



Minding Animals Bulletin 36

Membership of Minding Animals International Inc. NOW OPEN

Membership of Minding Animals International Incorporated is now open to all individuals at the flat rate of \$20.00 USD for the period up to 31 December, 2017. Please follow this link to join: <http://www.mindinganimals.com/members-donors/>

Membership fees will be on a calendar year basis. So, if you join at any time in 2017, the fee remains at \$20.00USD, and will be ready for renewal on 1 January, 2018 – so the earlier you join the better! Renewal notices will be sent to your nominated email address at the end of 2017. On 1 January, 2018, membership fees will increase to \$50.00USD, or \$25.00USD for full time students (with proof of ID), for the period up to 31 December, 2018.

What does membership of Minding Animals mean?

Being a member of Minding Animals will enhance the benefits that the organisation will be able to provide. A member is essentially, and legally speaking, a supporter; similar to most other animal and environmental organisations, particularly charities like Minding Animals, that are organised by a Board of Directors. Other organisations will not be able to become members.

Initially, and for a limited time (up to 31 January, 2017, ONLY), all new members will also be able to register for the conference in México at a \$100.00USD discount (a saving of \$300.00USD off the full registration rate). This discount will drop to \$50.00USD off the registration fee from 1 February, 2017. Details of registration fees for the conference in Ciudad de México will be available from 15 December at: <http://www.mindinganimals4.umich.mx/>

Benefits will be added for all members over time. Additional member benefits will become available before the conference in México. The Bulletin will provide details on proposed benefits.

Membership enquiries

You will continue to be able to contact us at mindinganimals@gmail.com, but if you have a membership enquiry, will now also be able to contact us at memberships@mindinganimals.com

Donations to Minding Animals International Inc. also open

Donations to Minding Animals International Incorporated are also now possible. Please follow the donations button on the Minding Animals website. If you are a citizen of the USA, all donations to MAI are also tax deductible.

New Minding Animals Website

The Minding Animals website has now been updated and moved to a new domain provider. You will still be able to log on the new look website by following mindinganimals.com, but also if you log on to mindinganimals.net or mindinganimals.org

Final Call for Nominations for two new MAI Directors Nominations Close 31 January, 2017

The Board of Minding Animals International Inc. has decided to increase the number of Board members to 11. Candidates are asked to provide a statement in support of their nomination. No seconders are required, although references/referees are encouraged.

Candidates should be committed to making a difference to and building animal studies as a transdiscipline, and to animal protection more generally. Candidates must also be committed to team work, show an aptitude for fundraising, have academic and or activist experience, and be willing to be a part of an active Board structure.

Minding Animals celebrates diversity, including gender, age and ethnicity. Nominations reflecting diversity are especially welcome.

[Note that longevity of service is open-ended due to legal and constitutional limitations of the organisation. Legal liability is limited and MAI Inc. has management insurance. Further, Board members are responsible and accountable in all matters pertaining to and for the Board. Board members can resign at any time or be removed if found to be in contravention to the Articles of Association, or acting against the interests of the organisation or the Board.]

Minding Animals Conference 4

Conference Website, Registrations and Call for Abstracts

Plans are now well advanced for the next Minding Animals conference to be held from 17 to 24 January, 2018, inclusive, at the Mexican National University in Ciudad de México (UNAM). A dedicated conference website will become available on 15 December.

By following www.mindinganimals4.umich.mx you will be able to find details on how to submit abstracts, register for the conference and information about our speakers and activities. Information regarding accommodation, travel and visa requirements, details about the programme and venue, and other information regarding your visit to Ciudad de México will be added shortly.

Your Abstract

As for the previous three Minding Animals Conferences, MAC4 will be open to no end of papers dedicated to animal studies and animal protection. We would like to stress that Minding Animals International Inc. (MAI) works to further the development of animal studies internationally and to help establish legal and moral protections for all nonhuman animals.

As such, Minding Animals Conferences are available for animal academics and activists alike, and provides an avenue for the transdisciplinary field of Animal Studies in all its guises (Human Animal Studies, Anthrozoology, Critical Animal Studies and so on) to be more responsive to the protection of animals.

It is recognised that animal protection in this context encapsulates environmentalism, animal liberation, animal rights, wildlife protection, animal welfare and animal law and justice, veterinarian and the zoological sciences (in no particular order of importance).

MAI aims to enable discourse between the various interests (from the arts, literature, feminist studies, queer studies, philosophy, law and public policy, to the humanities and cultural studies, to name just a few) within this rapidly developing transdisciplinary field in ways that will improve the status of nonhuman animals and alleviate nonhuman animal exploitation. As such, MAI also facilitates research in Animal Studies. So we will soon be calling for abstracts from all these areas of interest.

We stress to all delegates that they should participate in Minding Animals Conferences in a spirit of honesty and cooperation, accepting that other delegates may have quite divergent opinions, but always with the overall objective of protecting animals, no matter in what form or time frame. Nonetheless, we urge critical debate and active engagement with your fellow delegates.

Sixth Announcement of Plenary and Invited Speakers

Our first five rounds of speakers were announced in Bulletins 31 to 35. We would like to announce a sixth round of speakers.

Steven Wise



Steven M. Wise is President of the Nonhuman Rights Project. He holds a JD from Boston University Law School and a BSc in Chemistry from the College of William and Mary. He has practiced animal protection law for 30 years throughout the United States and is admitted to the Massachusetts Bar. Steve teaches Animal Rights Jurisprudence at the Vermont, Lewis and Clark, University of Miami, and St. Thomas Law Schools, and has taught Animal Rights Law at the Harvard Law School and John Marshall Law School. He is the author of several books, including *Rattling the Cage – Toward Legal Rights for Animals*, and *Drawing the Line – Science and the Case for Animal Rights*. He has authored numerous law review, encyclopaedia, and popular articles. His work for the legal rights of nonhuman animals was highlighted on Dateline NBC and was the subject of the documentary, *A Legal Person*. He regularly travels the world lecturing on animal rights jurisprudence and the Nonhuman Rights Project, and is a frequent guest on television and radio discussing animal rights law and the Nonhuman Rights Project.

Paula Casal



Paula Casal, ICREA Professor at Universidad Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona), is an associate editor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics, editor of Law, Ethics and Philosophy, president of Academics Stand Against Poverty-Spain and The Great Ape Project-Spain. Paula has held teaching and research positions at Keele, Harvard, Lovain-la-neuve, Oxford and Reading. She publishes in

journals such as *Ethics, Economics and Philosophy*, *Hypatia*, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, *Political Studies* and *Utilitas* on social and global justice, multiculturalism, gender, other species, evolutionism and medical ethics.

Rod Bennison



For the first time, founder and chair of Minding Animals International will provide a lecture on the road ahead for Minding Animals International and Animal Studies. Rod has been involved in animal protection issues since the late 1970s, from the sidelines to being deeply immersed in animal protection activism. His work experience has taken him from government department, to party politics, to drug law reform activism, and his active roles in several environmental groups. He was a sessional academic for 13 years and now manages a dedicated and tight-knit team of environmental scientists in an engineering and environmental consulting firm based in the Hunter Valley on Australia's eastern seaboard. With Jill Bough, Rod co-convened the first Minding Animals Conference held in Newcastle, Australia, in 2009. Rod now helps steer Minding Animals International that he founded in 2010 after the Newcastle conference.

He has a strong interest in the intersection of animal and environmental protection, particularly the rationale of why some human animals view some nonhuman animals and plants as pests, feral, weeds or invasive, as being somehow 'out of place'. He has a strong interest in climate change and other human induced environmental impacts that are changing planetary life irrevocably.

Paulina Rivero

Paulina Rivero Weber studied for her Bachelors, Masters and PhD at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the UNAM, where she has taught ethics and other topics for more than twenty years. Paulina has written dozens of scholarly articles in México and abroad, as well as the books; *Nietzsche: truth and illusion*, *Heidegger: Aletheia, the original truth, heroin is sought*, and *Ethics: a university course*. She has also edited books *The Challenge of Bioethics*, *Daoism: contemporary interpretations*, amongst others.

Paulina's interests lie in ethics and in bioethics, allowing her to focus academically on ethics to animals while exercising a degree of political activism through dialogue with the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico City. She is also active in AC Bioethics, Medicine and Health Seminary UNAM, the University Program on Bioethics, the National Research and SEDEN in Spain, where she is also a member of the Board of the journal *Nietzsche Studies*.



Paulina has lectured at various universities, including the University of Tübingen, University of Barcelona, La Complutense de Madrid, the University of Zaragoza and the University of Hawai'i. Paulina is currently professor in the Graduate programme and in the College of Philosophy at the UNAM. She is currently preparing the book *Bioethics: an introduction from philosophy*, and coordinating the book, *Current Issues in Bioethics: about nonhuman animals*.



Special Conference Events to Look Out For

Documentary Film Festival

As for the three previous conferences, documentaries will feature strongly at the conference in Ciudad de México. If you are a producer or director or cinematographer and are interested in showing your film at the conference, please send an email proposal with *Curator Documentaries Mexico* in the subject line to mindinganimals@gmail.com

Critical Animals Studies Study Circle

A Critical Animals Studies Study Circle was held prior to the second Minding Animals Conference in Utrecht, and dedicated sessions offered in New Delhi. A special preconference CAS Study Circle is also being arranged for the conference in Ciudad de México. CAS abstracts will also be most welcome in the broader conference programme. The Study Circle will be held at the Royal Pedregal Hotel, located close to the MAC4 venue on 17 January, 2018, between 12 noon and 16:00. Details regarding speakers will be provided in a future Bulletin.

Study Circles/Panel Sessions at MAC4

In México, Study Circles, which have been a popular aspect of all previous Minding Animals conferences will be replaced by dedicated Panel Sessions. Nonetheless, there will again be an opportunity at the Conference for delegates at each of the panels to indicate if they wish to continue ongoing debate in Study Circles by leaving their name and email contact details. The structure of the panels will nevertheless be similar and involve a number of speakers who will each present a 10 minute discussion (about half the allocated time), followed by questions or comments from the floor. We MUST reiterate that questions or comments are to be kept brief and not become presentations. Several panels are planned. More detail regarding the panels will emerge as we get closer to the big event.

Research Networks Forum

In addition to the panel sessions, an hour will be available for specific Research Networks to present their findings. Spaces are very limited, so please contact mindinganimals@gmail.com to express an interest.

Partner Events

11 to 12 April, 2017: Stellenbosch, South Africa

Dogs in Southern African Literatures

Call for papers: Dogs –once you start looking for them – appear pervasively in the literatures of Southern Africa. Sometimes they are central characters (as in Jock of the Bushveld). Most often they appear peripherally or incidentally – pet dogs, feral dogs, guard dogs, wild dogs, companion dogs – tangential but apparently necessary. What are they doing there? We also invite the submission of papers for a book collection, in conjunction with the conference.

It is envisaged that a selection of papers from the conference would be considered for the book project, but contributors may wish to propose book chapters without necessarily attending the conference. The conference will take place on 11 to 12 April, 2017, on the campus of the Stellenbosch University at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS, <http://stias.ac.za/>). Abstracts should reach Sam Naidu, Dan Wylie, Joan-Mari Barendse and Andries Visagie by 30 November, 2016, at the conference e-mail address: DogsConference2017@gmail.com

6 May, 2017: Monthei (VS), Switzerland

SHARRE 2017 : « SHARRE en VALAIS, l'envol de la zoothérapie »

Hosts: Society for Human-Animal Relationship Research and Education (SHARRE)

Venue: Malévoz Hospital, Route de Morgins 10, 1870 Monthei

Conference language: French

To register, simply use the dialogue box available on the "SHARRE 2017" page of the conference website (<http://www.sharre.ch/sharre-2017.shtml>). A preferential rate is offered until 31 December 2016, so register soon!

For further information, please visit our website on www.sharre.ch, or contact the conference organisers at info@sharre.ch

Announcements

Australasian Animal Studies Association 2017 Conference: Animal Intersection

July 3-5, University of Adelaide, Australia

Increasingly, Animal Studies turns towards the question of intersections: where, how and why human and animal lives intersect. Intersectionality offers us a way to explore interconnectedness to advance our understanding of the complex ways we relate to and interact with other animals and each other. The keynote speakers include:

- Professor James Serpell: Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare, University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine
- Professor Colin Dayan: Humanities and Law, Vanderbilt University
- Associate Professor Annie Potts: Cultural Studies and English and codirector of New Zealand Centre for Human Animal Studies (NZCHAS), University of Canterbury
- Professor Fiona Probyn-Rapsey: Humanities and Social Inquiry, University of Wollongong
- Professor Rachel Ankeny: History and Philosophy of Science, University of Adelaide
- Dr Dinesh Wadiwel, Sociology and Social Policy, University of Sydney

The Call for Papers is open - see: <http://animalstudies.org.au/conferences>

Expressions of interest are also sought for the curated exhibition accompanying the Conference: <http://animalstudies.org.au/archives/5740>

The AASA is offering Travel Scholarships for one International Student, one domestic student and two underemployed/independent researcher/casual academic -
<http://animalstudies.org.au/scholarships>

NYU: Clinical Assistant Professor (Dept. Environmental Studies)

The Department of Environmental Studies invites applications for the position of Clinical Assistant Professor. The appointment will begin September 1, 2017, pending administrative and budgetary approval. The successful applicant will help to administer a new M.A. in Animal Studies that will launch in the fall of 2018, teach graduate and undergraduate courses, advise students, conduct research, fully participate in and contribute to the development of the Department of Environmental Studies, and provide other service to the University. The Department of Environmental Studies currently offers a major and minor in Environmental Studies and an undergraduate minor in Animal Studies (one of the first in the country). It is in the process of developing other graduate programs.

Clinical faculty are fully-time faculty, non-tenure track appointments subject to continuous renewal, and receive health, retirement, and tuition benefits. For further information and to apply, visit: <https://apply.interfolio.com/39279>

Book Recommendations

We would like to highly recommend the following Animal Studies publication for our readers:

Intervention or Protest: Acting for Nonhuman Animals

Editors: Gabriel Garmendia da Trindade and Andrew Woodhall

Publisher: Vernon Press

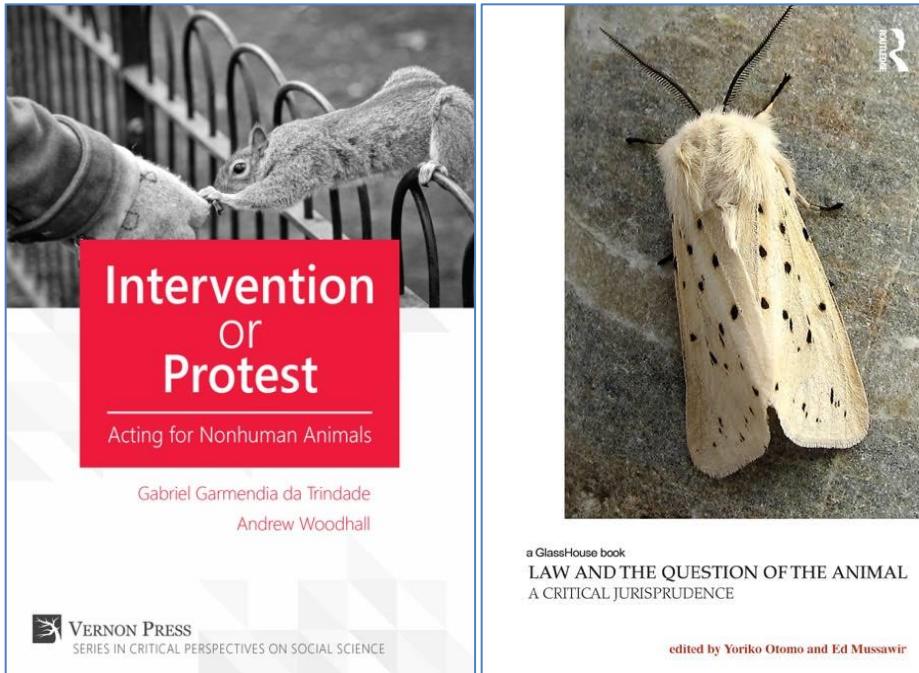
Publication: 2016

Law and the Question of the Animal: A Critical Jurisprudence

Editors: Yoriko Otomo and Ed Mussawir

Publisher: Routledge

Publication: 2013



Gabriel and Andrew have provided us with a wonderful collection of essays that examine current political, social, and ethical debates about activism and how individuals should approach issues facing nonhuman animals. Individuals, groups, advocacy agencies, and governments have all espoused competing ideas for how we should approach nonhuman use and exploitation. Ought we proceed through liberation? Abolition? Segregation? Integration? As nonhuman liberation, welfare and rights groups increasingly interconnect and identify with other social justice movements, resolutions to these questions have become increasingly entangled with questions of what justice and our ethical commitments demand on this issue, and the topic has become increasingly significant and divisive. This great edition to the animal studies compendium considers how this question and contemporary issues facing nonhumans should be answered by drawing on both theory and practice in order to provide grounded, yet actionable, ways forward.

This wonderful edition includes some essays by Minding Animals stalwarts like Carrie Packwood Freeman and Eva Meijer, and covers diverse topics such as:

- The intersection between interspecies ethics and the ethics of war and self-defence
- Nonhuman animals as political subjects and acting agents

- Whether we should intervene for nonhuman animals in cases of natural disaster
- Explorations of why the nonhuman movement may not be succeeding as well as it could be
- Comparisons between the nonhuman movement and other social movement
- Arguments for and against intervening to help or save nonhumans
- What intervention could ultimately mean for nonhumans

An older edition edited by Yoriko and Ed, also Minding Animals colleagues, presents us with questions that address the problem of 'animal life' in terms that go beyond the usual extension of liberal rights to animals. As we know, the discourse of animal rights is one that increasingly occupies the political, ethical and intellectual terrain of modern society. But, although the question of the status of animals holds an important place within a range of civil, political and technological disciplines, the issue of rights in relation to animals usually just rehearses the familiar perspectives of legal, moral and humanist philosophy. Animal law is fast becoming a topic of significant contemporary interest and discussion. This burgeoning interest has not, however, been matched by renewed inquiry into the jurisprudential frames and methods for the treatment of animals in law. Responding to this interest, this book brings together leading and emerging critical legal theorists to address the question of animality in relation to the law's foundations, practices and traditions of thought.

We also would like to announce two very special PhD dissertations from the Netherlands:

Disentangling the Domestic Contract: understanding the everyday life construction of acceptability - or non-acceptability - of keeping and killing animals for food by Dr Hanneke J. Nijland. Hanneke has been studying and working in the field of human animal and human nature relations for over 15 years. During her time at Wageningen University, she chose to specialise in different aspects of human nature and human animal relations. She studied the ethical and practical argumentation regarding keeping and killing pigs for food; researched animal welfare labelling and wrote articles for Natuur & Techniek's special NWO issue on animal welfare; organised a philosophical debate on farm animal welfare with Peter Singer for Varkens in Nood and Philosophy Magazine; monitored sea turtle nesting beaches for WWF Turkey; researched the legal and practical welfare situation of broilers in Turkey; and performed an ethological study on the effects of group size and density on the vocalisation of laying hens. She has since gained professional experience working as a researcher, consultant and coordinator at WWF Turkey, the Animal Sciences Group in Lelystad, Küre Mountains National Park in Kastamonu (Turkey), and the Animal and Law Foundation in Amsterdam. At present, Hanneke works as an independent researcher and research consultant on various projects related to human animal and human nature relations and sustainability and can be hired to assist in or perform new projects. She can be contacted at: info@hannekenijland.com

Wildlife: a hidden treasure of green places in urbanized societies by Dr Akke Folmer. Akke holds a Master's degree in Human Geography from the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. She conducted her doctoral research as an external PhD candidate at the Cultural Geography Department of the same university. She is currently a senior lecturer in Leisure and Tourism and a member of the research group Marine Wetlands Studies at Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands. Akke Folmer first studied social geography at the University of Groningen. After her studies she worked as a market researcher and policy advisor for tourism and recreation. In 2000, she was employed by Stenden University as a lecturer in tourism and recreation. Her doctoral thesis examines the role that animals have in the bond that people have with nature, especially within Lauwersmeer National Park and the Wadden Sea.

SHARRE en VALAIS

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH & EDUCATION

L'envol de la Zoothérapie



Samedi 6 mai 2017 (9h-17h)

Hôpital de Malévoz, Rte de Morgins 10, 1870 Monthey

Info : www.sharre.ch / info@sharre.ch / +41 76 540 86 53

Tarifs : jusqu'au 31 décembre 2016 : CHF 80.- (60.- étudiant, AI, AVS, ASZ)

de janvier au 20 avril 2017 : CHF 130.- (90.-)

dès le 21 avril ou sur place : CHF 150.- (110.-)



SHARRE
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH & EDUCATION
2017

SHARRE en VALAIS

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH & EDUCATION

L'envol de la Zoothérapie

Programme de la journée

08h30-09h00 Accueil des participants

- 09h00-09h40 Les associations suisses de zoothérapie, pionnières en Europe**
Rachel Lehotkay, PhD, psychologue psychothérapeute, zoothérapeute ASZ, présidente ASZ, présidente SHARRE
Regula Falquet, éducatrice spécialisée, thérapeute, intervenante en zoothérapie ASZ, membre ASZ
- 09h40-10h20 SHARRE en Inde : une collaboration autour de la danse du Tigre...**
Giuliana Galli Carminati, MD, PhDs, ancienne PD, physicienne, psychiatre psychothérapeute FMH, psychanalyste IIPB, vice-présidente SHARRE, membre ASZ

10h20-10h40 Pause

- 10h40-11h20 L'animal comme lien...**
Valérie Bitschnau, éducatrice de l'enfance, responsable d'une garderie et intervenante en zoothérapie ASZ, membre ASZ
- 11h20-12h00 Chien médiateur : quels bénéfices pour l'enfant en difficulté?**
Sophie Pralong, éducatrice, intervenante en zoothérapie ASZ, membre ASZ

12h00-13h40 Pause repas

- 13h40-14h20 Huskiesport : structure où les émotions sont mises à contribution!**
Evelyne Gaze Stauffacher, enseignante et intervenante professionnelle en médiation par l'animal, membre ASZ
- 14h20-15h00 Une goutte d'eau dans l'océan : zoothérapie au Salvador**
Naara Salomon, technicienne en thérapie assistée par le chien, diplôme CTAC, membre ASZ

15h00-15h20 Pause

- 15h20-16h00 Vie aquatique... zoothérapeutique !?...**
Federico Carminati, PhD, physicien CERN, membre IIPB, membre du comité SHARRE, zoothérapeute ASZ, membre ASZ
- 16h00-17h00 SHARRE en VALAIS, l'envol de la zoothérapie**
Table ronde avec tous les conférenciers, présidée par Dre Giuliana Galli Carminati

17h00 Clôture du congrès



SHARRE
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH & EDUCATION
2017

SHARRE en VALAIS

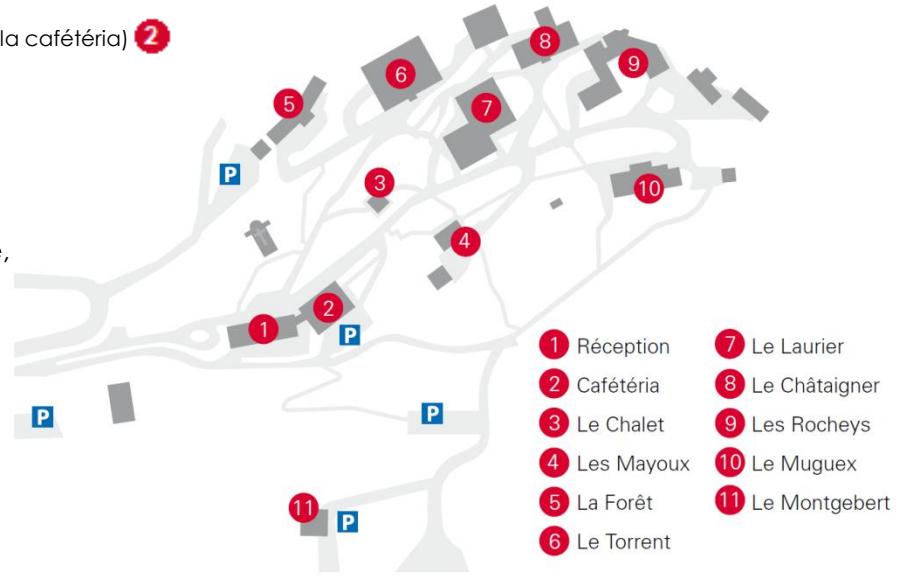
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH & EDUCATION

L'envol de la Zoothérapie

Samedi 6 mai 2017

Lieu

Salle polyvalente (au dessus de la cafétéria) ②
Hôpital de Malévoz
Route de Morgins 10
1870 Monthey



Accès

Bus Monthey 1 depuis la gare,
Arrêt Poisieux
Parking payant sur place
Le Montgebert ⑪

Informations

E-mail : info@sharre.ch
Website : www.sharre.ch
Tél. : +41 76 540 86 53

Inscription jusqu'au 20 avril 2017 sur le site www.sharre.ch

Tarifs*	Early birds Paiement avant le 31 janvier	Paiement jusqu'au 20 avril 2017	Inscription sur place
Tarif régulier	CHF 80.-	CHF 130.-	CHF 150.-
Tarif réduit (étudiant, AVS, AI, ASZ)	CHF 60.-	CHF 90.-	CHF 110.-

* L'inscription est validée dès paiement

Bulletin de versement libellé à

SHARRE, Rue Verte 2, 1205 Genève
Compte Postal No : 12-807268-9
IBAN : CH62 0900 0000 1280 7268 9

Référence à mentionner : SHARRE 2017

La Conférence SHARRE 2017 est organisée par la Society for Human-Animal Relationship Research & Education, en collaboration avec l'Association Suisse de Zoothérapie, et présentée comme pré-conférence Minding Animals

Cette journée représente 8 heures de formation continue attestée



SHARRE
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH & EDUCATION
2017

SOMETHING BETTER

THE TALE OF THREE SCHOLARS AND
ONE SHARED ANIMAL ATTRACTION

BY JENNIFER BLEYER

One evening last spring inside NYU School of Law's Vanderbilt Hall, hundreds of people listened as David Carter, a 300-pound NFL defensive lineman who looks like the kind of guy who could polish off five cheeseburgers in a single sitting, talked about his improbable path to becoming a vegan.

"I grew up, like pretty much everybody, hearing that beef is what's for dinner and milk does a body good," Carter said. Meat was ever present since his family owned a barbecue restaurant, and he gorged on it to build the requisite size and strength for colliding with others. But by his third year as a professional football player, at age 23, he found himself beset with what he refers to as "old man diseases"—high blood pressure, early onset arthritis, tendonitis, fatigue.

Doctors prescribed him drugs, but he didn't like the idea of being pumped full of medication at such a young age. Then he saw a documentary, *Forks Over Knives*, which convinced him that eliminating animal protein from his diet could improve his health. He promptly switched to a vegan diet. Before long, his physical ailments subsided, his sleep and energy level improved, and he became faster and stronger than ever, bench-pressing 100 pounds more than he had as a carnivore.

The clincher of Carter's speech was when he described the moral awakening that accompanied his recognition that eating animals was unnecessary—even for a pro athlete like himself. "I started eating a plant-based diet for health reasons, but then ethical and environmental reasons came into play," he told the audience. "I realized I don't need to take a life to survive in this world. Why



should another animal suffer for my selfishness? You don't have to eat meat to get big." The crowd erupted in applause.

Carter was speaking on a panel about vegan athletes, and while the event bore the impassioned tone of an animal rights rally, it was in fact presented by the university's Animal Studies Initiative, a six-year-old program within the College of Arts and Science's Department of Environmental Studies that its founders are quick to clarify is not an advocacy effort at all, but rather a locus for deep, rigorous thinking about animals. The vegan athletes on the panel are not "people whose views we're endorsing," said Dale Jamieson, the chair of the department and one of the initiative's cofounders. "What we do is offer a space for thinking about the choices people make with regard to animals, and for expressing ideas about animals which would have no exposure otherwise."

The initiative's origins can be traced to an informal dialogue that began in the early 2000s between three professors interested in animals as refracted through their different fields: Jamieson, a philosopher who has explored the consistency between environmental ethics and animal liberation; Colin Jerolmack, a sociologist interested in the interactions between humans and urban animals and how they influence each other's experience; and Una Chaudhuri, a professor of English and drama who has long considered animals through the lens of theater, culture, and performance. "We had these very different perspectives," says Jamieson, "and we all saw issues about animals as central." Jerolmack recalls the discovery that the three "were interested in how animals shape the ethical presumptions of how we relate to one another as a happy coincidence."

The coincidence of their shared interest reflected a movement brewing in the broader academic world. "A lot of disparate threads have been in the air for some time about the human relationship with animals," Jamieson says. "One is the work of people like Jane Goodall, from whom we started to learn amazing things about animals [we're evolutionarily close to]. Then there's the rise of cognitive science, where we began to see that a lot of things we think about the human mentality are not distinctly human. As you move through the 1970s and '80s, Peter Singer's book *Animal Liberation* sets off a whole debate in philosophy. At the same time, there's the intensification of exploitative practices of nature—overfishing, land-use change, the rise of industrial agriculture and factory farming—and that [begets] ethical questions about animals. Then it gets picked up in areas like sociology and literary studies, and the question of the human relationship to animals just exploded."

At NYU, this question was given a boost with a \$1 million gift in 2010 from Brad Goldberg (STERN '68), a former financial portfolio manager who is an animal advocate. The gift enabled the establishment of the Animal Studies Initiative, including support for postdoctoral fellowships, academic symposia, public events, and research, as well as the creation of an undergraduate minor in animal studies—one of the first of its kind.

Drawing on the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences, the initiative has proven to be remarkably popular in its short existence. Dozens of events, including a panel discussion on seeing







“A COMPUTER SCIENTIST SPOKE AT OUR DIGITAL ANIMALS CONFERENCE ABOUT WAYS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF DRONES AND RANGERS TO FIND RHINO POACHERS IN SOUTH AFRICA,” JACQUET SAYS.



seafood as animals, an evening of animal-inspired performance art, a discussion of global equity and animal welfare, and a conversation with *New York Times* film critic Manohla Dargis on animals in contemporary films, have attracted thousands of participants. Its conferences have assembled scholars from a vast array of fields, including anthropology, media studies, visual studies, literature, philosophy, and law, to present on topics as varied as animal poetics in Keats, the moral status of animals, and animals in antiquity. Perhaps most indicative of the initiative's success is that it has attracted dozens of undergraduate minors who are eager to think about animals in relation to ethics, cognition, public policy, culture, and the environment.

"Our students care really deeply about the material," says Jennifer Jacquet, a conservation biologist who joined the initiative's faculty two years ago. "I think it's partly because animals are coming of age [as a subject] after having long been ignored, and also that this is a moral issue of our time, so it self-selects for a kind of student who's really motivated and passionate. As opposed to a veterinary or agricultural program, where there's a clear precedent about the relationship between animals and humans, our students ask, 'How do we relate to animals and why is that so?' They're open to considering animals in and of themselves."

The big-tent nature of the Animal Studies Initiative and the kind of expansive thinking it invites are evident as well in the work of its faculty members and the creative collaborations they forge. Jacquet, for instance, is currently working with NYU's Center for Data Science on a project called the Enforcement Gaps Interface, which seeks to build a viral worm that can travel through the Internet and identify sites that are engaged in the sale of endangered wildlife.

One of Chaudhuri's current projects is a collaboration with media artist Marina Zurkow, a faculty member at the Tisch School of the Arts' Interactive Technology Program, on a project called Zoopolis. It involves digital collages assembled on top of images of New York City culled from Google Street View, imagining "the city as a space of shared animality, an ecosystem capable of supporting the lives, pleasures, and freedoms not only of its human citizens but also of an expanded population of members of other species." (One image shows the surface of Times Square overtaken by a green pasture, with naked New Yorkers frolicking among deer and owls.) It's a project emblematic of how Chaudhuri views animal studies—as an "emergent and tremendously dynamic field that's morphing and changing a great deal as it comes into conversation with other fields."

The already thriving program now seems poised for its next great feat: Last spring the university approved a proposal to offer a master's degree in animal studies—the first such program at a major research university. In the proposal, the initiative's faculty

explained that their goal is "to launch the MA that will be seen as the gold standard for intellectually and empirically rigorous interdisciplinary scholarship on animals." New academic fields aren't born every day, and with the creation of the master's program, which is anticipated to begin in fall 2017, Jerolmack thinks that NYU will be "positioned to be one of the institutions, if not the main institution, setting the agenda of what animal studies looks like."



The top three goals of the Animal Studies Initiative:

To contribute to the field through scholarship

To increase awareness about animals' importance and devise ways to best protect them

To build bridges between academia and society in the study of and interactions with animals