-177, 241-283.

Solomon O. 2010. What a dog can do: children with autism and therapy dogs in social interaction. *Ethos* 38(1):143-166

Solomon O. 2015. "But-he'll fall!": children with autism, interspecies intersubjectivity, and the problem of 'being social'. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 39:323-344.

Bogdan R, Taylor SJ. 1989. Relationships with Severely Disabled People: the social construction of humanness. *Social Problems* 36 (2): 135-148.

Alger JM, Alger SF. 1999. Cat culture, human culture: an ethnographic study of a cat shelter. *Society & Animals* 7:199-218

Young, IM 1997. Asymmetrical reciprocity: on moral respect, wonder and enlarged thought. *Constellations* 3 (3): 340-63

Thursday 26 April, 13.00-15.00**Meeting 6. Thinking Vulnerable Animals II**

Deleuze G, Guattari F. 1987. Becoming-animal, extracted in *The Animals Reader: The Essential and Classic Contemporary Writings*. London: Berg, pp. 37-50.

Haraway, D. 2008. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Read chapters 1 and 8, pp.3-42, 205-246

Nussbaum, MC. 2006. Beyond "compassion and humanity", in *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*. Cambridge, AM: Harvard Univ. Press. Read Chapter 6, pp. 325-407.

Donaldson, S, Kymlicka W. 2016. Rethinking membership and participation in an inclusive democracy: cognitive disability, children, animals. In *Disability and Political Theory*, edited by B. Arneil & N. Hirschmann. Cambridge: CUP, pp. 168-197.

Kulick, D. 2017. Human-animal communication. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 46:357-78.