



Keynote Speaker Abstracts

KN001

Minding Animals: A Compassionate Footprint

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Our relationships with animals are challenging, complicated, frustrating, awkward, ambiguous, paradoxical, and range all over the place, but we already have lots of information about their lives. Animals' lives aren't all that private, hidden, or secret but there are many remaining mysteries about how they live and who they are. We know that animals have deep feelings and display moral intelligence. When someone says that they're not sure if dogs have emotions I say I'm glad I'm not their dog. When people tell me that they love animals and then harm or kill them I always tell them I'm glad they don't love me. Existing laws and regulations allow animals to be treated in regrettable ways that demean us as a species - "good welfare" isn't "good enough." The best way to make the world a more compassionate and peaceful place for all animal beings - *to expand our compassion footprint* - is for people with varied expertise and interests to share what is known about our animal kin and to use this knowledge for bettering their (and as a result, our) lives. There are many ways of knowing and figuring out how science and the humanities including those interested in animal protection, conservation, and environmentalism (with concerns ranging from individuals to ecosystems) can learn from one another is essential. Excuses justifying animal exploitation such as "Well, it's okay, I'm doing this in the name of science" or "in the name of this or that" usually mean "in the name of humans." We're a very arrogant and self-centered lot.

Each of us can make a difference and this meeting is an essential and inspirational stepping-stone for making positive change for all beings, for increasing compassion, empathy, respect, dignity, spirituality, peace, and love. I conclude by detailing ten reasons - an animal manifesto - why animals are asking us to treat them better or to leave them alone.

KN002

Some Obstacles in the Way of Uniting the Three Life-affirming Movements

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There are three salvational movements, and all three are in the business of protecting life. I call these three *Animalism* (domesticated animal protection), *Naturism* (fauna, flora and wilderness protection), and *Humanism* (human well-being). These three sub-movements of the overarching life-affirming movement encompass all of earthly life, but with a few exceptions, most organizations in the compassion business focus on just one of the three. Even more problematic than this exclusivity is the problem of righteousness: many activists are ideological, and many prophets, writers and spokespersons are rather prickly when it comes to relations with the other two movements. (Strangely, I have found that compassionate non-activists are often sympathetic to all three sections of life.) I contend that all three sub-movements would be more effective in achieving their goals if they were nicer—better informed and more tolerant of the others. Over-simply put, the movements are uncompassionate in the broad sense of "all-of-life" and this is a hindrance to overall happiness and a global reduction in suffering. I suggest some tools for overcoming our garrison mentalities, and for nurturing a more adult and more unified movement. After all, a wolf is a dingo is a dog, and we have already done enough harm by dividing ourselves into tribes, religions, races and nations. Are we are compelled to artificially fragment the rest of life?

KN003

Global Production Networks, Urban Consumption, and the Carbon Hoofprint of Cities

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Livestock production contributes an estimated 18% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions worldwide. Yet global demand for livestock products is rising rapidly, posing a major challenge for climate change policy as well as animal advocates fighting the spread of factory farming. This presentation seeks to deepen our understanding of urban meat consumption and associated GHG emissions – *the carbon 'hoofprint'*. A novel conceptual framework relates livestock producer practices, urban meat consumption dynamics, and differential food retailer behaviour. Rooted in recent theoretical work on global production networks, animal geographies, industrial ecology and urban metabolism, and urban health disparities, the framework emphasizes the centrality of cities in shaping urban consumption preferences. Food system stakeholders – city, state and federal agencies; livestock producers; consumer, health and animal welfare advocates; food retailers; and diverse urban consumers themselves – are identified within this framework as having differential power but also potential to shape urban meat eating patterns. An assessment of life cycle analyses of meat reveals both the magnitude of GHG emissions associated with different livestock species under alternate production regimes, while a media content analysis provides qualitative insight into how key events, protagonists, and movements influence urban attitudes toward meat consumption and their change over time. Alternative strategies being considered by livestock producers to reduce GHG emissions are also highlighted, along with their implications for the lives of animals destined for slaughter.

KN004

Emerging Social Ethics for Animals: Animal Rights as a Mainstream Phenomenon

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Businesses and professions must stay in accord with social ethics, or risk losing their autonomy. A major social ethical issue that has emerged in the past four decades is the treatment of animals in various areas of human use. Society's moral concern has outgrown the traditional ethic of animal cruelty that began in biblical times and is encoded in the laws of all civilized societies. There are five major reasons for this new social concern, most importantly, the replacement of husbandry-based agriculture with industrial agriculture. This loss of husbandry to industry has threatened the traditional fair contract between humans and animals, and resulted in significant amounts of animal suffering arising on four different fronts. Because such suffering is not occasioned by cruelty, a new ethic for animals was required to express social concerns. Since ethics proceed from pre-existing ethics rather than *ex nihilo*, society has looked to its ethic for humans, appropriately modified, to find moral

categories applicable to animals. This concept of legally encoded rights for animals has emerged as a plausible vehicle for reform.

KN005

Does philosophy have anything new to say about animals?

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KN006

On Being Unwanted

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In a moral or theological context, it is not acceptable to speak of human beings as unwanted (though it is permissible in some quarters to speak of unwanted pregnancies). On the other hand, we do feel free to speak of whole classes of animals as unwanted.

What does the word unwanted mean? Is there a verb to unwanted? What is it like existentially to be unwanted? What kind of world is this in which some of us are wanted and others are not?

KN007

On the Ethics of Pet Keeping

James Serpell

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Although the practice of keeping nonhuman animals for companionship (henceforth, *pet keeping*) occurs in one form or another in most cultures and throughout most historical periods, it has also been widely criticized on moral grounds. The essence of these criticisms varies from place-to-place and from time-to-time, and range from deontological arguments about misplaced social duties or deviations from divine law to utilitarian claims regarding the perceived adverse consequences of the practice for individual humans and animals, or for society as a whole. This paper will consider the merits of these various ethical challenges to pet keeping by examining the apparent costs and benefits associated with this extraordinarily widespread activity.

The primary costs of pet keeping can be grouped loosely into three categories: Environmental costs, public health costs, and animal welfare costs. The former comprises issues such as the environmental impact of producing food for pets; pollution from pet feces, urine, and noise, and pet depredations on wildlife. Public health concerns focus primarily on issues related to zoonoses, or bites and accidents caused by pets, although potentially it could also encompass ecological competition between people and pets for increasingly scarce global food resources. The animal welfare issues surrounding pet keeping are numerous, ranging from concerns about dysgenic animal breeding practices to the capture and confinement of wild animals to supply the exotic pet trade. On the other hand, a variety of benefits appear also to be derived from pet keeping. These include direct practical, medical, developmental and social benefits for pet owners, and indirect positive influences on people's attitudes to animals in general. More controversially, insofar as pets serve as surrogate children for many of their owners, pet keeping may even contribute to human population regulation.

Overall, the putative benefits of pet keeping tend to be more difficult to quantify than the costs, thereby rendering any simple cost-benefit analysis unreliable. However, even if a strong case could be made that the costs of pet keeping greatly outweigh the benefits, it would be hard to justify restrictions on the practice without also calling for restrictions on people's freedom to engage in a host of other destructive, unproductive, non-beneficial, and yet widely accepted leisure activities.

KN008

Philosophical animism

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Towards the end of her eventful and productive life, Val Plumwood was turning toward Indigenous people and cultures as a way of encountering the lived experience of ideas she was working with theoretically. At the same time, she was defining herself as a philosophical animist. As I understand her term, she was making connections with animism as a worldview, but rather than mimic or appropriate indigenous animisms, she was developing a foundation that could be argued from within western philosophy. Her beautiful definition of philosophical animism is that it 'opens the door to a world in which we can begin to negotiate life membership of an ecological community of kindred beings'.¹ Thus, her animism, like indigenous animisms, was not a doctrine or orthodoxy, but rather a path, a way of life, a mode of encounter. In the spirit of open-ended encounter, I will bring her work into dialogue with some of my Australian Aboriginal teachers. I will focus quite specifically on her statement that one of the key tasks for the ecological humanities is to re-situate humans within natural systems, and will explore some of the communicative dimensions of life on the inside of the living world.

¹ Plumwood, Val, forthcoming, 'Nature in the Active Voice', *Australian Humanities Review*, 2009, 46:1.

KN009

What do animals think?

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We tend to think about the mind by taking our own case as a paradigm, and then assessing others on the basis of what we see as similarities and differences. Since in our own case language is closely allied with thinking, it is no wonder that we tend to see it as essential. However, if we shift our focus and instead see mind as widely distributed among organisms in the natural world, then the nature of thought appears in a startlingly different light. I begin from the question, "what do animals think?," and arrive at a surprising view of what humans think as well.

KN010

Ethics Without Speciesism

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More than thirty years ago, in *Animal Liberation*, I argued for the then-novel view that we owe nonhuman animals equal consideration of their interests, and that to give them less is speciesism, a prejudice as objectionable as racism and sexism. I also argued that the implications of this position are that we should cease to eat animals, and that our use of them for research should be, at least, very drastically curtailed and controlled. After 30 years of debate about this proposal among philosophers, is there any kind of consensus about the moral status of animals?

I shall argue that there is a substantial degree of consensus, if not complete unanimity, that pure speciesism is ethically indefensible. There is, however, more controversy about the moral significance of features like autonomy, rationality and self-awareness, the boundaries of which run substantially, but not entirely, parallel to the boundaries of our species. At the practical level, there is again widespread agreement that factory farming, and research that involves significant animal suffering without a realistic prospect of major benefits for humans or animals, are wrong. There is, however, no agreement on the eating of humanely raised animals, or on less objectionable forms of research.

I shall conclude by considering some of the implications of this situation, both for philosophers and for advocates for animals.