Reading Animals
School of English, University of Sheffield
17-20 July, 2014
Conference Abstracts
Keynote Speakers

Opening Keynote: Thursday 17th July
Susan McHugh, Read Dead: Hunting, Genocide, and Extinction Stories

Several contemporary novels, including Linda Hogan’s People of the Whale (2009) and Robert Barclay’s Melal (2002), feature scenes of indigenous hunting of marine mammals gone spectacularly wrong; people are killed, animal deaths are unnecessarily prolonged, and all inhabit polluted landscapes. While in isolation the killings are often seen as exposing the cruelty or unsustainability of hunting animals such as whales and dolphins, reading them into literary history suggests that a more profound linkage of hunting with extinction and genocide stories is emerging. Whereas novels of the previous generation like Leslie Silko’s Ceremony (1986) and Witi Ihimaera’s The Whale Rider (1987) portrayed the native hunter as psychologically and culturally healed, respectively, by returning to a traditionally performed chase of or a modified traditional practice with animals, Hogan’s and Barclay’s hunters are set up to botch the ceremony, and the bloody mess that ensues exposes how the component that once marked the ideals of the hunt – namely, the ability for both hunter and hunted to escape any fixed script – goes missing, and in its stead emerges a cross-species politics of endangerment that concerns the limits of representing human-animal relations more generally and the importance of fiction to making them legible in particular.


Morning Keynote: Friday 18th July
Kevin Hutchings, ’More Savage than Bears or Wolves’: Animals, Romanticism, and the ‘Indian Atlantic’

This paper considers the relationship between animals and Indigenous people as it was represented by Enlightenment, Romantic, and Native American writers circa 1770 to 1860. Beginning with a discussion of Scottish Enlightenment perspectives, I consider Eurocentric claims that Native Americans, inured by the chase to violence and bloodshed, were “more savage than bears or wolves” (Henry Home 1778) or “more dreadful … than all the wildest animals in the forest” (Thomas Day 1790); and that their violent treatment of animals made them “fit subjects for the Society for Preventing Cruelty to Animals” (Johann Georg Kohl 1860). Such claims served colonial interests in a number of ways. Most obviously, by questioning the humanity of Indigenous people, they justified the expropriation of traditional hunting grounds and the subsequent replacement of the land’s wild animals with domestic ones, enabling settlers and administrators to understand colonialism as a civilizing process that would eradicate the predatory violence of the North American woods. As a foil to this perspective, I consider the voices of nineteenth-century Aboriginal writers, including the Mississauga historian Peter Jones (Chief Kahkewaquonaby) and the Ojibwe autobiographer George Copway (Kahgegagahbowh), the latter of whose comments on Aboriginal hunting practices and captive animals at the London Zoo reveal a transatlantic mixture of Indigenous and Romantic understandings. Finally, I consider the function of animals in the ethnography and treaty-making of Sir Francis Bond Head, a Romantic man of letters who served as Upper Canada’s lieutenant governor in the mid-1830s, and who defended the hunting practices of Indigenous people while ridiculing those of aristocratic Britons. In the course of my discussion, I hope to illuminate the key role that animals played in the period’s
colonial and anti-colonial discourses, while at the same time shedding some light on the implications of these discourses for animals themselves.

Kevin Hutchings is Professor of English and Canada Research Chair in Literature, Culture and Environmental Studies, University of Northern British Columbia. He is the author and editor of many books and essays including Romantic Ecologies and Colonial Cultures in the British Atlantic, 1750-1850 (Montreal: McGill University Press, 2009), and Imagining Nature: Blake's Environmental Poetics (Montreal: McGill University Press, 2003).

Evening Keynote: Friday 18th July

Diana Donald, 'Translated from the original equine': Anna Sewell's Black Beauty and the art of animal autobiography

Black Beauty belongs to a tradition of animal 'biographies' and 'autobiographies' established in the eighteenth century, especially stories of the unhappy lives of horses, which were told in both visual and literary form. Yet Anna Sewell’s book wholly transcended this genre in its emotive power, the depth of its insights, the flow and variety of the narrative structure, and the simple beauty of the writing. I explore the epistemological and practical difficulties of writing and illustrating animal autobiographies of this kind. I also attempt to set the book in the Victorian context, showing its connection with - and sometimes its departure from - prevalent attitudes to animal protection and other forms of charitable work. Anna Sewell’s emphasis on chance and shifting fortunes in the horse’s life is in tension with the religious providentialism that was characteristic of her Quaker circle, just as her generally pessimistic view of society at all levels implicitly challenges an approach to philanthropy based on benign paternalism. The series of books written by Anna’s kinswoman, Sarah Stickney Ellis, had established solicitude for animals as a specifically female trait and duty. However Black Beauty, though often describes as a feminist tract, in fact has a more subtle connection with Anna Sewell’s personal circumstances, especially her experience of pain and the interpretation of her illness as a process of spiritual purification decreed by God. Both the experience of passive suffering and the pressure for an entire surrender of her own will created a profound fellow-feeling with working animals.

Diana Donald was, until her retirement, Head of the Department of History of Art and Design at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her studies of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British art, especially graphic imagery, have taken her in the direction of animal representations, and their interplay with both the development of natural science and the history of animal advocacy. Picturing Animals in Britain 1750-1850 was published in 2007. The exhibition, Endless Forms: Charles Darwin, Natural Science and the Visual Arts, for which she was guest curator, was held at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and the Yale Center for British Art in 2009, with an accompanying book: the exhibition was Apollo magazine’s ‘exhibition of the year’, and the book won the William Berger prize as the best book on British art published in 2009. The Art of Thomas Bewick was published in 2013. Diana Donald is now working on a book on the role of women in animal protection in nineteenth-century Britain.

Morning Keynote: Saturday 19th July

Tom Tyler, The Spell of Anthropocentrism

In Marie de France’s 12th century retelling of the popular fable ‘Del Prestre e del Lu,’ a priest attempts to teach a wolf the alphabet. Though the wolf can mimic the priest’s A, B and C, when told ‘Now say them by yourself,” he replies “I don’t know how.” “Say whatever you think it is, and spell,” insists the priest. “A lamb!” replies the wolf, betraying both his inner thoughts and his unchanging, unchangeable nature. That human beings are the only reading animals has, of course,
been asserted many times before and since. It is but a single instance of the long-standing and widespread commitment to anthropocentrism that would persuade us not just of humanity’s unique reading ability, but of a knotted cluster of reassuring, mutually confirming truisms: that humanity is Nature’s “most prominent object,” that animals are means to human ends, that human beings are an inevitable or necessary axis for reflection. The grounds of these claims for human-centering have been many and varied, but two indispensable conceptions can be identified. On the one hand, it is frequently asserted that humanity is exceptional; on the other, that it is the norm. Further, within these complimentary, contradictory conceptions, it is possible to distinguish six separate dimensions of anthropocentric thought. I will explore these six dimensions using examples drawn from across literary, scientific and philosophical genres, and a range of historical periods, in order to untangle the enduring, bewitching spell of anthropocentrism.

Tom Tyler is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy and Culture at Oxford Brookes University. He has published widely on animals and anthropocentrism within philosophy, critical theory and the history of ideas. He is the author of *CIFERAE: A Bestiary in Five Fingers*, Posthumanities Series (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), co-editor of *Animal Encounters* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), and editor of *Animal Beings* (Parallax #38, 12.1, 2006).

**Evening Keynotes: Saturday 19th July**

Laura Brown, *Nonhuman Subgenres: Animals and Innovation in Eighteenth-Century Literary Culture*

Nonhuman animals give humans unusual opportunities to experiment with images, themes, and genres, and with representations of affinity and alterity, proximity and distance. This paper argues that these opportunities are rather new in the history of English literature. The rise of the animal in the literary imagination has its roots in the major historical changes that took place in the human-animal relationship in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and it can play a significant role in our understanding of literary innovation. The depictions of trans-species love in the lap dog poem and the images of animal paradise in the dog novel can show us how some of these generic experiments functioned, during and beyond their own time.

Laura Brown is John Wendell Anderson Professor of English, Cornell University. She is the author of books and essays including *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes: Humans and Other Animals in the Modern Literary Imagination* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2010).

Cary Wolfe, *Wallace Stevens’s Birds*

Birds comprise arguably one of the most storied *topoi* in Anglo-American poetry—and particularly in the Romantic genealogy that runs from Keats’s nightingale, Shelley’s skylark, and Poe’s raven to the birds that appear centrally in Wallace Stevens’s “Sunday Morning” and “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird.” In fact, two of Stevens’s most important birds appear in the poems that end his two major collections: “Not Ideas About the Thing But the Thing Itself” (in *The Collected Poems*), and “Of Mere Being” (in *The Palm at the End of the Mind*). Stevens is drawn to the bird *topos* for a number of reasons at different points in his career—their usual associations with transcendence and freedom, their exoticism, his desire for a perceptual freshness and fecundity of which they are often the index. But most of all, I think, Stevens is fascinated by birds because of their intensely inhuman embodiment of a subjectivity, a point of view, at once recognizable and yet utterly foreign—a strangeness for which even the term “animal” would seem a domestication. This essay will argue that the bird in Stevens is above all a figure for the complexities that attend the problem of how “observation” produces the system/environment relationship (in systems theory parlance)—a problematic everywhere foregrounded in the
familiar Romantic thematics of Imagination vs. Nature that Stevens quite conspicuously inherits. Drawing primarily on the work of Niklas Luhmann (and in particular Art as a Social System, “A Redescription of ‘Romantic Art,’” and “Notes Toward the Project ‘Poetry and Social Theory’”), I will attempt to elucidate how in the bird topos of Stevens, the lines of animal studies and posthumanism cross in a way that subordinates the problem of the animal other to the more radically inhuman or ahuman otherness of a machinic dynamics of paradoxical observation that is not limited to animal and human bodies, but in fact (if we believe Luhmann and Derrida) “traverses the life/death relation” (to use Derrida’s phrase). In turn, paying attention to the complex dynamics of the bird topos in Stevens allows us to unlock the most fundamental fact about his poetry, in particular his poetry after Harmonium: that it is precisely when Stevens is at his most insistently paradoxical that he is at his most rigorous.

Cary Wolfe is Bruce and Elizabeth Dunlevie Professor of English, Rice University. He is the author and editor of many books and essays including Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), What is Posthumanism? (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010), and Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Closing Keynote and Plenary: Sunday 20th July

Erica Fudge, Farmyard Choreographies: Or, Reading Invisible Cows in Early Modern Culture

How do we read animals that have left almost no textual traces? That is the central question here. Following a path from the 2001 foot and mouth outbreak, and the work of John Law and Donna Haraway, through Renaissance dance manuals (encountering some drunks in a court masque along the way), the paper will end up in the fields and farmyards of early seventeenth-century Essex, chasing glimpses of human-livestock interactions. The fact that all we have are glimpses reveals the problem I am addressing in my attempts to understand the relationships that existed between humans and livestock in this period. We get only glimpses of these relationships because the culture of the farmyard - my term for the shared world of humans and livestock animals - was largely tacit. What kind of ‘reading’ might we do when we are engaging with texts that are not there? What kind of relationships can we track when the cows are invisible? The evidence that I use to begin to answer these questions is early modern, but I hope that some of the implications might have a wider resonance in animal studies.

Can animals lie? A number of prominent Victorian writers and psychologists believed that they could, and that non-human deception was key to understanding the evolution of consciousness. This paper argues that such ideas of animal cunning were developed through a genre of natural history writing that treated animals as anthropomorphized characters in a narrative. In the eighteenth century, Comte de Buffon had pioneered a form of 'animal biography' which sought to describe animals' habits and customs in the contexts of both their wider environments and whole life-spans. A little later, in England, Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selbourne* (1789) sought to understand animals by observing their minute habits in detail. This new sense of the value of scrutinizing animal behaviour led naturalists to speculate on the possible agency and mental awareness of non-humans, particularly when observing them engaging in apparently deceptive behaviour.

I will argue that this tradition of anecdotal description of animal cunning underpinned George Romanes' influential and controversial work of late-Victorian psychology *Animal Intelligence* (1883). Under the mentorship of Charles Darwin, Romanes argued that animal and human consciousness differed in degree rather than kind, with the former shading into the latter. To prove this point, he amassed stories of animals, wild and domesticated, contriving ingenious ruses and deceptions, which had duped both humans and other animals alike. However, as comparative psychology developed as a discipline, critics of Romanes came to view his anecdotal method as a form of human self-deception, generating fictions of anthropomorphic animal agency. The capacity of animals to deceive, and what exactly 'deception' signifies, remain hotly debated issues in the twenty-first century. Tracing the generic literary forms in which the Victorians represented and explored animal deception will illuminate the difficulties involved in such discussions of non-human subjectivity.

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**Animal Cunning: Anecdotal Narrative and Theory of Mind in Victorian Comparative Psychology**

**Speaker Abstracts**

**Will Abberley**

*St Anne's College, University of Oxford*

william.abberley@ell.ox.ac.uk

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**Animal Cunn...**

**Alison Acton**

alison.acton@hotmail.com

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**Foxhunting Tales: The Hunter in Foxhunting Literature**

Nineteenth and early twentieth century foxhunting literature is replete with images of imperialism, warfare, adventure, daring and masculinity. Within these texts the reader finds a central character. Sometimes, this figure is elegant and strikingly attractive, sometimes they are described as plain or even ugly, yet, whatever their appearance they are esteemed for virtues of staunchness, bravery, honesty, acuity, intelligence, strength and agility. Moreover, you will trust them with your life. However, this figure is not a human character, but "the hunter", the hunting horse. This paper combines archive hunting texts with my own ethnographic fieldwork riding within Hunts. Through my research I became literally incorporated into a particular type of co-species relationship between horse and rider which permeates foxhunting. A central virtue of the hunter is their agentive capability and they are...
regarded, in cases, as superior to their rider, not just physically, but in terms of knowledge and perception of the environment. The wise rider will do well to listen to them, if not learn from them. This aspect of hunting has not changed and these horses have long been a true ‘companion species.’ Experiencing this connection led me towards a more nuanced interpretation of these old texts and the common essence of this human-equine nexus became more evident. One would not expect to turn to archive foxhunting literature to find themes of human-animal relationships that ebody the ethos of the current species turn in academic analysis, yet entwined within the stylised and sometimes bombastic narrative of their era are accounts which reveal a subtle, complex, respectful relationship. And although the hunter occupies a generalised recurrent role in foxhunting tales of the past they also feature as individuated, personalised figures. In essence, my twenty-first century “view from the saddle” elicited a temporal-spatial thread which revitalised these accounts of a peculiar human-equine bond.

Candice Allmark-Kent

University of Exeter
ca231@exeter.ac.uk

Practical Zoocriticism: Science, Sentience and Storytelling.

Despite our claims about the characteristic ‘interdisciplinarity’ of animal studies, any interactions between literary and scientific researchers seem to have been negligible. This oversight indicates a range of disciplinary biases, anxieties and prejudices that remain at work, regardless of the common ground. Blending Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin’s literary ‘zoocriticism’ with Glen Love’s scientific ‘practical ecocriticism,’ I explore here the potential of a ‘practical zoocriticism.’ To demonstrate, I read the turn-of-the-century wild animal stories of Ernest Thompson Seton and Charles G. D. Roberts alongside contemporaneous developments in animal psychology. Indeed in his preface to Kindred of the Wild (1902), Roberts states that the primary concern of the wild animal story is “the psychology of animal life” (16). The authors tried to blend natural history and animal psychology with adventure stories and animal biographies to represent the experiences of wild animals ‘realistically.’ I suggest that when both men asserted that their narratives were factual and accurate, they blurred the distinction between stories and anecdotes; Roberts even suggested that their stories were contributing to the advancement of animal psychology. This resulted in an intense debate known as the Nature Fakers controversy in which, I argue, their stories were criticized not for their literary content, but for their ‘anecdotal evidence’ of animal behaviour. Few critics who explore the scientific context of these stories have looked beyond the anthropocentric, late-Victorian anxiety over Darwinism, and fewer still have explored the full implications of animal psychology’s development from anecdotes and ‘intelligence’ to behaviourism and ‘instinct.’ Whilst many continue to see these stories as something of an archaic embarrassment, practical zoocriticism can re-evaluate them in relation to modern ethology research and explore the meaningful, interdisciplinary potential of Roberts’ oft-mocked desire to contribute to science.
Joseph Anderton  
*University of Nottingham*  
*Joseph.Anderton@nottingham.ac.uk*

**Dogdom: The Unknowable World of Canines in Kafka, Beckett and Auster**

'Anthropocentrism in some sense is logically unavoidable', writes David Wood, 'any account we come up with of "our" relation to "animals" will be from "our" point of view'. In the case of canines, there remains an impassable gulf between human and dog highlighted all the more owing to our proximity. In the twentieth century, writers of experimental prose such as Franz Kafka and Samuel Beckett, and, more recently, Paul Auster, evoke the fundamental 'unknowability' of animal perspectives whilst at the same time conveying the closeness, even liminality, that canines possess. This paper will reflect on the different ways that these writers represent canines in their respective prose works 'Investigations of a Dog' (1922), *Molloy* (1955) and *Timbuktu* (1999). I argue that human and nonhuman animals are entangled in each, which questions the very distinction in the first place, but at the same time, the dog's alterity is made apparent. Kafka speaks from within the dog to parody anthropocentrism; the animal becoming human at once suggests likeness and complete blindness to others. Beckett parallels human and dog; the human becoming animal sees Beckett's creatures evincing the lowly dog trope until distinct identities are shared and eventually collapse. Auster's narrator speaks on behalf of the dog from a third-person perspective, but he is also speaking on behalf of the human. I make the claim that, as with speaking in place of another, speaking for oneself also entails the production of an Other and that these various efforts to read and give voices to dogs underline the rupture of the self-reflective human subject. The failing attempts to read canines result in the successful writing of human ignorance of nonhuman animal worlds, but they also expose the fissure within human autobiography.

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Clare Archer-Lean  
*University of the Sunshine Coast*  
*Carcher@usc.edu.au*

**Reading and Storying Animal Sentience in a Community Book Club Context**

The literary art work is in many ways ideally placed to explore animal sentience and to capture human moments of appreciation of animal sentience. Reading occurs in a space of interiority in the first instance, that is, it is an almost immediate experience of inter-subjectivity with literary characters and representation. It is arguably less mediated than the use of voice over in film or visual art representation. But what occurs when literary works that have been discussed within a Human Animal Studies (HAS) framework are shared in a community context, such as a book club? Literature is sometimes criticised for using anthropomorphising sentimentiality when it comes to animal representation. But sentimentiality (including understanding of cross-species commonality and human grieving for non-human suffering) and representation of animal sentience can be a ‘resource to create an ethics of care towards animals’ (McDonnell, 2012). When the work prompts community reflection and engagement with the nonhuman animal and gauges community values, it is a powerful example of art as a mechanism for community directed change.
This paper will be reflecting on data gathered through 11 monthly meeting of 3 regional Queensland book club groups. The question I respond to is how do discussions of literary representations of non-human animal sentience and human animal engagement by participants from a range of cultural, socio-economic, age and gendered demographics produce new readings of a work? And what stories and values does the dialogic space draw out? The answer is complex and intriguing. For example, the narrative in Yann Martel’s Life of Pi is produces reflections on local zoo practice at Sunshine Coast’s Australia Zoo, on turtle management at Mon Repos Turtle Conservation Park in central Queensland and on participants’ individual experiences of animal sentience. David Malouf’s Remembering Babylon pushed consideration of the line between animals and humans as arbitrary and participants produced narratives of bee keeping and of their individual own transcendent moments of inter-subjectivity with bees and other species. Margaret Atwood’s The Year of the Flood produced dialogue about the potential for more widespread veganism. The process of reading narrative then discussing and debating that reading produces new reflections on interspecies encounters.

Steve Baker
University of Central Lancashire
SBaker1@uclan.ac.uk

Improbable Evidence

Niklas Luhmann observed that ‘in working together, form and medium generate what characterizes successful artworks, namely, improbable evidence’. Can the sometimes contentious forms taken by the animals encountered in contemporary art usefully be described in this way? The representation or presentation or performance of (or with) animals can never be a straightforward or transparent affair. This paper tries to reflect and to report in some detail on what it is that artists do in their handling of animal form. In particular, it will propose that it involves the perplexing combination of an attentive looking and a necessary overlooking of the animal, of the specialness and difference of its being an animal – and with that, a letting go of everything inessential in the manner in which animal form is presented to the viewer. No lessons, no messages, no symbolism, no ‘intentions’. This overlooking of the ethical weight of the work's subject matter has its dangers, but seems essential in the ordinary mundane work of making the artwork into a form of improbable evidence, rather than an object with an agenda, or a reflection of things already known.

James Barilla
University of South Carolina
BARILLAJ@mailbox.sc.edu

Furry Machines: Where Tame Animals Meet Wild Technology

This creative nonfiction essay is about mapping the territory between the traditional world of domestication and the futuristic world of synthetic beasts and virtual pets, a world that in many cases is right around the corner. To do so, I have brought together the stories of my encounters with two creatures: Annie, a fluffy extrovert with a knack for getting people in pain to forget their troubles, and Paro, a seal-like creature with limpid brown eyes and similar
aspirations. Annie is a golden retriever mix, trained in animal-assisted therapy, who makes the rounds of Columbia, South Carolina's Providence Hospital wards, meeting and greeting patients, letting many strange hands pat her head and rub her back. She's exuberant and just a tad unpredictable, a "living antidepressant" that's the perfect counterpoint to the hospital's otherwise regimented atmosphere. Paro is a personal therapy robot who mews, blinks and rests in the laps of the dementia patients at the Bentley Adult Day Care facility in Athens, Georgia. What's going on here in terms of what we need and value? How does an encounter with the biomimicry of Paro compare to the real thing? What are the limits of technology when it comes to relationships that many of us consider sacrosanct, partnerships that feel as if they are based in our own biology, our own identity as human beings?

At some point soon, Siri will meet Paro, and a new kind of constant companion will be born. Will this fuzzy little thing be cuddly, or creepy? Will it spring off the couch on terrier-like legs and cajole us into going for a walk, barking encouragement and recording useful data as we trot along the sidewalk behind it? Will it replace the real live animals we feed and walk and pet, or will its artificial nature keep us from embracing it? How much contact with the real thing do human beings actually need?

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**Roman Bartosch**  
*University of Cologne, Germany*

**‘Creaturely Poetics and Urban Texts: Crossing the Species Boundary in Nineteenth-century Tales of the Nonhuman’**

My paper seeks to analyse the function of literary texts framing 'humanness' at the intersection of animality, understood as an evolutionary aspect within the human (sensu Darwin), and something 'other' and 'abject' that has to be held at bay. The anthropomorphisation at the bottom of human-pet relations can be read as an example of the former; engagements with the latter dimension shows in literary works where ghosts and werewolves, shape-shifters and other 'savage' agents prevail. In order to understand how literary fiction works with and establishes this dichotomy narratively while, at the same time, subverting its posits of radical difference or sameness, I will work with what Anat Pick calls a 'creaturely poetics': a poetics that is grounded in the materiality of human and animal beings, their vulnerability and finitude. I will try to show that texts often transgressed their own discursive limitations and thus became a powerful counter-discursive force in an increasingly anthropocentric environment.

By briefly discussing seminal examples such as Anna Sewell’s *Black Beauty* (1877) and less obvious ones such as Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897), I will extrapolate the connection of animality and horror with its context of urbanisation, colonialism, and the abjection of the animal. I will conclude by giving a brief outlook on the developments during the early twentieth century, when Modernism, despite its desire for anthropocentric avant-gardes, begins to rediscover the nonhuman agency of animals.
This paper explores the way in which queer sexuality in Charlotte Brontë’s *Shirley* is represented primarily through animals, and the link between rabies and sexual desire in the Victorian imagination. Critics who focus on Shirley's relationship with Caroline see *Shirley* as a failed lesbian novel, overlooking the fact that animals in the text offer what Mary Armstrong calls in another context “manifold possibilities for sexual desire and narrative pleasure.” Shirley's primary relationship is with her mastiff dog Tartar, who is both mirror and object of her desires. Other animals – both “real” and metaphorical – also function to convey Shirley's “polymorphous perversity.” These include her horse Zoe, herself as “Le Cheval Dompté” and a “jungle feline,” and Phoebe, the dog who bites her. The self-styled “gentlemanly” Shirley enjoys queer desires which far exceed her relations with Caroline, reflecting what Eve Sedgwick calls the “multiplication of sexual species,” before “it all boiled down to a single, bare– and moreover fiercely invidious– dichotomy.”

However, the bite from a frenzied pointer bitch (the neglected climax of the novel), propels Shirley, at least ostensibly, into conventional femininity. She cauterises the wound with a hot iron, becomes “nervous and womanish,” and agrees to marry the man to whom she confesses her fear of rabies. The anxiety and self-reproach that Shirley suffers as a result of the dog-bite constitute what Judith Butler calls “normativizing injunctions that secure the borders of sex through the threat of psychosis, abjection, psychic unlivability.” When Shirley asks her tutor to administer a dose of laudanum to ensure her death, she implicitly concedes that her “eccentricity..touch(es) the verge of frenzy.” In the nineteenth century rabid humans were thought to die of “an erotic fever raised to its highest degree.” The rabid dog, then, embodies the threat of queer unlivability.

Attention to animals in *Shirley* explains Shirley's capitulation to hetero-normativity; more importantly, it explores the “narrative pleasure” of her queer animal desires.

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**Maggie Berg**  
[bergm@queensu.ca](mailto:bergm@queensu.ca)

**Queerness and the Threat of Rabies in Charlotte Brontë’s *Shirley.***

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**Melissa Bianchi**  
*University of Florida*  
[mbianchi@ufl.edu](mailto:mbianchi@ufl.edu)

**Playing as Animals: Reading Animal Avatars and Animal Alterity in Digital Games**

Published in 1977, John Berger’s “Why Look at Animals?” emphasizes the theoretical and ethical importance of studying animals in order to critique the processes that reduce and marginalize both humans and nonhumans. In our contemporary moment, however, the interactive quality of digital games poses an interesting challenge to Berger's call to “look” at animals. Digital games often feature animal characters that players not only gaze upon, but also interact with, inhabit, or control. As Ian Bogost, Robert Cassar, Bob Rehak and a number of game studies scholars argue, the scripted procedures and technologies of game spaces are often informed by problematic and conflicting ideologies about the self and the other. My presentation examines this aspect of digital games as it pertains to a simulated other that is
expressly animal. To put Berger in conversation with contemporary game studies, I argue that we should not only look at animals, but also *play as them.*

To play as animals is, in part, to explore alterity in terms of ontological and phenomenological difference while acknowledging that simulations can never replicate nonhuman experience. As Tom Tyler argues in “New Tricks,” games have the capacity to highlight and appreciate the often overlooked alterity of nonhuman perspectives without necessarily capturing it. Thus, I am less interested in the ability of games to effectively and comprehensively reproduce animal otherness. Instead, I analyze how the design and procedural rhetoric of several games reify and/or challenge cultural processes that marginalize animals as others. Building on Thomas Nagel’s “What Is It Like to Be a Bat?” and Cary Wolfe’s *Animal Rites* which take animals as meaningful sites for exploring the philosophical challenges posed by otherness and anthropocentrism, I argue that reading animal avatars in digital games is important because they reveal the problematic ways we conceptualize and consume animal alterity.

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**Kathryn Bird**

*University of Leeds*

*K.E.Bird@leeds.ac.uk*

‘The house won’t seem right without that old hound in it’: ghostly dogs, haunted houses and the founding of the welfare state in Sarah Waters’ *The Little Stranger*

In a pivotal early chapter of *The Little Stranger*, the Ayres family dog, Gyp, bites a young child. In order to avoid a court case, the aristocratic Mrs Ayres agrees to have the dog put down, since ‘when all is said and done, he’s a dog, and an old one.’ After his death, Gyp continues to haunt Hundreds Hall as a ‘physical absence’, yet the ghostly echoes of his footsteps are the least of the family’s supernatural worries. Their house is already haunted by a malevolent spirit which sets it on fire, bites and scratches its inhabitants, and drives every member of the family towards self-destruction.

According to Colin Dayan, dogs and ghosts share a simultaneously marginal and pivotal place in law. She argues that they provide an ‘entry’ into understanding legal rituals centred on the ‘disposing of the stigmatized outside the body politic’, rituals that ‘inflict death and dehumanization’. In Waters’ novel, Gyp’s death is exemplary of the precariousness of animal life before the law, but the dog (along with other animals) also becomes a way of reading the ghostly residues of other marginal lives that haunt Hundreds Hall. In this paper, I will read the novel’s preoccupation with dogs and ghosts in relation to its focus on a decisive moment in the development of biopolitics in twentieth-century Britain: the founding of the welfare state. I will argue that *The Little Stranger* examines the inauguration of this large scale care of the population through the lens of those lives which are positioned outside the body politic, and whose ghosts return as a troubling reminder of the precariousness of life which both preceded the founding of the welfare state and remains embedded in the approach of contemporary British politics to those lives which do not form part of the human community.

Kathryn Bird is a PhD student in the School of English at the University of Leeds. Her thesis, funded by the AHRC, is entitled ‘Undeath and bare life: the politics of the contemporary Gothic’, and explores representations of undeath in contemporary British novels influenced by the Gothic tradition in the light of recent work on sovereignty and biopolitics, most notably that of Giorgio Agamben, Jacques Derrida and Roberto Esposito. She has previously given
papers on the human/animal distinction in Kazuo Ishiguro’s Never Let Me Go, on representations of ghostly agency in Sarah Waters’ Affinity, on the relationship between anatomy, immunity and biopolitics in Alasdair Gray’s Poor Things and Ishiguro’s Never Let Me Go, and, most recently, on the relationship between biopolitics and originary technicity in Frankenstein.

Jo Blake Cave  
*University of Chichester*
  
jo Blake10@hotmail.com

**Ecology for Girls, or, How I Met Trickster on my Way Down.**

In 2012 I was commissioned to make a new storytelling performance. The only specifications were that it should be a solo piece, made for an adult audience, which focused particularly on composition. With such an open remit, I soon found myself lost, and stumbled, quite by chance, upon a path that led me into the mythological forest – delving among the roots to find the splintered remains of stories that spoke of petals, plants and astonishing transformations; where bark became skin, flesh became food and chlorophyll became blood. Gradually these story-shards entwined into a fractal ecology of repeating motifs from British and New Guinean myth, Russian wondertale and East Anglian folktale.

The piece, however, was only performed three times before I deemed it to be a failure. In this performance presentation, I will explore how my creative process sought to collapse the boundaries between body and world and led me to a wordless place of more-than-human consciousness, populated with characters who were deceptively active in their passivity; and how I was rescued from the overgrown path through the forest by Trickster and his animal ways.

Katrin Boniface  
*California State University*
  
kboniface@mail.fresnostate.edu

**Horses as Status Symbols in Medieval Europe**

My research is on the development of the horse as a status symbol in western Europe during the high Middle Ages. Horses throughout history are often restricted to the upper classes in non-nomadic societies simply due to the expense and time required of ownership of a 1,000lb prey animal. However, between 1000 and 1300 the perceived social value of the horse far surpasses the expense involved. After this point, ownership of quality animals begins to be regulated by law, such that a well off merchant or a lower level noble would not be legally allowed to own the most prestigious mounts, despite being able to easily afford one. Depictions of horses in literature become increasingly more elaborate and more reflective of their owners’ status and heroic value during this time. Changes over time in the frequency of horses being used, named, and given as gifts show a steady increase in the horse’s use as social currency. This is particularly evident in literature from the same traditions, such as from the Waltharius to the Niebelungenlied, and the evolving Arthurian cycles. Later epics, such as La Chanson de Roland and La Cantar del Mio Cid, illustrate how firmly entrenched the horse became in the trappings of aristocracy.
Amphibians, Vampires and Dark Ecology

This paper takes as its starting point Timothy Morton’s (2007) recent theorisations of “dark ecology”. Morton calls for a re-estimation of “nature”, demonstrating that “the term collapses into impermanence and history—two ways of saying the same thing. Life-forms are constantly coming and going, mutating and becoming extinct” (Morton 2007, 21). Morton encourages us to see the world as ecology in motion; as a multiplying series of inter-species interconnections. In this paper, I read the amphibian as an important figure in these attempts to re-imagine relations between different life-forms. Morton urges us to protect marginal and marginalised creatures, to value life-forms that might constitute “liminal space”:

If current industrial policies remain unchecked, these very spaces, such as coral reefs, and liminal spaces (Latin, limen, boundary) such as amphibians, will be increasingly at risk of being wiped out ... I mean here to support these margins. ... We must choose to include them on this side of human social practices, to factor them into our political and ethical decisions. (Morton 2007, 51)

The amphibian must, for Morton, be brought into our view of what it means to be a social human. This is an ethical, a political, and an aesthetic task in Morton’s thinking. Morton is committed to reimagining both life forms and texts as overlapping series of interrelations, and this is concomitant with a commitment to deconstruction: to “ruthlessly denature and de-essentialise” (2010).

The Latin “ambo”, “in both sides”, infuses Morton’s account of how nature and aesthetics might concurrently be rethought along ecological lines. In this paper, I suggest that early vampire narratives might be re-read as amphibious texts, describing as they do an ambiguous ecology, an “in both sides” inhabited by the undead. Reading Sheridan Le Fanu’s *Carmilla* (1872), where the female vampire is strikingly described as an amphibian, I suggest that vampire literature imagines inter-species interrelation and transformation: that it is, in other words, dark, ecological fiction. The amphibious vampire is situated in a blood ecology, a reimagining of organic relation that darkly destabilises the conceptual integrity of the human.
slaughterhouses into some of the most inconspicuous places in our societies, thus helping to separate the act of killing – its smells, sounds and sights – from the meat products we eat. As we rarely encounter animal slaughter in real life, coming across it in fiction will, in a sense, function as a novel experience, while at the same time playing on our knowledge of that which we have willfully concealed, and on our knowledge of our own role in affecting the slaughter of non-human animals.

Drawing on literary theory regarding ethics and emotions, as well as on sociological theory regarding slaughterhouses and concealment, this paper discusses how depictions of abattoirs in fiction will necessarily play on the concealment of slaughter in real life, thus drawing attention to the fact of animal slaughter and to the non-human animal itself. In this way, the literary abattoir comes to function as a particular space within which attention is drawn to ethical questions surrounding animal slaughter, even when non-human animals are not the main focus of the narrative.

Through readings of fiction by authors as diverse as Upton Sinclair, Ruth L. Ozeki, Neil Astley and Tristan Egolf, this paper discusses very different literary uses of slaughterhouses and slaughter, demonstrating that they ultimately lead to an emphasis on ethical questions surrounding slaughter and offer interesting possibilities for provoking empathic responses to non-human suffering and death.

Camilla Bostock
University of Sussex
C.Bostock@sussex.ac.uk

Shrinkers: the (Im)possibilities of Reading Animals.

The idea that when we read literature, we are engaging with a certain kind of animality, has been brought to light by much contemporary philosophical writing and literary criticism. Much less, however, has been made of the unreadability that is the necessary condition of both animality and literary texts, and works to threaten anthropocentric thinking across all disciplines (including the sciences). In this paper, I seek to highlight how this unreadability of nonhuman animals functions in literary texts and to consider what its resistant force might consist of, and in turn what the wider implications of this might be in the light of mass animal extinction and catastrophic global warming. Through analysis of the poems of D.H. Lawrence, particularly those which take snails, tortoises and other animals as their subjects, alongside readings of Jacques Derrida’s ‘Che cos’ è la poesia?’ and The Beast and the Sovereign, I will consider how the very possibility of ‘reading animals’ (and therefore ‘reading literature’) is called into question through notions of animal-poetic withdrawal, detumescence and shrinking away. I wish to move towards a theory of the unreadable by arguing that nonhuman animals, like any literature truly worthy of the name, do not let themselves be read or mastered by any hermeneutic gaze (engendered by a desire for power and sovereignty). Instead, they resist; not only with a movement of shrinking from, but also by means of generating what I call a “shrinking effect” on the reader. By engaging with both the transitive and intransitive uses of the verb ‘to shrink’, I will draw attention to the double movement of the “poematic” animal that curls up to protect itself while also, through this action, threatening the very notion of mastery.
Looking at Beavers: A Field Guide

Taking up the persistence of beaver imagery in Canadian visual culture and its re-emergence as a significant trope in contemporary art, this paper explores the beaver as a symbol of Canadian identity and as a complex figure immersed in a field of human animal relations. The multiple and contradictory reinterpretations of beaver imagery by contemporary artists provide a site for examining the cultural and political stakes in the animal's representation. Drawing on Harold Innis' 1930 analysis of the centrality of the fur trade to Canadian history in dialogue with contemporary scholarly examinations of the beaver's role in Canadian colonization (Sayre 1995, Francis 2004), I examine the tensions inherent in the beaver's overlapping statuses as a commodity, symbol, and living being.

Classroom Animals. Posthumanism, Creative Writing and Experimental Fiction

In The Program Era (2009), Mark McGurl has recently drawn attention to the deep ties between postwar American fiction and the rise of the creative writing program. As he convincingly shows, many important and ostensibly anti-academic works of fiction reveal the imprint of the university through the use of academic settings, textbook writing techniques and the exploration of a particularly human point of view. Critics including McGurl have pointed out the problems with this institutionalization of an anthropocentric perspective ('The Posthuman Comedy', 2012), yet so far they have not offered a sustained discussion of the actual classroom uses of animals. How do writing handbooks and exercises use 'the animal', and what roles do animals play in more experimental forms of fiction, which are equally shaped by the writing program? In this presentation, I will answer such questions by considering handbooks like David Morley's Cambridge Introduction to Creative Writing (2012) and literary works like Thalia Field's Bird Lovers, Backyard (2010). How do Morley, creative writing instructor and biologist, and Thalia Field, experimental writer and writing professor, draw on the animal realm in their workshops, and what do their practices tell us about the program era, and its anthropocentric as well as posthumanist dimensions?

The Centrality of the Dog in Wordsworth's Poems, in Two Volumes (1807)

One of William Wordsworth's earliest poems, written when he was sixteen, is an imitation of Milton's Lycidas entitled "The Dog—An Idyllium" (1786). This elegy was apparently written
for a drowned dog belonging to Ann Tyson, Wordsworth's landlady at Hawkshead. Almost twenty years later, in The Prelude, Wordsworth devotes thirty-seven lines to "a rough Terrier of the hills," one of the faces he was happiest to see during the summer vacation from Cambridge (4:86). The terrier, "pre-ordained / To hunt the badger and unearth the fox," has assumed the "gentler service" of attending the young poet in the wanderings that he devotes to composition (4:87-88, 91). As John O. Hayden notes, Wordsworth's metaphor in The Prelude describing how an "enchanting image" suddenly rises in the mind ("full-formed like Venus from the sea") and the enthusiastic petting of the terrier that succeeds poetic invention (4:104, 105) both derive from the canine pastoral elegy of the juvenilia:

If, while I gaz'd to Nature blind,  
In the calm Ocean of my mind  
Some new-created image rose  
In full-grown beauty at its birth  
Lovely as Venus from the sea,  
Then, while my glad hand sprung to thee,

We were the happiest pair on earth. ("The Dog—An Idyllium" 18-24)

Dog-walking as the scene of poetic composition, a drowned dog and "the calm Ocean of [the] mind," a turning away from the instinct for hunting to devoted companionship, the celebration of poetic success through the joyful caressing of the pet: these ideas from the juvenilia reemerge in Wordsworth's great autobiographical poem.

Wordsworth's three main dog poems, however, were first published in Poems, in Two Volumes (1807): "Fidelity," "Incident, Characteristic of a favourite Dog, which belonged to a Friend of the Author," and "Tribute to the Memory of the Same Dog." In this paper, I shall show how the book Poems, in Two Volumes assumes a different shape once the dog poems are positioned at the center. For example, the greyhound Dart, who breaks through the ice and drowns in "Incident," and the favorite dog Music, whose death by drowning after falling into a well is memorialized in the elegiac "Tribute," serve to illuminate the penultimate poem in the two volumes, the "Elegiac Stanzas," deploring the death at sea of John Wordsworth. In that poem, there is once again a "calm Ocean of [the] mind"—in this case, "a glassy sea" that bore the "Image" of Peele Castle ("Elegiac Stanzas" 4, 7). The perfect calm of that ocean enabled a kind of poetic composition that was inadequate because based on blindness and "Hous’d in a dream" ("Elegiac Stanzas" 54). Drowned dogs and drowned men. The drowning of Dart prompts Music to abandon a hare hunt for the "gentler service" of love, in which her canine nature reaches toward human form: "From the brink her paws she stretches, / Very hands as you would say!" ("Incident" 33-34). Wordsworth interrogates the interspecies boundary both in miniature (in the two lines in which paws resemble hands) and in the two volumes as a whole.

"Fidelity" is clearly a more important poem than the two poems about Thomas Hutchinson's dog Music. Wordsworth devoted great attention to the poem, making substantial changes to the manuscript prior to publication (mostly, omitting factual details). The poem was further revised for the edition of 1815. Dorothy Wordsworth transcribed the poem in one of her letters. Wordsworth recounted to Walter Scott the incident behind the poem—the three-month vigil of the terrier Foxey beside the corpse of her master, Charles Gough—when the two poets walked together on Helvellyn, near the scene of Gough's death. Scott wrote his poem "Hellenvyll" to commemorate the incident. Sir Edwin Landseer took the same subject for his painting Attachment (1829). In the Biographia Literaria, Coleridge uses "Fidelity" as his initial illustration for the contrast, within a single stanza, between the Wordsworthian defect of trivial matter-of-factness and the poet's irrepressible genius. In the context of Poems, in Two Volumes, the move from the simplistic matter-of-fact to the "elevated conceptions" of genius (Coleridge, Biographia Literaria 2:119) is connected to the abstract title "Fidelity," which recalls the title of another major poem in the collection, "Resolution and Independence." If the "old leech-gatherer" is transformed by that title into two personified
abstractions, how should we describe the abstraction that Foxey becomes in Wordsworth’s “lasting monument of words” (“Fidelity” 52)? Is personified the right word when the creature embodied in the abstraction is a dog? In thus embodying abstract ideas, is Wordsworth abandoning the (mistaken) theory of the Preface to Lyrical Ballads, with its rejection of poetic diction and personified abstractions: “such personifications make” no “regular or natural part” of “the very language of men”? The dog serves as a hinge between the matter-of-fact and the abstract, between two kinds of poetic theory and practice.

In this paper, I shall ultimately ask whether “Love’s intellectual law” discovered in the dog Music (“Tribute” 35) and the “love sublime” of Foxey (“Fidelity” 63) mark a shift in poetical practice that might also involve a transition to a different conception of the human place in the natural world, Wordsworth’s abandonment of pantheism in favor of a more orthodox (but still theriophilic) Providentialism.

4 In defining Wordsworth’s native element, Coleridge introduces another animal and another glassy surface. Wordsworth is like a swan who has been waddling awkwardly through the weeds by a river but then “returns to his own majestic movements on its reflecting and sustaining surface” (Biographia Literaria 2:120-21). In his discussion of Coleridge’s reading of “Fidelity,” Jerome Christensen explains why “the human” must “be eliminated in the emblem of a love sublime” (Coleridge’s Blessed Machine of Language [Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1981], 152).

Michaela Castellanos,
Universität Bayreuth
michaela.castellanos@yahoo.com

‘The Peculiar Terror He Bred’: Materializing Moby-Dick in the Nineteenth Century Order of Nature

At a time in which the concept of the ‘human’ as defined by cognitive abilities allegedly exclusive to the species is thoroughly undermined (Haraway, Wolfe), the deconstruction of the humanist subject is well under way. This process has led to anxieties that often find textual expression in literature. Well before Darwin’s On the Origin of Species introduced human animals to their uncomfortable closeness to other primates, whales (among other mammals like bats) found widespread public attention as “problematic organisms” that resisted both Biblical and Linnean taxonomic systems (Burnett).

Exploitative practices and the systematic study of nonhuman animals alike have produced knowledge that threatens the notion of anthropological difference. My paper aims to position nineteenth-century whales in the history of this threat, sharing John Simons’ and Philip Armstrong’s objective to recover “tracks” or “traces” (respectively) of material animals in literature. Analogous to Armstrong’s analysis of historicized “structures of feeling” in Moby-Dick, my paper brings historicized knowledge to bear on an interpretation of the human-animal interactions in the novel, placing emphasis not only on the problem of classifying whales (as several interpretations have done), but emphasizing the threat to the place of humans in the natural order. For this purpose, I am reading “The Quarterdeck” and “The Grand Armada” in the context of historian of science D. Graham Burnett’s 2007 analysis of competing knowledges of whales in an 1819 New York trial about whether whales were mammals or fish. It is my claim that Melville’s use of metaphor and metonymy in these chapters generates an irony that I connect to whales as “problems of knowledge” and the
implications of this conceptualization for human exceptionalism. This irony creates a narrative space in which the ideological violence inherent in clinging to anthropological difference can emerge amidst precariously liked chains of metaphors.

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**Alison Cattell**  
*University of Waterloo, Ontario*  
acattell@mailservices.uwaterloo.ca

**Metaphors of the human/animal: Semiotic and diegetic bodies in *Brokenbrow* (1926)**

Ernst Toller’s play *Brokenbrow* opens as the protagonist, Eugene Hinkemann, mourns for a goldfinch that his mother-in-law has deliberately blinded. As he holds the bird and speaks to it, he first pities it, then identifies with it, and finally kills it in order to end its suffering. Although this goldfinch is one of the only animals to actually appear and have a direct role in the action of the play, various animals and animal metaphors are used throughout the piece to highlight its central themes of cruelty, suffering, and compassion.

After receiving a battle wound that emasculates him, Eugene returns home, where he quickly becomes aware of the discourses that constitute him as a disabled man and falls into despair. The play also depicts how Eugene’s suffering creates a situation in which he is able to perceive the suffering of other living beings to which he was previously oblivious. The piece contains many familiar disability tropes, many of which are considered today to be politically incorrect myths (Mitchell and Snyder 2001, Poore 2007, Quayson 2007, and Siebers 2010).

By examining the textual animals in the play and analysing their function as both semiotic and diegetic bodies, I will argue that the frequent use of animal metaphors in the text indicates that *Brokenbrow* locates the human-animal’s relationship to other animals as a site at which to investigate the origins of disabling discourses. The analysis will highlight how “talking about the animal” interacts with the semiotic and diegetic dimensions of the protagonist’s body within the network of discourses on class, sex/gender, and disability that constitute the dramatic world he inhabits. The results of the analysis will contribute to both Cultural and Literary Animal Studies and Disability Studies by reflecting upon the tensions that emerge at various intersections of disability tropes and animal tropes.

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**Claire Cazajous**  
*University Toulouse II-le Mirail*  
cazajous.claire@gmail.com

**“She couldn’t stop marveling at how few clues there were”: Tracking the Animal in Rick Bass’s Short Stories**

A hunter and a writer, Rick Bass draws an analogy between his two activities when evoking his art: “[when I write], I follow some trend of emotion and that leads me to another point. It is exactly like hunting.” According to Carlo Ginzburg, hunting and deciphering the traces left by an animal are one of the first intellectual activities of humankind. In this respect, hunting and writing share common features. If traces tell the hunter that “someone was there,” texts tell the reader that “something happened” (Deleuze and Guattari). Many of Rick Bass’s short stories present hunters as they track animals in the wilderness by following the
traces that they have left. These traces can take various forms—imprints on the snow, drops of blood, broken branches...—and turn the landscape into a text full of signs to decipher.

This presentation will consider how the different stages of the hunt are rendered on the page. The tracking process oscillates between the patience that is required in order to find and analyse the rare traces that act like clues in the landscape and the urgency to catch the prey before it disappears. We will see how Rick Bass’s writing expresses the watchfulness and alertness of the hunters he depicts. However the tracking of an animal can represent man’s awe when facing the terrors and wonders of the land. In fact, traces may disappear (Derrida) or be badly interpreted. They reveal the limits of a man’s look and knowledge.

This presentation will focus on two short stories: “Her First Elk” and “Two Deer.” In “Her First Elk,” a text which is structured like a hunting guidebook, Jyl tracks an elk for the first time before killing it and methodically dismembering it. In “Two Deer,” a hunter goes after a deer lost in the streets of his town. As in Moby-Dick, the hunt consists in an obsessive quest, and a form of duel between a man and a particular animal that somehow embodies the invisible mysteries of the world.

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**Percy Chao Xie**  
Bath Spa University, UK  
CHAO XIE13@bathspa.ac.uk

**The Extended Sympathy: An Ecological Reading of ‘Hart-Leap Well’**

Among many of Wordsworth’s animal poems, ‘Hart-Leap Well’ stands out for its reflection on the cruel hunting of the animal as well as the abuse of power. Many critics sensed Wordsworth’s sympathy with the hunted animal and his anticipation of the animal rights movement. But few of them have mentioned or fully explored the relationship between the mistreatment of the animals and the sexual exploitation of women. In fact, the animals and the women are closely related in this poem. Sir Walter collapses many horses and dogs to chase the hart to death. Right in the death place of the prey, he establishes a pleasure-house in which he can sexually abuse women. This shared victimhood of animal and woman constitutes the basic ideas of ecofeminism which believes both woman and nature are exploited by patriarchal dominion. In this essay, I try to read ‘Hart-Leap Well’ from the perspective of ecocriticism by analyzing the ecological vision reflected in it, including the interrelated oppression of animal and woman as well as the organic renewal of the woods. By doing so, I argue that ‘Heart-Leap Well’ is not a simple poem denouncing animal abuse, but a poem that debates the human-nature relation as well as the interpersonal connection. Through referencing Wordsworth’s other animal poems, like Home at Grasmere and Peter Bell, I also propose that, far from being sheer animal descriptions, Wordsworth’s animals poems tend to deal with human-nature and interpersonal relations. Instead of being misanthropic, the poet actually expresses his cares for human by extending his sympathy with animals to people. This extended sympathy forms an important part of the poet’s romantic ideas.
The Way of the Dog: Dickens and the Limits of the Person

Who counts as a person? How does the category of “the animal” contribute to shaping the concept of legal, political, and social personhood? These questions, central to contemporary animal studies, suggest research directions for Victorian studies by drawing attention to the rhetorical role of animals in texts written during the rise (according to Foucault, Derrida, and Esposito) of the paradigm of the person. How and why are animals drafted to shape the human? Are animals ever in play without serving a rationalistic conception of the person? This talk takes as its focus Charles Dickens’ novel Hard Times (1854), arguing that Dickens uses animal figures to establish the centrality of representation—linguistic and political—to a definition of the person. If the novel’s project is to achieve a more just system of representing persons, the attribution of a capacity for representation deserves attention. This novel accords privilege to inarticulate but critical utterances, like Stephen Blackpool’s refrain that industrial relations are “all a muddle.” Stephen and other valued characters (Sissy, Sleary) do not fully recognize the force of their own critical gestures, but their conversations are granted considerable space in the novel. The novel’s conclusion, moreover, valorizes animal speech, taking this line of thinking to its ultimate expression.

It was not uncommon at this time for magazines (like Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal) and novels to feature tales of “animal sagacity,” and Dickens’s dogs are often exemplary. In Hard Times, Merrylegs demonstrates the persistence of memory and fidelity that his master lacks: the dog occupies a privileged, even idealized position. Many critics have pointed out that the purity of values associated with the circus and with Sissy Jupe do not constitute an adequate answer to the questions of how to organize a just polity. But Sissy’s circus-dog Merrylegs is not merely an agent of pure love—rather he demonstrates discursive practices that have political implications. As the novel closes, the ringleader Sleary tells Gradgrind the story of how Merrylegs returned to the circus after years of itinerancy. According to Sleary, the dog’s return “made me think whether that dog hadn’t gone to another dog and thed, ‘You don’t happen to know a perthon of the name of Thleary, do you?’” Merrylegs becomes a member of a mobile, national dog-crowd that constitutes a discursive community, and this community collaborates to identify a “person.” Animals, here, reframe the question of how to be representative and representational. As Sleary puts it, “it hath a way of ith own of calculating or not calculating, whith thomehow or another ith at leath ath hard to give a name to, ath the wayth of the dog ith!” “The ways of the dog” is an account of political representation that remains ambivalent about the value of the explicitness and dialogue even though the story itself depends them. Notably, Gradgrind responds with silence, while Sleary marvels at his own volubility. Here the novel seems to erase its own demands for explicitness, exemplarity, or any aggrandized account of human capacities. Perhaps the novel appears to be, as James Eli Adams writes (in another canine context), “constantly trying to write itself into silence,” as if the most inclusive politics cannot be spoken. Be like the dogs, Sleary suggests, who have an instinctive, transparent, inarticulate community without knowing it.

Yet his highly anthropomorphic emphasis on dialogue and discourse in the canine world also suggests the more pragmatic view that communication and political recognition are linked. (This is a capacities-based view, but one that interestingly allows for animal equivalents to language and gives animals’ emotions communicative functions.) Merrylegs’s “ways” capture the value Dickens accords to the inarticulate, even while representation remains the governing framework for the relationship between person and polity.
“Humans Happened to Me”: Shapeshifting in Contemporary Fairy Tales.

To what extent do our modern tales seek rescue and resolution in union with the beast? This paper will explore the changing values of the shapeshifting motif in contemporary fairy tale fiction, focusing specifically on two anthologies of shapeshifting texts, Bruce Coville’s *Half-Human* and Terri Windling and Ellen Datlow’s *The Beastly Bride*. “The value of the beast as a symbol has changed; he is no longer the site of the hostile and repressed other” (Marina Warner, 1994). Indeed, given developing understanding of the anthropocene extinction it is we to animal who have become hostile other. How significant to contemporary fairy tales is a modern-day desire to collapse our human detachment, and become more-than-human, less than other, once again at-one?

In a multitude of tales following Angela Carter, becoming-animal constitutes the happy ending, rather than the crisis point. From Philip Pullman to Michele Paver to Ursula Le Guin, modern young adult fiction writes the shape-shifting tale not as a journey to return a human to an animal-invaded body, but a quest to reach and relish the non/human on the borders of the tale and the self. From dragon-princess to bear’s bride, both anthologies read becoming-animal as a modern story of redemption. However, in tales complex and challenging, they contemporaneously remind us that becoming-animal is horrific; a ‘necessarily traumatic encounter’ (Timothy Morton, 2011) that tells of our deeply unsettling intimacy with that which is not us.

‘When shall thy feeling powers awake’: Cruelty to Animals in Poetry from Eighteenth-century Ireland

The eighteenth century was a period of notable development in the publishing and reading of poetry in Ireland. Among the many poems from this period that reflect on man’s relationship with the natural world are a significant number concerned with animal welfare. Animal life had long been the subject of both literary and artistic representation in Ireland, but at this time—due to a complex intersection of ethical and scientific enquiries—poets began to re-examine the unequal relationship between man and animal, and to consider its implications for issues of religious belief and social justice.

Some of the works I will explore in this paper seek to shed new light on the lives of animals by individualizing their experiences and drawing inferences about their place in the world. Laetitia Pilkington’s extraordinary 1725 poem ‘The Petition of the Birds’ gives a voice to birds killed for sport, a strategy echoed sixty-five years later in the pseudonymously published ‘Lamentation of Cara Pluma’ in which a female pheasant who has lost her mate addresses a Dublin gun maker. The last quarter of the eighteenth century saw a proliferation of poems
that engaged in both emotional and intellectual terms with the issue of blood sports in Ireland. These poems, which include not just hunting of hare, fox and stag but also bull baiting and cock fighting as their subjects, are often innovative in form and technique. The different kinds of readership suggested by these poems indicate both the cultural visibility of blood sports in Ireland and the range of positions that could be adopted by commentators in relation to them. These texts draw attention to the complex moral questions surrounding animal exploitation in Ireland during the long eighteenth century.

Maureen O'Connor

University College Cork

Maureen.OConnor@ucc.ie

Myth and Mutation in Edna O'Brien's Fiction

I will discuss shape-shifting and of human-animal hybrids in O'Brien's' fiction, a figuration that effects, inter-alia, a kind of auto-ethnography, an ironic exoticizing of not just Irishness but Irish femininity. Mythology and folklore is a 'nonmodern' motif available to Irish writers, a store of imagery and narrative which links many contemporary writers and which has become a distinguishing feature of texts produced by Irish women. This material not only addresses Ireland's oblique and fragmented accession to the modern, but also offers multiple possibilities for cultural negotiations. Angela Bourke has observed of fairy tales that they 'carry the potential to express profound truths and intense emotions' and 'are particularly well-suited to the expression of ambivalence and ambiguity'. Fairy and folk lore, like the figure of the animal they revolve around, give voice to those outside the operations of power, but these are potentially ambivalent sites of enunciation, and this paper will address the rebarbative equivocacies of such imagery, particularly in an Irish context in which the distinctions between nature and culture, between human and non-human seem especially nebulous, as evidenced in Irish myths of shape-shifting, an ability attributed to the devious and deviant Irish since the twelfth century. Animals often function as fairies in Irish folklore, perhaps due to the way in which they can act as a hinge between what appear to the 'civilized' as disparate realms, specifically the land of the living, what we call the 'real world', and Tír na nÓg, land of the dead and land of the sidhe. David Lloyd maintains that this kind of 'myth and folklore are not simply sedimented popular versions of outmoded philosophies, but function, rather, as the names and screens affixed by historians in those openings where there might be a way into alternative logics of time and space'.

Abi Curtis

York St John University

“Squiddity”

A presentation combining a creative and critical approach to the strange power of the squid in writing. From Tennyson's 'The Kraken' of 1830 to China Miéville’s recent science fiction novel Kraken. Through the Natural History Museum’s pickled giant squid Archie, in its glass display case, I will explore the creative pull of the squid. Drawing on the writer’s fascination with touch, with the ocean's depths, with monstrosity and multiplicity of limbs, ‘Squiddity’ will itself be a kind of monster, both in and out of its element.
The Animality of the Text: Kafka's Zoopoetics

Perhaps more so than that of any other author of the period, the work of Franz Kafka is marked by a sustained engagement with animality. In most cases, the animal presence in Kafka's texts marks a disruption of the prevailing order, an uncanny intrusion of alterity that is at once unsettling and insurmountable, threatening to upend not just the protagonists' lives but also the narrative itself. In this paper, I focus on the prose fragment, 'Memoirs of the Kalda Railway' (1914) in order to explore what I refer to as the 'animality of the text', which is a salient feature of Kafka's zoopoetics. Tracing a path from the 'Kaldabahn' fragment to 'The Burrow' (1923), I explore Kafka's repeated attempts to 'inhabit' or 'domesticate' the text, a process which is frequently conceived as an incursion into another creature's territory. There are two strategies involved in such 'domestication', representing forms of writing: the first is 'horizontal' and involves following or constructing tracks across the surface (the Kalda railway), the second is 'vertical' and involves burrowing through the ground. Both strategies are consistently thwarted by an indomitable animal presence within the text itself. In order to account for this 'animality' of the text, I draw on Akira Lippit's conception of 'animetaphor' as the embodiment and at the same time antithesis of the metaphor, the site of an irresoluble yet productive tension between animal being and figurative language. Animetaphor is an apt description of the function and status of animal figures in Kafka's writing, in that it describes precisely the simultaneous construction and dissolution of meaning that characterises the disruptive presence of the 'little creatures' that inhabit the textual ground which Kafka's narrators try in vain to make their own.


Samuel Beckett's 'Dante and the Lobster' is probably the most extensively discussed story of the More Pricks than Kicks collection; however, there is a rich contemporary context for his depiction of Belacqua's horror at the discovery that the lobster he has brought home must be boiled alive. We might be surprised that despite the absence of a true animal rights movement in the 1930s, we see a politics of food and anxiety about its ethics represented both in the story and in Beckett's Irish modernist culture. In the course of this paper, I will look at the details of the story but also at contemporary newspaper articles and advertisements and at debates around lobster consumption and the value of its suffering. I will argue that the presence of lobster in the story is to do contemporary food politics due to a greater availability of lobster and thus to lower prices – even a character like Belacqua can afford it. The wider availability of lobster in Ireland in the 1920s and 1930s even led to a Guinness advertising campaign pairing Guinness and lobster. However, and perhaps more crucially, in January of 1930, around the time we think Beckett composed the story, the Guardian recorded an exchange between MPs about the ethics of serving lobster in the House of Commons, linked to the question of whether the method of cooking them is 'inhumane'. This
debate about the suffering of the lobster is explicitly linked with contemporary reform of capital punishment in a flippant remark by one of the MPs. My paper will examine this context for Beckett’s story in the light of deliberate parallels drawn between the question of the lobster's suffering and the planned execution of a criminal which Belacqua contemplates throughout the day.

Stephen F. Eisenman
Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois
s-eisenman@northwestern.edu

The Real ‘Swinish Multitude’

Beginning in the 18th Century, a “hierarchy of genres” disciplined the visual arts. The idea had its origins in classical antiquity. The Roman Quintillian proposed there existed a unity of ethics and artistic quality, and that nobility of person and an exalted oratorical style were joined. The true connoisseur was not one who appreciated art’s voluptuousness but understood its morality. Later, during the Renaissance – when Roman rhetoric and art were consciously imitated – artists reasoned that if painting was to be counted a liberal art, it would have to be decorous, idealizing, and inspired by the art, poetry and mythology (istoria) of antiquity. Codified by Félibien and Le Brun in France at the end of the 17th Century, and by Richardson and Reynolds in England in the 18th, these rules were soon embraced by the art academies that sprung up across Europe.

But no sooner was this hierarchy codified – with history painting at the pinnacle -- than it was challenged. Disparaged as the lowest genres, still life and animal painting were the specialities of Oudry and Chardin in France, the latter of whom was so prodigious a talent that he was reçu into the Academie Royale as a painter of still life at age 29. And in England too, Hogarth, Stubbs and Bewick contested the hierarchy, setting animal art at or near its crown. Their challenge arose from a remarkable alignment of biography and social history: each artist was directly exposed to gross transformations in what may be termed the human-animal class struggle. Witnessing the mass transport of animals through the city of London, seeing their suffering, hearing their outcry (what the English Jacobin John Oswald called “the cry of nature”) and observing the transformation of muscle into “horse-power”, they joined an emerging liberation movement that aimed to grant basic rights to non-human animals.

Laura Ettenfield
Leeds Metropolitan University
lettenfield9482@student.leedsmet.ac.uk

The cephalopod's ascent: rewriting discourse and categorisation

In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die.
‘The Kraken’, Alfred Tennyson (1830)

For centuries the cephalopod has remained just out of reach of human understanding: physically too far below the surface of the ocean to easily be studied, the marine creature has taken on a figurative and metaphorical resonance with the impalpable in nature. The nineteenth-century classification and ordering of both animal kingdom and knowledge
can be understood through Tennyson's description of the cephalopod's 'roaring' rise through the submarine space to the surface of the waves. Tracing this cephalopodic rise in Alfred Tennyson's 'The Kraken' (1830) and Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (1870), I argue that the nineteenth-century inability to conceptualise and control the evasive cephalopod is evinced through the rewriting of nature into taxonomy. It is through Verne's submarine *Nautilus* and Tennyson's 'unnumbered polypi' that this fictionalisation of the creature which evades categorisation is rewritten into contemporary discourse. Alongside this literature I will also look primarily at Michel Foucault's theories on the nineteenth-century development of taxonomy and his provoking references to the possible war which lies 'beneath the calm order' (Foucault, 1976, p.46). The war which Foucault suggests exists 'beneath' can be interpreted as a battle of knowledge and rewriting which occurs beneath the waves, between man and cephalopod. This paper will trace the trajectory of the cephalopod's rise in conjunction with the nineteenth-century attempt to categorise nature into a distinct taxonomy.

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**Nádia Farage,**  
*Universidade Estadual de Campinas*  
nfarage@gmail.com

**Around the causes of a tale: Machado de Assis on vivisection**

Nádia Farage contemplates the dialogue between the short-story 'The Secret Cause', by the Brazilian writer Machado de Assis (1884) and the 19th century British anti-vivisection movement, with particular reference to the thematic parallelism between Machado's short story and the novel *Heart and Science*, by Wilkie Collins (1885), both published in the mid-1880's. The textual politics of both delineates the laboratory as a cronotopos, strategic space for a critical approach of the biomedical model and correspondent biopolitics which consolidated at the time. While Wilkie Collins deliberately never opens the door of the lab, leaving personages and readers the task of figuring out vivisection, Machado de Assis assumes the task of opening the door of the lab wide and allows his reader a glimpse of the suffering and death of animals, only to close it soon thereafter. In so doing, both authors address the debate of their time about vivisection, in particular the clash between public opinion and the experimental science at the end of 19th century, from the point of view of the lack of accountability of vivisection, based on the secret nature of the laboratory.

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**Paul Ferguson**  
*University of Cumbria*  
paulfergz@gmail.com

**'Me eatee him up': Unravelling Binaries in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Cloud Atlas***

Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, according to Edward Said a 'prototypical realist novel', is often considered from perspectives that explore the contradictions, and indeed injustices, inherent in self/other, savage/civilised binaries. The celebrated appearance of a single footprint in the sand exemplifies these contradictions with Crusoe's misrecognition of like for unlike, and this misrecognition, which appears at the text's midpoint, is central to many of the novel's preoccupations. This paper will begin by exploring the ways in which Crusoe's version of civilised order is under constant threat, particularly in considering the problematic
relationship he describes in the form of a series of misrecognitions between self/other, savage/civilised which seem at root to be based on a false opposition between human and animal and ultimately humanity and nature. Crusoe’s abhorrence for the consumption of human flesh, though not flesh per-se, is, I will argue, a misrecognition that builds upon early liberal human ideals that seek to reinforce the sovereignty of man over and apart from nature (see Wiliams, ‘Naked Creatures’, Derrida, ‘The Animal That Therefore I Am’).

Mitchell’s novel feeds upon Defoe’s original narrative, taking its opening from Crusoe’s midpoint, and loosely basing itself upon the same chaotic structure. However, here the oppositions Crusoe battles to uphold come undone, with each chapter feeding upon the last both literally and metaphorically in order to delineate humankind’s increasing appetite for a nature which is at once both self and other. In this sense Friday’s declaration in Defoe’s ‘original’ text that ‘me eatee him up’ when faced with a ‘Gentleman’ bear, is one that prefigures our present state of misrecognition in which the civilised prohibition upon the consumption of human flesh may yet, as my reading of Mitchell’s novel will show, lead us to the consumption of ourselves.

Irene Fizer
Hofstra University
Irene.fizer@hofstra.edu

“How Abandoned Eggs and Vagrant Apes: The Natural History of Female Bastardy in Mary Wollstonecraft’s The Wrongs of Woman”

In “Abandoned Eggs and Vagrant Apes,” I analyze the renegotiation of animal-human boundaries in The Wrongs of Woman; or Maria, the novel that Mary Wollstonecraft left unfinished prior to her untimely death. My focus is on Jemima, one of the three primary narrators in this highly fractured text. Mid-way through an agonized re-telling of her life story, Jemima stops short. Her tale itself is unbidden, and disruptive of institutional order, as it unfolds within the private asylum outside of London where she serves as a keeper, tasked with monitoring and reporting on the conduct of the female inmates. Once she elects to break this compact, by relaying--to Maria Venables and Henry Darnford, her chosen auditors and resident inmates--the traumatic series of events that marked her entry into adulthood, she abruptly reverts back to her origin: “I was an egg dropped on the sand,” she reflects, “a pauper by nature, hunted from family to family, who belonged to nobody—and nobody cared for me. Now I look back, I cannot help attributing the greater part of my misery to the misfortune of having been thrown into the world without the grand support of life—a mother’s affection. I had no one to love me; or to make me respected, to enable me to acquire respect” (B2). The cast-off egg is a fittingly capacious metaphor for her original fall, as a female bastard who was banished from the human family as soon as she entered the world, and whose deepest loss remains the death of her mother in childbirth.

Jemima’s reference to herself as an “egg dropped on the sand” is more than a poignant distillation of her abject social status within The Wrongs of Woman. Rather, this reference—along with an array of allusions to other animal species, ranging from chickens to apes—evocatively links her autobiographical tale to eighteenth-century natural history, as well as to an iconic narrative of birth and early childhood within this emergent discipline. Almost singularly, images of eggs dropped on the sand found within natural history folios published during the 1700s introduced constructs both of sexual difference and of biological development into a science of observation and classification that otherwise privileged and focused on specimens of mature males. Along these lines, therefore, Jemima’s tale is
evocatively correlated to the observed but as yet un-document ed “life stories” of the soon-to-be-hatched sea-turtle and the newly-hatched alligator. Moreover, in writing Jemima’s history, Wollstonecraft is at once appropriating and revising an eighteenth-century origin story about animals, who are born “fallen,” and who thereby enter a post-lapsarian world in which they are immediately forced into a fierce survivalism. Thus, theirs is not the pre-lapsarian world evoked by the dominant visual order of eighteenth-century natural history. Abandoned and made self-sufficient by necessity, these oviparous creatures are then claimed by Jemima as her closest and natural kin.

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**Monica Flegel**  
*Lakehead University*  
[mflegel@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:mflegel@lakeheadu.ca)

*Cats don’t care for their Mothers, and their Mothers don’t care for them*: Family Ties and Ruptures in 19th-Century Animal Autobiographies

It is a common trope in animal autobiographies for the speaking animal to begin with some narrative of his or her upbringing, leading to the pet’s immersion (successful or not so successful) into the framework of human family life. These early depictions of family life often end in grief, as the future pet is forcefully removed from their animal kin, and I want to examine what purpose these moments of rupture serve in terms of the human reader: how are we to understand our own, often familial relations with animals, ones that are predicated upon non-human animals being separated from their own kin (and often, species)? Do animal autobiographies represent immersion in the human family as improvement over the lesser-familial ties of the animal family? Or do the scenes of familial rupture operate as means of negotiating human familial relations? In an analysis of a variety of nineteenth-century animal autobiographies, I argue that narratives of family disruption and of finding/creating new families operate as classed explorations of human family in Victorian England.

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**Lee Frew**  
*York University, Toronto*  
[lee.frew@gmail.com](mailto:lee.frew@gmail.com)

“*I never let the facts get in the way of the truth*!": Scientism, the Settler Subject, and Farley Mowat’s *Never Cry Wolf*

Farley Mowat’s *Never Cry Wolf* has enjoyed tremendous success, both in Canada and abroad, since it was first published in 1963. The book is supposedly a first-hand account of a summer Mowat spent in Canada’s far North, where his interactions with a wolf pack he has been sent by the federal government to study eventually lead him to develop a deep reverence for these wild animals. Despite having been immediately dismissed by several scientists and hunters as bogus, the book—which Mowat has described as “subjective nonfiction” while numerous critics have considered it a novel—managed to gain popular credibility as an authority on wolf conservation, and it was adapted by Walt Disney Pictures in 1983 into a very successful film. And despite a conclusive 1996 exposé of *Never Cry Wolf* as fraudulent, Mowat continues to be championed by the public as a national icon—Margaret Atwood even canonized him in
her 2009 novel Year of the Flood as “Saint Farley Mowat of Wolves.” My paper will examine the cultural value of Mowat’s wolves, which seems to exceed the constraint that such a nonfictional account be historically and scientifically factual.

By making a biocentric corrective to recent scholarship that has posited that the text’s fantasy of settler indigenization is evoked in terms of a symbolic substitution of animal for indigene, I will argue Mowat’s wolves signify as agents of indigeneity quite independently of the Inuit in the text. Moreover, by reading Mowat’s human-animal interactions as rehearsals of woodcraft—an indigenizing discourse conventional to Canadian wilderness writing and central to the bildung of settler subjectivity—I interpret the novel’s ending as a strategy to reinforce the sentiment that modernity poses a threat to wilderness that only an enlightened settler subjectivity can mitigate. That is, the scientific factuality in Never Cry Wolf is only useful so long as it does not interfere with the “subjective nonfiction,” if not “truth,” promised by settler indigenization.

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**Rhiannon Galla**  
*Australian National University*  
rhiannon.galla@anu.edu.au

**Creating a Difference: Animals and Contemporary Art**

This paper will focus on the relationship between contemporary art and posthumanist thought and explore the possibilities that art might create for thinking the human-animal relationship in new ways. Contemporary artists have, in varying ways, engaged with the figure of the nonhuman animal to trouble our existing understandings of ourselves and our relations with other species (Aloi 2012). While we may consider the complex ways in which these artworks depict nonhuman animals and play with the meanings associated with the human-animal relationship, in this paper I argue for the primacy of the material relations and sensations that these artworks create as the means through which they open up what might be called an aesthetic mode of thought. Art, as Deleuze and Guattari have argued, ‘thinks’ in sensations. In What is Philosophy they state that “the aim of art is to wrest the percept from perceptions of objects and the states of a perceiving subject, to wrest the affect from affections as the transition from one state to another” (1994: 167). Drawing on examples of contemporary art that utilise bodily materials of nonhuman animals, I examine how art generates affective spaces in which experimental engagements with the problematic of the animal are enabled. In light of the work of Deleuze and Guattari, I argue that art has a problematising relation to a representational mode of thought that seeks to recognise its objects. The transformative capacities of art in the context of human-animal relations might be thus understood in terms of its nonrepresentational functions which always trouble the logic of representation. I suggest that the potential of art in the project of posthumanist thought is in its creation of ‘difference’ – difference conceived in this sense as a productive force that ruptures existing forms such as ‘human’ and ‘animal.’

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**Ted Geier**  
*UC Davis*  
teger@ucdavis.edu

**Insufferable Community: Romantic Nonhumans**
Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein is a novel form consideration of frustrated relationships between life and nonlife, human and nonhuman and opens the question of sensation and exchange to a posthuman figure both before and after the perfectible human subject. This frustration is in fact a hallmark of much Romantic literature, as when, for example, apostrophe is satirized yet deeply interrogated in works such as Blake’s Book of Thel and Wordsworth’s “There Was A Boy.” This frustrated interactive community in Romantic literature interpellates subjects yet revises humanist and Enlightenment conceits in a flattened, object coexistence. In the case of Robert Burns’s “To A Mouse,” as in a number of John Clare’s works, this frustrated community is an interspecies political subjection. The plowman under enclosure and the mother mouse tilled up under agrarian land claims are subsumed under a shared, immediate economic figure. The narrator fails to articulate the mouse’s language of suffering yet catalogues the behavior of suffering (panic’s in thy breastie). The “fellow-mortal” class then fails—by design—as a mediated political prospect: The narrator clarifies a standard species difference (animals without “past” in the poem, without “world” in later versions of the chauvinism) that frustrates interspecies community except in a radically revised political concept that expresses and evaluates suffering whether in vernacular or the mouse’s inarticulate reactions. The vernacular, part of Burns’s political aesthetic theory, then helps amplify a key formal disorganization when the narrator “backward casts (its) e’e on prospects drear.” The aesthetic subject position in Romanticism is thus annihilated yet mandatory in formal redresses of literary modes like the pastoral and consistent in portable categories of human/nonhuman. Romantic literature returns constantly to sustained, bare frustrations such as these failures of categorical and narrative authority, expressing an inhuman condition while rejecting its organizing concepts.

Eva Giraud
University of Nottingham
Eva.Giraud@nottingham.ac.uk

Performing Animal Capital: critical practices of representation in grassroots activism

Through analysing the modes of representation emerging in grassroots food protests (with a focus on work by Nottingham Vegan Campaigns and Food Not Bombs), this paper argues that these actions can be read as performances that foreground the mechanisms of bio-capitalism, in order to open these structures to political critique. The purpose of this reading, however, is not to analyse this form of activism in itself, but to demonstrate how grassroots praxis can have theoretical as well as tactical significance for animal studies.

Questions of political representation lie at the heart of tensions between ‘mainstream’ and critical animal studies (CAS). The problem is that – on the one hand – the rise of posthumanist theory has led to (often productive) challenges to conventional rights or advocacy frameworks, on the basis that these frameworks inadvertently perpetuate the logic of
anthropocentric-humanism (Haraway, 2008, 2011; Wolfe, 2010; Braidotti, 2013). On the other hand, however, thinkers from CAS suggest this dissolution of conventional advocacy frameworks stultifies potential for political action (Adams, 2006; Pedersen, 2011). This critique is compounded by the practical obstacles faced by activists, of finding accessible ways of highlighting exploitation, or of simply making animals visible, in urban contexts when sites where animals are transformed into capital (from animal markets to slaughterhouses) are hidden from view (Philo, 1995). The issue, therefore, is whether it is possible to craft alternative political representations of animals that do not appeal to anthropocentric-humanism, but still have the capacity to foreground and contest exploitation. I suggest that grassroots food protests offer tools for overcoming these problems, through intervening in the spatial arrangements and everyday practices of consumption that naturalise the exploitation of both food-workers and animals. Read in this way, moreover, the protests illustrate how taking insights from activist praxis seriously as theory opens space for dialogue between ‘mainstream’ animal studies and CAS.

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Abi Glen

University of Glasgow

a.glen.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Creatures of Habit: (anti-) feminist animal imagery in the Ancrene Wisse

I propose to examine the feminisation of animal imagery in the Ancrene Wisse, a thirteenth-century Middle English guide for female religious recluses known as anchoresses. Written by an unidentified cleric, the Wisse gives advice to anchoresses on how to maintain bodily and spiritual purity. I will focus on the fourth section of the Wisse, in which the Seven Deadly Sins are depicted as female animals. These animals give birth to litters representing further manifestations of their mother sins: the lioness Pride, for example, gives birth to Vainglory. The beast imagery of the Wisse has not before been examined in terms of the re-gendering of the sins as female, nor in terms of the imagery of childbirth upon which it draws. In addition, to provide points for comparative reflection, I propose to consider these images in relationship to the hitherto unconsidered context of contemporaneous English bestiaries. I will focus primarily on the Wisse’s exempla of the lion and the scorpion. My training in both Middle English and History of Art enables me to examine the ways in which both text and image are employed to imprint the Wisse-author’s teachings indelibly on the minds of his anchoritic charges. I will discuss the ways in which the Wisse transforms traditional bestiary exempla by attributing female characteristics to them. I argue that this reinforces a prevailing view in Christianity that female sexuality is animalistic, uncontrolable, and ultimately destructive. Despite the anti-feminism of the images themselves, however, I will further suggest that the Wisse-author’s use of these images is not necessarily sexist, but guided by the author’s concern to provide support for women who have chosen a chaste life. This talk will contribute to discussions not only about medieval understandings of animals, but also about contemporary notions of women’s inherent affinity with them.

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Julian Good

University of Essex

jrpgoo@essex.ac.uk

Twentieth Century Foxes.
This paper will be an initial report on research with a focus on the fox, what the fox means and how it means in 20th century culture and media, looking primarily at the written text, but also at other forms of media, such as popular music, burlesque, ballet, opera and film. Data will come from a range of written texts in which the fox may be present as an actual physical fox, or as a concept or element of the fox, or as both. Primary texts will include novels such as D.H. Lawrence (2010 ed) *The Fox*, including popular literature such as Barbara Cartland’s (1977) *Punishment of the Vixen*, Tesnohlídeka’s *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and Garnett’s (2008) *Lady into Fox*. Approximately thirty five novels will be covered, including some texts for younger readers. Music will include Janacek’s opera of *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Stravinsky’s *Renard*, Ashton’s choreography of *The Tale of Mr. Tod*, as well as contemporary groups such as Vixen; Fleetwood Foxes; Mr. Fox; and songs such as Johnny the Fox. Films will include Disney’s *Robin Hood*; as well as *The Belstone Fox*; *The Fox and the Child*; *Fantastic Mr. Fox*; and the French animation *Le Roman de Renard*. Data collected will be entered into the QSR N6 program (similar to NVivo) as an aid to qualitative analysis and coding. The main aim of this part of my research is to gain a view from different media of what the fox meant in the 20th Century. (My research also covers medieval literature, such as *Ysengrimus*; *Ecasis Captivi*; *Roman de Renard*; *The History of Reynard the Fox*; *The Nun’s Priest’s Tale*; Henryson’s *Fables*; *The Fox and the Wolf in the Well*, etc. Not enough time to present that as a comparison with the 20th Century in a 20 minute paper however).

1 Including productions by Opera Paris, Glyndebourne, and a BBC animation.

Victoria Googasian  
*Stanford University*  
vgoog@stanford.edu

A New Route Home: Writing Disaster through Animal Eyes

Maurice Blanchot tells us that the disaster marks the “limit of writing,” that it inevitably “describes.” To push this claim a step further, the disaster poses a challenge to representation because it writes in the curious non-language of animality, with its substrates of embodied vulnerability and contingent, secondary existence. This paper pursues what I take to be an overlooked sub-genre of the animal story, provisionally labeled the animal disaster narrative. Perhaps best exemplified by Richard Adams’ 1972 novel *Watership Down*, these fictions, which narrate ecological crisis from a nonhuman perspective, prove surprisingly common in our present, disastrous moment. They also frequently distinguish themselves from contemporary manifestations of the beast fable by careful, even ethological attention to animal behavior. In this paper, I explore the relationship between these sustained, if fantastic, explorations of animal consciousness and the writing of widespread environmental catastrophe. What is it about the animal that helps us think these crises? To answer this question, I take *Watership Down* and the final story in Wang Ping’s 2007 collection, *The Last Communist Virgin*, as my primary case studies. Ping’s story of sturgeon struggling to adapt during the installation of China’s Three Gorges Dam provides a framing apparatus of metamorphosis and shamanic mediation that models the readerly and writerly practices demanded by animal focalization. My reading reveals that animal narration and responses to ecological disaster are linked through their deployment of co-optive, tactical maneuvers—acts that articulate different interests than those of the syntaxes in which they operate. In doing so, I gesture toward an animal narratology grounded in premises of zoological, rather than psychological realism and capitalizing on the disobedient possibilities of the animal

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1 Including productions by Opera Paris, Glyndebourne, and a BBC animation.
speech act. The fictional animal, like the individual faced with global environmental disaster, always dwells in someone else’s place.

Silvia Granata  
*University of Pavia*  
silvia.granata@gmail.com

"Above, below and beside us": Representations of Rats in the Victorian Era

The Victorian era is particularly interesting for the study of rat-human relations: on the one hand, rats were strongly connected with the idea of dirt and with the social and moral implications it entailed; on the other hand though, naturalists insisted on a more accurate representation, trying to eradicate the stigma usually associated with them; yet, even scientific accounts often incorporated popular beliefs, feeding the same ‘myths’ they set out to dispel. But rats were also increasingly represented (in novels, children’s literature, poetry and illustrations) as cute little animals, either helping man or closely mimicking his behaviour. Indeed, an impressive discrepancy characterises the way in which humans chose to depict them (both fictionally and pictorially), and the way in which they usually perceived rats in real life, a perception often characterised by fear and disgust, resulting in a multitude of methods for extermination (from the flourishing market for poisons and ferrets, to the infamous rat-pits so popular by mid-century).

My starting point will be Charlotte Tucker’s *The Rambles of a Rat*: this book for children, meant to dispel current prejudices by a more precise representation of rat biology and habits, draws heavily from scientific texts; yet, the author decides to omit some of the most ‘sensational’ passages of her declared source (an article on the *Quarterly Review*). I will discuss the reasons and outcomes of such a choice, in order to pinpoint the ways in which rats (noted for their capacity to trespass human-imposed boundaries) remain difficult to ‘enclose’, both from a material and a conceptual point of view. I will do this by highlighting the tension between Tucker’s intention to promote a more sympathetic attitude and the necessity to provide a ‘realistic’ representation of rat-human relationships, a tension that the author is not ultimately able to solve.

Justin Grize  
*University of Sussex*  
j.grize@sussex.ac.uk

"A Nest of Nightingales in her Belly": Avian Presences on the Opera Stage

At an 18th century performance by superstar diva and Handel protégée Francesca Cuzzoni, one astonished member of the audience cried out, "Damn the woman, she has a nest of nightingales in her belly!" Taking this impromptu accolade as its point of departure, this paper explores the avian presence in opera performance, theory and text. Drawing on notions of the uncanny voice proposed by Carolyn Abbate and expanding on the cultural and philosophical resonances of opera outlined by Gary Tomlinson and Mladen Dolar, it considers how the treatment of birds in opera highlights its engagement with debates over the animal-human divide.
Despite their centrality to opera’s founding myth, the beasts tamed by Orpheus are largely absent from the repertoire, their potentially disruptive presence barred from the opera stage by precarious notions of human exclusivity. Birds, on the other hand, are granted an “operatic personhood” which is still denied our nearest biological relatives. In opera, the bird seems to reify the human/ist struggle against and triumph over the body – unbound from earth, discorporeal, by nature pointed literally heavenward. Even more crucially, birds effortlessly excel at music and song, making the imitation of birdsong an irresistible challenge to human bodies in performance and human art in representation, as pointed out by Daniel Albright and Elizabeth Eva Leach.

Birds, then, are granted special access to what is otherwise the most human of stages. Not relegated to roles of spectacle to which other non-human animals are confined, birds take an active part in opera narratives. They have agency, they interact with humans, and most importantly, they are allowed a voice. Considering avian presences from *The Magic Flute* to *Siegfried* to early-modernist opera and beyond, this paper argues that the privilege of bird over beast on the opera stage confirms that opera’s humanist roots are more than merely historical – opera remains a central part of what Giorgio Agamben has termed “the anthropological machine”.

Tyler Groff

*Miami University*

grofftr@miamioh.edu

**Interspecies Geography: Hunting, Landscape, and Territoriality in William Somervile’s *The Chase***

Representations of eighteenth-century hunting practices offer much to our understanding of the time period. One work that warrants consideration in this conversation is William Somervile’s poem ‘The Chase’ (1735). Over its four books, ‘The Chase’ depicts a range of interspecies interactions, from the cooperative to the violent. Somervile alternately imagines hunting as an art, an index of national identity, and an avenue through which to funnel and sublimate violent drives in the human character that lead to war. The poem’s reflections on hunting produce worthwhile questions about the justifiability of imperial processes when faced with the reality of the animal, a reality that undermines hierarchical understandings of human exceptionality and the suppositions that uphold imagined communities.

My paper considers how ‘The Chase’ uses animals as a way to think about landscape, violent expansion, and national identity. Throughout the work, Somervile documents observable indicators of affective response and cognitive sophistication in the quarry he pursues. In recognizing the complex interior lives of animals, Somervile undermines a number of the poem’s epithetical descriptions of hunting, such as “guiltless war.” Through the cataloguing of animal behavior, ‘The Chase’ also attempts to locate a biological correlate for imperial expansion in behavioral territorialization and the ways in which animals interact with their habitats. Ultimately, however, the poem illustrates that the results of the secondary psychological imperatives underlying human land claims and imperial expansion are destructive rather than regulatory and cannot therefore be validated through comparisons to animal behavior. I argue that though Somervile is unable to reconcile the accumulating anxieties he finds surrounding war, landscape, and identity linked to place, his reflections on animal behavior lead him to a more complex understanding of belonging that transcends the imagined communities associated with empire.
At the 1889 annual general meeting of the anti-vivisection organization, the Victoria Street Society, founder Frances Power Cobbe urged fellow anti-vivisectionists to read in order to claim a voice in the political and public debate on the use of live animals in experiments. Marshalling reading material, from scientific reports on animal experimentation to stories of animal distress in anti-vivisectionist periodicals to reports of animal loyalty and courage in daily newspapers, Cobbe’s address offered guidance on how to argue with integrity, and insisted that it was careful, sustained reading that would grant anti-vivisection the right of reply.

As Carolyn Miller and James Mussell remind us “[g]enre makes things happen.” For Mussell, genre provides writers with “a set of productive constraints, a repertoire of forms inherited from the past and already known to readers; for readers, genre tempers the novelty of new texts and connects them to existing social formations.” This paper explores the vivisected animal in/as serial genre in the anti-vivisectionist press, in particular the use of genre to sustain the alarming “novelty” of the laboratory animal over decades of protest. The 19thC anti-vivisection campaign required a careful balancing of the evocation of the vivisected ‘laboratory animal’ in pain with the familiar, yet contestable, representation of the animal as companion and workmate. This paper explores serialized genre and social action by examining the ways in which two advocacy periodicals – the Home Chronicler and the Zoophilist – used serial genre to generate and sustain the vivisected animal as companion. Both periodicals display distinct approaches to the serial use of commonly available material and to the creation of serial systems for producing reading material (eg. Establishing branch associations; soliciting fictions for junior readers; use of textual “assemblages,” including testimony at Royal Commissions, stories of rescued dogs, reports of activities of groups, reprintings of experiments). What are the emerging genres of anti-vivisectionist periodicals? What work do such genres perform, and how do such genres generate an effect called ‘advocacy’?

Animals have always been a prominent motif in children’s and young adult literature, operating as helpers or even as main protagonists in innumerable stories. Since the 1970s a special kind of animal protagonist has seen a renaissance: the talking animal. The last four decades have produced a wealth of talking animal stories whose protagonists are chimeras of human, animal and symbolic features and which thus open up an intriguingly different perspective to reading animals.
This paper seeks to read the ways of culture transmission presented in such talking animal stories. Though the vast majority of animal cultures in talking animal stories are based on oral culture transmission, some stories present ingenious blends of written culture and animal features. In William Horwood’s Duncton Wood one finds moles creating historical records in a system closely resembling Braille; the bats in Kenneth Oppel’s Silverwing “write” by means of capturing echo in a cave purposefully constructed to fulfil this function, and in Terry Pratchett’s The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents the reader encounters the rat heroes in the middle of an ongoing process of inventing and abstracting an elaborate hieroglyphic system to make sense of their peculiar way of life caught between rat necessities and ‘human’ intelligence.

The approaches of the stories might be different, yet all three systems share one common denominator: they alienate and therefore draw to attention concepts so deeply embedded into our culture that they are often taken for granted, and, consequently, all too easily slip from awareness. The stories hold a mirror to our own practices of culture transmission, reflecting and reinventing it through animal eyes, and thus offer opportunities to question and discuss what defines concepts such as “reading” and “writing”, throwing up the question if it is really necessary to put the term “write” in inverted commas, when the writing takes place in sound only.

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**Kelly Hübben**  
*Stockholm University*  
kelly.hubben@littvet.su.se

**Animals eating animals Ethical and ideological implications of meat consumption in picture books for young children**

This paper discusses the ethical and ideological implications of anthropomorphic animals that (try to) eat other animals in a number of American Little Golden Books, a picture book series intended for a very young readership. In Western cultures, the connection between young children and animals often goes unquestioned. It finds e.g. expression in the fact that animals are omnipresent in children’s culture – not in the least in picture books. In a day and age where access to real animals is limited for many children, these fictional animals inform the ideas entertained by young readers about human-animal relationships. They can infer them from the images even before they can read the words, and in this way, picture book animals inform the child’s socialization process.

In picture books, meaning emerges from the interaction of text and images. I consider the animals in picture books as meeting places for ideas and assumptions about childhood, humanity and animality; the animal form lies at the intersection of conceptions about species, age and gender. This becomes all the more interesting when we look at how the two semiotic fields of text and image contribute to the reader’s interpretation of animals as a food source for other, anthropomorphized animals. In this case, the hybridity of the animal form causes conflicts of interest that are not always resolved.

I will discuss a variety of possible inter- and intra-species relationships that are mediated through acts of eating in picture books. I will analyze how these representations reveal the ideology behind them, and how they may influence the reader’s sense of ethics with respect to animals.
Jessica Ison
La Trobe University
jison@students.latrobe.edu.au

Queering speciesism: mourning as activism

Within dominant discourses the citizen is constructed as heterosexual, cisgendered, white and human. Those who do not fit this construct often exist outside, below, on the margins and beyond. How can we locate a queer anti-speciesist analysis of those deemed not worthy of life? More specifically, in this paper, we will look at how the queer and the animal have been constructed to produce the abject, the outside, the not me. In turn, queer activists and activists for nonhuman animals have often used mourning; the political act of mourning, to try to create a position within the discourse of the citizen in order to shape political and social change. How is mourning a political tool and how has it been used to reconstruct the worthy citizen? To answer this I will parallel queer and animal activism that uses mourning through two specific groups: Queers Bash Back and Animal Liberation Victoria.

This paper will go beyond Judith Butler's theorization of those who are worthy of being mourned, by extending this to nonhuman animals. This will lead to a queering of speciesism that seeks to redefine the worthy citizen.

Jessica Ison is a PhD candidate at La Trobe University in Melbourne Australia. She is writing on the intersection between queer theory and speciesism. She is the Representative for the Institute for Critical Animal Studies, Oceania and the editor of To The Exclusion of All Others: Queer Critiques of Gay Marriage. She is a presenter on the 3CR community radio program Freedom of Species and recently joined the Students for Critical Animal Studies collective.

Paul Jenner
Loughborough University
P.A.Jenner@lboro.ac.uk

'Thus inevitably does the universe wear our colour': Upstream Color, transcendentalism, and the question of the animal

Contributing to the conference’s film and philosophy strands, my paper foregrounds the reading of the human-animal relation underway in Shane Carruth’s self-described ‘worm-pig-orchid cycle’, Upstream Color (2013), focusing in particular on cinematic and philosophical conceptions of subjectivity. This foregrounding will involve thinking through the nature and significance of the film’s engagement with Henry David Thoreau's Walden. Some online commentators warn that Upstream Color’s references to Walden are less porcine than fishy – red herrings that ought not to be seen as offering up the film’s hidden code. It would be more accurate to say that that Walden is deployed – alongside viral programming and parasitism – as one of the film’s several means of broaching the question or sense of hidden codes or determinants. Paying close attention to the film’s worms, humans, and pigs, my paper will
situate *Upstream Color* in relation to transcendentalist accounts of intimate subjectivity found in writings by Thoreau, Emerson and, latterly, Stanley Cavell. I will suggest that whilst Carruth’s film evokes Emerson’s telegraphic synthesis of Kant’s critical philosophy (‘Thus inevitably does the universe wear our color’), this evocation, in one of the film’s strands, is developed in a post-human and post-Kantian direction. The film’s juxtaposition of animals and humans stages post-humanist insights but also works in some ways to retrieve and recuperate these insights in epiphanic and anthropocentric terms. Drawing on connections traced by Stanley Cavell between Emersonian and Thoreauvian transcendentalism and Heideggerian philosophy, my paper will suggest that human-animal relations in *Upstream Color* suggest a Heideggerian but non-speciesist account of subjectivity.

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**Yvonne Kaisinger**  
*University of Salzburg, Austria*  
yvonne.kaisinger@sbg.ac.at

**Reading Animals in Contemporary Postcolonial Texts**

In the age of climate change, we are often bombarded with images that aim at raising awareness for this environmental issue and the poster child for climate change is undoubtedly the polar bear. However, it is often neglected in the public debate that the extinction of other species would have even more serious and severe consequences for ecosystems, for instance the extinction of amphibians. Scientists have observed an alarming decline of up to 50% in amphibian populations worldwide over the last 25 years.

The elusive and threatened grenouille du sang, or blood frog, is at the center of Mayra Montero’s novel *In the Palm of Darkness* (original title: *Tú, la oscuridad*). This novel, set in Haiti, has been called the first environmentalist novel of the region. Even though an important part of the novel deals with the political and social situation of Haiti in 1992/93, the search for the blood frog stands out as a leitmotif. The frog does not have a (dominant) voice in the novel and is only looked for out of scientific curiosity and pride. Nevertheless, the novel’s treatment of the disappearance of this frog and the interwoven passages about global amphibian extinctions offer a valuable contribution to giving amphibians a voice in literature.

The aim of this paper, which is part of a larger dissertation project about contemporary Caribbean and Pacific environmental literature, is to highlight how animals are given a voice in texts while they are at the same time still marginalized. For this purpose, I will closely analyze Montero’s novel as well as additional selected texts from Caribbean and/or Pacific islands. The analysis will show a connection between colonial practices, globalization, and species extinction and thus contribute to ongoing debates about portrayals of the nonhuman in literature.

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**Dominic O'Key**  
*University of Leeds*  
dominicokey@live.co.uk

**The Zoo in Crisis**
Zoos are problematic places at the best of times. What happens, then, at the worst of times? The zoo animal has often been figured as a marvelous possession, well-fed and protected in its cage. During the historical upheavals of the twentieth century, though, this facade is well and truly broken: crises bring out the violence inherent in taking species captive, and in turn the zoo animal is seen as nothing more than a disposable body. In fiction as in life, the violence enacted against animals has theoretical as well as corporeal significance; my study will compare parallel scenes of violence, using the confines of the zoo as a framework. My research hopes to continue the intersection between animal studies and biopolitics as well seeking to extend the debates presented in Randy Malamud’s Reading Zoos. Malamud’s work catalogues what he calls “zoo stories”, a catch-all reference to a diverse range of literary and popular cultural artifacts that ‘generate complexities, nuances, implications and contradictions’. Focusing on two such zoo stories that deal specifically with human violence against animals, J. M. Ledgard’s Giraffe (2007) and Haruki Murakami’s The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle (1999), I will conduct a comparative study of how these texts represent the zoo as its ugly reality comes to the fore.

I begin my essay with how the modern zoo’s success as a public space rests on its claim to be normal and unproblematic. Consequently, many “zoo stories” picture the animals in a state of boredom, consumed by the zoo’s facade. My study moves towards and focus on stories that deal with the zoo in disarray, where its ordinariness is threatened. I am particularly interested in whether the form and structure of novels are interrupted by the death of animals, and how their principal characters come to terms with this violence.

Belinda Kleinhans
University of Manitoba
Belinda.Kleinhans@umanitoba.ca

Polite to animals? Canadian contemporary animal poetry as a modern bestiary of human-animal relationships

The ancient tradition of creating bestiaries not only offered the natural history, visual characteristics of, as well as a moral associated with specific animals, but also documented and reinforced the symbolic meaning of each animal. This tradition shifted the perception of real animals into the semiotic sphere in which they are mostly “imagined beings”, subjected to humans and their language.

The bestiary as a genre has become less common and seems to have shifted in our contemporary literature to the field of poetry. While the form has shifted, so have the animals represented in it: out of the tradition of natural history and symbolic meanings, the animals in contemporary Canadian poetry have regained part of their diegetic existence. Rather than
being subjected to the human imagination, these animals determine language associations, language games specific to and dependent on the animal, and demonstrate the deep connection between human practices, language, and animal beings, as Hartog demonstrates in Polite to Bees. Thus, reading this poetry enforces a reading which is “polite to animals”, taking them as language agents rather than objects.

These poetic bestiaries demonstrate the interconnectedness of human and animal life while offering resistance to purely symbolic readings. The result is a deeply ecocritical and aware bestiary which explores contemporary life through the connection points of human life and animal life. Providing a close reading of poems by contemporary Canadian authors such as Russell Thornton, Don Domanski, Diana Hartog and Sandra Kasturi, I offer a conceptualization of this kind of poetry as a bestiary that demonstrates that animals are not only “good to think” (Levi-Strauss), but offers access points to understanding the danger of our victimization and isolation to which the animal as a subject to “think with” offers the only resort.

Shannon Lambert
University of Adelaide
shannon.lambert@adelaide.edu.au

An Unbearable Sight": Early Modern Bear-Baiting and Becoming-Animal

This paper seeks to explore the role of “gaze,” “affect” and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s concept of “becoming-animal” in early modern bear-baiting. I propose that poststructuralist interpretations of affect as a pre-personal, and mobile intensity are comparable to pre-modern materialist understandings of vision, in which the eyes—of both humans and animals—were thought to be physically powerful. Affects emitted from the animal gaze encourage “becomings-animal.” I explore the potential of this experience to destabilise human/animal boundaries in the bear-baitings of Thomas Nashe's Unfortunate Traveller (1594), Robert Laneham’s letter (1575) and Shakespeare’s Macbeth (1606). I compare Nashe’s piece, in which we find an example of a cross-current of feeling to the involuntary and affective alignment between members of the crowd and the pack of dogs in Laneham’s letter. Like Laneham’s piece, the final scene of Shakespeare’s Macbeth encourages a human+canine alliance. Macbeth’s references to the theatre—especially his opening lament, “They have tied me to a stake: I cannot fly, / But bear-like I must fight the course”—dissolve textual boundaries and spectators find themselves within the play; audience members at a bear-baiting (5.7.1-2). The desire to see Macbeth “cancel[led]” and “[torn] to pieces” suggests an alignment between the dogs and members of the audience who take on, and emit, the relations of motion and rest, and speeds and slowness of Deleuzian barking “molecular” dogs (3.2.54, Deleuze and Guattari 320).

Wen-lin Lan
National Chengchi University, Taiwan
dder_lan@yahoo.com.tw

Physical and Linguistic Violence in The Dogs of Babel

In Carolyn Parkhurst’s novel The Dogs of Babel (2003), the narrator Paul endeavors to find out the truth of his wife Lexy’s death, and he believes that their dog Lorelei is the holder of
“knowledge,” who witnesses not only Lexy’s last moment but also their family life in the years. It is the supposed position of a knowledge holder that intensifies the relationship between humans and animals. Throughout the novel, Paul intends to teach Lorelei to use human language to express. This intention is ostensibly the striving for communication under a presumption that human language is the sole, or at least most precise, instrument for intersubjective understanding. Remarkably, this presumption denotes a linguistic violence that neglects the canine type of expressions, which indeed achieves communication to some degree. The linguistic violence is juxtaposed with the physical violence done by Cerberus, the underground group that reconstructs dogs’ snout through surgery to make their pronunciation system suitable for human language. This paper aims to investigate the two kinds of violence that intend to enable dogs to speak human language, namely, to break animals’ cognitive limit of immediacy which is taken as upmost feature in animal communication through certain linguistic and philosophical approaches. However, this intention leads to the ultimate failure to communicate with animals. The failure, in short, results from human ignorance of the fundamental divergence between the human and animal ways of expressing, and therefore exposes the violent essence within human language.

Fiona Law
The University of Hong Kong
lawfiona@hku.hk; l.fiona@gmail.com

Vulnerability in the City: Reading Healing Narratives in Asian Animal Films

Narratives of mourning and healing have become a popular discourse in films about animal-human relationship set in the contemporary Asian urban milieu. From the mainstream to the art-house, from micro films to personal documentaries, images of the dying pet have triggered poignant revelations about human existence. While most of these films focus on the process of how the human protagonists come to the enlightening moment of self-understanding through the grieving experience, the deaths of their animal companions are often the imperative origins of such self-making. Interestingly, the cause of these animals’ loss is either evaded by or mirrored through human illness in these cinematic bildungsromans. Given such a lacuna in the interpretive context, how do we read these textual animals who are dying in the arms of their fragile human companions? How do the interspecies life-and-death stories illuminate the dialectics of alienation and intimacy of the city dwellers? How does the claustrophilic time-space of the cinematic medium articulate and habituate these affective stories of failures and recovery? How do we produce a critical reflection on the imaginary of vulnerability, the ethics of care, and fabulations of inadequacy and sentimentality in the cosmopolitan Asian cities where pet-keeping is becoming a vogue and a sign of economic prosperity?
Through a comparative study of Quill (dir. Angie Chen, Hong Kong, 2008), Gu Gu The Cat (dir. Isshin Iudo, Japan, 2008), This Darling Life (dir. Angie Chen, Hong Kong, 2008), and selected micro films produced in China recently, this paper attempts to examine the urban phenomenon that while the animal has emerged from the disappeared to the epitomized in everyday life, human beings are facing a (de)pressing need to rethink their affective network with these nonhuman urban residents. These studies of failures—the failure of language in articulating the loss of the animal-other in the human milieu as well as the failure of knowing oneself until the inconceivable moment of loss and death—signify the therapeutic journey in which the seeking of interpretation beyond language becomes an essential process toward a more limpid subjectivity both within and outside the narrative chronotope. By studying the representation of selected “cute” animal images and their tragic deaths on Asian screens, this paper aims at exploring the transference of vulnerability and power between the animal beings and their human counterparts.

Michael Lawrence
University of Sussex
Michael.Lawrence@sussex.ac.uk

Muybridgean Motion/Materialist Film: Malcolm Le Grice’s Berlin Horse (1970)

This paper will examine an early “materialist” work by the British experimental film-maker Malcolm Le Grice—Berlin Horse (1970)—which displays but also diverges from a “Muybridgean” fascination with capturing the motion of the non-human animal. Berlin Horse, produced using resources at the London Film-Makers’ Co-operative (established 1966), exemplifies Le Grice’s ideological and artistic opposition to capitalist film culture (specifically, the industrial production of realist narrative cinema, and the division of labour perfected to mass produce entertainment); the film, moreover, evokes a history (of both the technological and the industrial development of cinema) in which real horses were utilised for the purposes of producing images. I will here address the relationship between the film’s opposition to mainstream cinema and its evocation of historical horses, and consider the relationship between a materialist film practice (which would resist that disavowal of film’s material base common to commercial cinema) and an attentiveness to animal life (which would resist that disavowal of the animal’s material being common to anthropocentric history). If Berlin Horse is explicitly intended to demonstrate an alternative to the capitalist production of film (and the film industry’s organisation of labour), then it also (whatever Le Grice’s intentions) offers a similarly radical document of living animal being (both human and non-human), exposing and interrupting the history of their alienation and their exploitation.

Thomas J. Lynn
Penn State Berks
TJL7@PSU.EDU

Rogue, Politician, Hero: Tortoise and Trickster in Achebe’s Fiction

Ever the opportunist, the trickster figure of West African oral tradition has been repeatedly adapted by modern authors whose communities and themes have confronted the colonial past and the inequities of the present. Modern tricksters, including ones depicted by the late Nigerian author Chinua Achebe, play a role in recovering dimensions of a given culture that
were nearly extinguished by colonization or reshaped by colonial narratives of history. They demonstrate the continuing relevance of traditional narrative for addressing the dilemmas posed by modern society and literature. The significant place of trickster storytelling in the societies that Achebe evokes is suggested by the author’s recurring references to a trickster tortoise and, not least, by the author’s integrating into his first and most widely-read book, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), an extended Tortoise folktale. This story, which depicts Tortoise's encounter with the birds during a famine, is the most extensive invocation of Igbo oral tradition in his novels.

More broadly the major trickster element in three Achebe novels corresponds to three interrelated African political challenges: the Tortoise and birds folktale in *Things Fall Apart* views colonialism in Africa from an African perspective; the career of Chief Nanga in Achebe’s fourth novel, *A Man of the People* (1966), appears as a realistic reimagining of Tortoise's encounter with the birds and delineates the sources of African post-independence disillusionment; and a contrasting tale of the tortoise as culture hero in Achebe’s fifth and final novel, *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), expresses the crisis and confrontation of African authoritarian rule. The trickster's play in these works also helps dramatize Achebe’s longstanding belief that a major obstacle to true African independence is official corruption and societal toleration of it. Trickster maneuvers in these novels offer hope, moreover, that meaningful and potent opposition to such corruption can be mounted.

**Roberto Marchesini**

*Bologna, Italy*

[estero@siua.it](mailto:estero@siua.it)

**Subjectivity and Animal Learning**

The cognitive approach considers the animal the protagonist of the learning process, meant as an attempt to solve a failure. In order to learn, it is necessary that the subject: 1) defines specific goals, 2) understands the problem requirements, 3) finds the appropriate solution. This paper aims to illustrate the cognitive model of the learning process, based on subjectivity as first agent and the construction of knowledge as a result of learning. I will outline: a) the role of specie-specific and individual motivations in setting goals and the perception of the problem, b) the importance of the emotional interpretation in the immersion in the problem and in the pro-active start up for understanding, c) the role of previous knowledge in the development of heuristics useful for attempts of solutions. To learn, the subject needs to find a coherence between his/her motivational features and what the environment offers: each species needs a specific teaching and learning is based on a motivational engagement. Too often the animal does not learn not because of a lack of cognitive ability but because he/she does not find a motivational coherence: this paper depicts the difference of motivational engagement – as to promote “interest in learning” – in dogs, cats and human beings. Moreover, to understand the problem it is necessary a positive emotional state, which is open to the risk of failure: this paper analyzes the influence of contextual and relational characteristics on the motivational aspect and the relations between this and the learning process. Finally, the solution by trials and errors is not based on casual attempts but on
heuristics which involve a process of choice between solutions potentially adequate to the problem. To understand the concept of heuristic it is necessary to realize what it means to talk about knowledge and not conditioning as an outcome of learning.

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**Hadas Marcus**  
*Tel Aviv University*  
h.marcus@netvision.net.il

**Protesting Vivisection: Twain’s A Dog’s Tale and Rosen’s film adaptation of Adams’s The Plague Dogs**

In *Narrative Discourse*, Gerard Genette (1980) states that the term “personages” is used “for lack of a more neutral or more extensive term which would not unduly connote, as this one does, the ‘humanness’ of the narrative agent, even though in fiction nothing prevents us from entrusting that role to an animal” (p. 244). An ecocritical approach to the role of nonhuman animals in literature offers a proliferation of contemporary examples of Genette’s observation. From the microcosmic world of E.O. Wilson’s sociobiological novel *Anthill* to Barbara Gowdy’s matrilineal herd of African elephants in *The White Bone*, creative endeavors abound which are ostensibly conveyed from the idiosyncratic perspective of nonhuman species. Due to their close association with us, canine protagonists are the most common, as evidenced by the increasing popularity of fiction about dogs.

Nonhuman animal focalizers can be exigent to decipher and are routinely categorized as allegorical of the human condition—especially regarding marginalization, suffering, injustice and abuse—an interpretation challenged by Erica Fudge in her analysis of Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Heart of a Dog*. The emergence of posthumanism emphasizing the Derridean “question of the animal” (Wolfe) has elevated nonhuman animals in contemporary fiction, including transmedial cultural products such as film. Drawing from theoretical frameworks of narrative structure and critical animal studies, this paper will examine two largely ignored works about victimized dogs, told from their own point-of-view, which condemn vivisection and needless cruelty. Thus, Mark Twain’s overtly anthropomorphized, mawkish story, *A Dog’s Tale* (1904), and the gruesome cinematic adaptation of Richard Adams’s *The Plague Dogs* (Adams, 1977; animated film by Rosen, 1982) will be considered. These heart-wrenching works reflect the tragic plight of laboratory dogs, as reflected in the uniquely canine sensorimotor experience or Umwelt (Uexküll), while addressing thorny ethical questions in regards to brutal experimentation on blameless creatures.

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**Matthew Margini**  
*Columbia University*  
matt.margini@gmail.com

**Prometheus Unleashed: Problems of Representation in Victorian Dog Poetry**

"You see this dog," writes Elizabeth Barrett Browning in the opening line of her sonnet "Flush or Faunus," a vivid representation of literary history’s most famous cocker spaniel. Do we really see him? Can poetry ever succeed at recreating the embodied texture of a human-canine bond? Or does cross-species “significant otherness” (to use Donna Haraway’s term) necessarily confound poetic representation?
Self-conscious ‘dog-lit’ classics like J. R. Ackerley's My Dog Tulip and Virginia Woolf's Flush: A Biography suggest that narrative itself is a necessary component to any mutually enriching human-pet relationship. Bearing the full responsibility for a dog's life requires that one be able to imagine it in terms of plot, chapters, teleology—in terms of desires that grow over time, rather than the cyclical needs of the everyday. In her Flush poems, Barrett Browning suggests that the synchronic medium of lyric poetry, by contrast, only ever does a disservice to the dog it purports to preserve: it artificially freeze-frames a presence defined by embodied liveliness, in a process that amounts to poetic taxidermy; at the same time, it threatens to transform the dog into a symbol, a metonymy, a culturally- and linguistically-remediated abstraction. By reading Barrett Browning's poems alongside Michael Field's Whym-Chow, Flame of Love (a prayerful, mythic treatment of the poetic duo's late Chow-Chow), I hope to reveal how both authors interrogate—and also, perhaps, suggest a new conception of—the value of poetry as a form of ‘petkeeping.’

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Garry Marvin  
*University of Roehampton*  
*G.Marvin@roehampton.ac.uk*

**Creating Form and Emotion: The Ideals of Harmony in the Spanish Bullfight**

At the heart of the bullfight is a mutual forming and fusing. A forming of the bull by the matador and a forming of the matador by the bull. If successful, this results in *compenetraciación*, being at one with each other, a fusion enacted through a particular cultural aesthetic. In this presentation, through a close ethnographic reading of the event, I will explore how matador and bull respond to each other and how, through a developing rapport, they generate an affective engagement. This affective engagement is one of human and bull bodies sculpted into harmony through the medium of the cape. Although an intensely personal engagement between the two, this emotion is not private and does not remain with them. It must be transmitted to members of an audience who each seek their own affective engagement with what is performed.

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Monica Mattfeld  
*University of Kent*  
*M.Mattfeld@kent.ac.uk*

**The Spanish Horse: Text, Matter and Memorialization in Astley's Amphitheatre.**

In 1824 the comedian, Jacob Decastro, recorded in his Memoirs that the ‘Spanish Horse’, famous at Astley’s Amphitheatre for his pantomime performances, had died. According to Decastro, ‘Mr. Davis’, the then proprietor of the Amphitheatre, ‘with an idea to perpetuate the animal’s memory, caused the hide to be tanned and made into a thunder-drum, which now stands on the prompt side of the theatre, and when its rumbling sounds die on the ear of those who know the circumstance, it serves to their recollection as his “parting knell.”’ This was not the usual method of either preserving or memorializing the body of a celebrity animal. The Spanish Horse was not stuffed and placed in a museum, as was the case with Alfred the Gorilla, he was not the subject of satirical memorialization in newspapers, as was the Learned Pig, nor was he buried with an extensive elegiac inscription, as was King Nobby.
Seemingly an act of loving remembrance, the very strangeness of this memorial, the representation of the continued objectification and use of the Spanish Horse’s fragmented body, his ‘parting knell’ and the mixed private and public nature of his memorial invite another interpretation. In this paper I examine the representation and memorialization of the Spanish Horse, and question what this mixed textual and material afterlife of an animal can tell us about the relationships between human and nonhuman animals in the Amphitheatre at the end of the long eighteenth century. At a time of the emerging animal rights movement, and increasing public pressure on the Amphitheatre (an early circus) for its apparent mistreatment of animals, my examination of this memorial recollection, alongside representations of other famous Amphitheatre horses, will provide new understandings of animal labour, performance and personhood on and off the English stage.


Jennifer McDonell
University of New England (Australia)
jmcdonel@une.edu.au

Dangerous Dogs and the New Poor Law: Reading Dickens’s Bull’s Eye

Existing critical commentary on Oliver Twist (1836-7) tends to read Bill Sike’s dog, Bull’s eye as an extension of his irredeemably vicious master. An animal centred reading of the text reveals, however, that while animals fare used to metaphorise human traits and actions, there is a pervasive ambiguity in Dickens’s representation of Bull’s eye, a certain animal recalcitrance that survives analogy. Crucially, Bull’s eye’s behaviour is more explicable than that of such major protagonists in the novel as the very good as Oliver and the ‘naturally vicious’ Sikes. This paper contends that by transferring comparisons between humans and non human animals into an agenda for social reform—specifically in his indictment of the workhouse system in the wake of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act – Dickens was exploring the effect of environment on animals. Two arguments are mobilised: that Dickens’s representation of Bull’s eye, by far the most complex animal character in his oeuvre, is a site for the displacement of an unresolved anxiety that was at the heart of debates over the so called New Poor Law: whether human destiny was shaped by environment or hereditary factors. Second, the paper proposes that Bull’s eye is invested with what animal studies scholars have referred to as feral agency, the fleeting potential of animals caught deep within scenes of exploitation to act, even if that means they become agents in their own destruction. That is, Bull’s eye has an agentive function in the diegesis of the novel that cannot be fully contained by metaphor and metonymy. Central to this investigation will be a consideration of
prevailing social discourses of owner/dog relationships of the period that circularly connect the deviance of one to the other to produce a ‘criminology’ of the dangerous dog.

Susan McHugh
University of New England
smchugh@une.edu

Sacrificing Sacrifice, or How Stories of Mass Killings Take New Forms for Animal Studies

The language of sacrifice/ exploitation has become so conventional to reading animals – running the gamut from the abstractions of Derridean-deconstructive critique through more strident academic-activist calls to reject all forms of animal representation – that stories of mass killings would seem an extremely unlikely starting point for contemplating alternatives. Yet, with surprising consistency, contemporary narratives defy that logic of sacrifice through eyewitness accounts of the decimations of species – especially cross-species – populations, prompting the question: what if representations of human-animal relations are not only ever just entombments/ memorials/ relics, but also catalysts/ activators/ transformers, as much for artistic as for social action? This paper identifies some patterns of formal innovation across otherwise quite disparate examples – including novels, films, and community activist projects – that enable transmissions of live/ productive/ beneficial experiences of cross-species engagements on the brink of destruction. What is at stake in these stories are not only representations of relations of immanence – the ongoing, physical relations of animals and humans in and around story forms – but also the possibility that animal studies itself operates as an aesthetic project, and one that requires a deeply interdisciplinary approach to formalist theory of art as a thing that deliberately frustrates the desire to erase animals, to obliterate the very human-animal relations that confound the structures of hierarchical dualism.

Laura McMahon
Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge
lcm31@cam.ac.uk

Beyond an ontology of film/the animal: Denis Côté’s Bestiaire (2012)

Theoretical reflections on animals in film often invest in an ontological association between cinema and the animal: film reveals something essential about the animal; the animal, in turn, reveals something essential about film. In this paper, I trace this ontological association (in the work of André Bazin and Akira Mizuta Lippit in particular) yet I also seek to ask how reflections on screen animals might move beyond this theoretical trope. I turn to Denis Côté’s Bestiaire (2012), an experimental documentary about a zoo that seems in thrall to the idea that the onscreen animal reveals cinematic specificity. Including a sequence at a taxidermist, Bestiaire reflects on the display of animals both living and dead, still and moving, and in so doing mobilises two key metaphors – cinema as zoo, and cinema as taxidermy – in order to interrogate the ontology of film. Yet folded into this set of ontological reflections is an implicit questioning of the politics of the zoo, which manifests itself in Bestiaire through various strategies of framing and durational witnessing. These strategies constitute the political impetus of the film as it poses questions about zoo biopower and neocolonialism, captivity and suffering. Bestiaire pulls awkwardly in these different directions, reflecting on
the zoo both as a set of material conditions in which these animals live and as a metaphor for cinematic animality qua cinematic specificity.

Yet Bestiaire also invites spectatorial attunement to nonhuman perceptual worlds in ways that cannot be reduced to a transferential expression of film’s essence. Drawing on Jakob von Uexküll’s concept of the Umwelt, and recent work by Anat Pick developing this concept in relation to film, I argue that Bestiaire asks us to think beyond an ontological convergence of cinema and the animal in order to consider cinema’s capacity to attend to nonhuman modes of world-forming replete with sentience and thought. In so doing, Bestiaire shifts away from its own morbid, fascinatory positioning of the animal in relation to taxidermy and the zoo, reaffirming the broader political critique that underpins the film.

Sean Meighoo
Emory University
sean.meighoo@emory.edu

Reading HumAnimAllegories

The neologism “animallegory” first appeared in print in the January 17, 1955 edition of Time Magazine in a review of Halas and Batchelor’s recently released animated film, Animal Farm. Based on George Orwell’s novel of the same name, Animal Farm provides an allegorical representation of the Bolshevik Revolution and the rise of Stalinism in the Soviet Union by relaying Orwell’s story of a revolution led by a group of farm animals and its aftermath. Besides offering a convenient piece of political propaganda for the capitalist Western Bloc, Animal Farm ultimately reduces its fictional animal characters to mere metaphors for real human subjects, serving the most common function of the human-animal allegory in film and literature – or what I am calling the function of the “humanimallegory.” Almost fifty years later, Aardman’s stop-motion animated film Chicken Run was released, marking yet another appearance of the humanimallegory. Improvising on the numerous prisoner-of-war films that were produced during the decades following World War II, Chicken Run tells the story of a group of chickens who attempt to escape from a chicken farm. I would suggest, however, that Chicken Run complicates the function of the humanimallegory by resisting the general tendency in film and literature to reduce all fictional animal characters to simple metaphors for real human subjects. Although Chicken Run certainly does play on many anthropomorphic representations of nonhuman animals, the film nonetheless also calls attention to the irreducible heterogeneity among its various animal characters – chickens, roosters, rats, and dogs, not to mention human husband and wife – in some significant ways that Animal Farm does not. Reading these different humanimallegories in my paper, then, I want to propose that the theoretical concept of allegory itself remains circumscribed within the philosophical tradition of humanism.

Anne Milne
University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)
anne.milne@utoronto.ca

Portrait, Landscape, Portrait: Seeing the Animal and the Animal Artist in Eighteenth-Century Animal Portraits
In this paper, I look at the some of the complex relations between artist and animal in a selection of eighteenth-century animal portraits and I explore the possibility that the eighteenth-century British animal portrait artist is co-constituted with or even coevolves with his animal subject. As part of this investigation, I consider at what levels and how much the animal portraitist performs a kind of agricultural labour at the service of an ever-enterprising gentleman farmer and breeder cohort as these artists implicitly explore and enact the tension between self-consciously rendered animal individuality and the imposition of breed standards and uniformity.

I briefly look at examples from three artists working in different ways in different media: the painter, John Boultbee (1753-1812), the sculptor, George Gerrard (1760-1826) and the wood engraver, Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) with particular attention to the ways in which these artists actually interacted with animals to produce their work. If the task of any portraitist according to eighteenth-century painting manuals, is to inhabit the representation with the spirit of the sitter, then animal portraits perhaps offer more than just “symbolically enhanc[ing] the stature of the animal's owner” (Ritvo). Additionally, I suggest that much of the discussion of farm animal portraits has internalized animals as part of a discourse and aesthetic of landscape and not as part of a discourse of portraiture. Read as landscapes, these animal portraits adhere to Raymond Williams’ important observation that “landscapes impl[y] separation and observation”. To truly read these works as portraits generates an alternative view that potentially challenges the aesthetic of the horizontal orientation and its implicit social order that Williams reads as inherent, even projected during its composition. Despite the prominent horizontal orientation of many of these portraits, I would like to use this paper to think about how these works can be seen as ‘self-conscious observations’.

Dan Misheiker
Tel-Aviv University
danmisheiker@post.tau.ac.il

Humane and Non-Humane Animals in the Writings of Isaac Bashevis Singer for Adults and for Children

In his works for adults, the author, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Nobel Literature Prize Winner for 1978, constantly mentions the connection he saw between the Holocaust of the Jews and that of non-human animals; yet, in his works for children, Singer stresses the utopian unseverable connection between humans (especially children) and non-human animals.

In his writings for adults, Singer expresses withering criticism of the attitude of his human characters towards non-human animals and greater respect is shown for the dignity of the non-human animals. Generally, these non-humans are not active characters, nor are they represented as being more than simply animals. However, in Singer's works for children, fully-fledged characterizations of non-human animals appear. These works display a gentler attitude towards non-human animals, and also milder criticism of humans. While Singer's depiction of non-human animals in his writings for children is more complex, nevertheless they are most often devoid of personification and anthropomorphism. Simultaneously, he depicts a close connection between non-human animals and the young heroes of these stories, who are not yet affected by human evil or by the dictates of society, and who are described as being in close connection with nature and creation.
In my paper I intend to demonstrate Singer’s aforesaid dual approach by presenting examples from his works for adults and children.

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**Brett Mizelle**  
*California State University Long Beach*  
[Brett.Mizelle@csulb.edu](mailto:Brett.Mizelle@csulb.edu)

**Jeannette Vaught**  
*University of Texas at Austin*  
[jvaught@utexas.edu](mailto:jvaught@utexas.edu)

"Our Strongest Trait is Your Success": Reading Genetic Narratives of Pigs and Horses

In North America, a large percentage of horses that end up at slaughterhouses come from racetracks. These athletes represent centuries of purposefully crafted and meticulously tracked bloodlines which favor selective genomic diversity. Individual horses come with an identifying tattoo and a set of papers outlining several generations of its history. The papers and the flesh together give the horse a narrative of purpose, a reason for being, a history, a future, and a self. Yet the fact that these horses wind up at slaughterhouses more than others belies that story as a fantasy.

Most pigs, on the other hand, are bred specifically for slaughter. Their genetic makeup is increasingly as carefully constructed and guarded as racehorses, but instead of favoring diversity, hog genomes and breeding practices have been consolidated for hyper-efficiency and homogenized production. Global corporate semen banks market genetic profiles to producers who have to meet local conditions and specific pork retail requirements, creating historic and scientific stories about genetic value to promote the further intensification of animal agriculture.

Contrasting the narratives surrounding these two species, we consider genomes, genealogies, and registration records as texts accompanying the flesh of the animal that naturalize exploitation of animals in life and in death. Despite the different paths these animals take to slaughter, their genomic narratives support pernicious arguments of appropriate use. Frequent invocations of “this horse was born to run,” or “this sow was designed to farrow fifteen piglets,” encode a distorted version of welfare into genetic narratives: this is what this animal is “supposed” to do, and interpreting this “natural” mandate differently is against the animal’s nature. Scientific narratives of pedigree, in claiming a genealogical history, hide techno-scientific human interventions and embed misuse into the flesh.

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**Laurie Murphy**  
*New York University*  
[laurie.murphy@nyu.edu](mailto:laurie.murphy@nyu.edu)

**DomestiKateing the Shrew: Discipline and Submission in Shakespeare’s**  
*The Taming of the Shrew*

Throughout his plays, Shakespeare uses the powerful images of horses and horsemanship to reflect some of the many issues that were being debated during the early modern period. Even
though horses are domesticated animals and have been tamed by humans, they still remain strongly connected to their wild nature. In this paper, I examine Shakespeare’s comedy, The Taming of the Shrew, through the lens of the domestication of horses, showing how Shakespeare relates contemporary treatises on the methodology employed in the purchasing and training of horses to his depiction of the “taming” of Kate.

The theme of the play, the taming of an unruly or shrewish woman by her husband, proved very popular during the early modern period. The image of a submissive and obedient wife could therefore be compared with that of a well-trained and submissive mount. Shrewish women and unruly horses were often subjected to physical cruelty, including the use (and abuse) of harsh equipment for the purpose of “taming” or training. Contemporary treatises on horsemanship during Shakespeare’s period began to question the application of these cruel training methods and I argue that these treatises influenced Shakespeare’s construction of the “taming” process in The Taming of the Shrew. I examine how Shakespeare further extends the horse imagery in the play by likening the acquisition and “domestication” of Kate to the purchase, training, and obedient performance expected of a horse. By using equine imagery throughout his play, Shakespeare incorporated contemporary issues concerning the control, discipline, and subjugation of both horses and women into his comedy.

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Kaori Nagai  
*University of Kent*  
*K.Nagai@kent.ac.uk*

**Kangaroo Notebook: Huxley's Eutherian journey**

I derive my framework for this paper (which is part of a wider project on the beast-fable) from Kobo Abe’s *Kangaroo Notebook* (1991). Abe is often described as a Japanese Kafka, famous for his bizarre stories of the metamorphosis of humans into non-humans, such as a wall, a stick, and a cocoon. *Kangaroo Notebook* traces the narrator’s surreal journey to Hell, transported on his hospital bed which keeps moving forward on its own volition. He is suffering from the condition of having radish sprouts growing on his knees, and he eats these to survive. From this novel, which is usually read as the representation of a near-death experience, the ‘kangaroo’ itself is absent, though the novel keeps returning to the elusive idea of a ‘kangaroo notebook’, supposedly a metaphor of reading, writing, and life as a journey.

Abe’s representation of the ‘kangaroo notebook’ crucially hinges upon the taxonomic distinction between ‘Eutherians’ (placental mammals) and ‘Metatherians’ (marsupials), which was introduced by Thomas H. Huxley in the 1880s. The novel sheds interesting light on the nineteenth-century scientific discourses, which eagerly traced the evolutionary journey from ape to human. By reading the novel side by side with various narratives surrounding the discovery of Australia and its animals (as well as ‘aborigines’) and the various efforts of Europeans to integrate them into their taxonomic systems and the evolutionary ladder, the
paper offers a critique of the anthropocentrism inherent in Victorian evolutionary narratives. It also explores the possibility of a ‘Kangaroo Notebook’ as an alternative way of reading, and engaging with, animals, and thereby challenging the traditional trope of the ‘Book of Nature’.

Richie Nimmo
University of Manchester
Richie.Nimmo@Manchester.ac.uk


Honeybees pollinate around a third of the food consumed globally by human beings, but all over the world they are in rapid and accelerating decline. Recent years have seen dramatic, large scale and hitherto unexplained losses of honeybee colonies across much of the world, a phenomenon that has come to be known as Colony Collapse Disorder. This is simultaneously an ecological and an economic crisis, which, if it continues unabated, represents a significant threat not just to commercial apiculture and honey-production, but to the viability of modern agricultural systems more widely. Yet coordinated action to respond to this threat has been frustrated by the inability thus far to establish a singular definitive cause, and by the fierce politicization and polarization of the debate on probable causes and appropriate solutions. This simultaneously socio-technical, political-economic and environmental debate has engendered a substantial quantity of textual material since the term Colony Collapse Disorder was first used in 2007. This paper examines some of the principal discourses that have structured these texts, with an analytic focus on how subtly contrasting ontologies of technoscience, nature and animality, have been inscribed and configured within these discourses.

Jopi Nyman
University of Eastern Finland
jopi.nyman@uef.fi

Reading and Re-Writing Horses: Encounters in/with Follyfoot Fanfiction

The 1970s British television series Follyfoot, based on the works of the writer Monica Dickens telling of life in the Follyfoot Home for the Rest of Horses dedicated to caring for old and abused horses, is an unlikely object of fandom in a world where pop idols and fantasy heroes are more common sources of fanfiction. This paper will examine the representation of horses and human-animal encounters in 27 narratives that have been written by the fans of the series (2009-2012) and published on the website follyfoot.org. In these stories the writers revisit the series and provide further fictional versions of its events and storyworld. I will address the central concerns of Follyfoot fanfiction with particular reference to its representation of affect. In the first part of the paper I will briefly contextualize the Follyfoot narratives in the generic conventions of fanfiction and its attempt to provide alternative meanings as well as the affective frame directing the fans’ reconstruction of Follyfoot. In the second part of the paper I will discuss the representation of horses and interspecies relations in the stories. What I will argue is that the most significant function of horses in the stories is their representation in the context of affect. I will provide readings of two particular cases in which the horse is approached in an emotional framework: first, the death of the horse and,
second, the aging horse. My readings will contextualize such representations culturally and show the important role played by nostalgia in the stories. Rather than imagining new and alternative social meanings, the Follyfoot narratives, including their equine representation, appear to be embedded in the discourses of nation, community, and conventional Englishness.

Kevin De Ornellas  
University of Ulster  
k.deornellas@ulster.ac.uk

“Beasts are not defective”: dismantling the dichotomy of humanity and animality in Henry Newdigate’s The Emperor’s Favourite.

The Emperor’s Favourite, a manuscript play dating from around 1629, probably written by Henry Newdigate but presumed to have been never performed, was first published in a Malone Society diplomatic transcription in 2010. Naturally, existing scholarship on this hitherto-obscure drama has focused on bibliographical, textual, dating, and authorship issues. My paper moves forward from these matters, offering a pioneering, context-dependent analysis of the play, its investment in Shakespearean allusion, and, in particular, an assertion that the play's Shakespeare-influenced immersion in references to non-human animals is a vital component of its pointed anti-Stuart satire.

The play recalls Shakespeare's Julius Caesar in that it is a wilfully anachronistic portrayal of events in ancient Rome – there are even repeated references to a wristwatch that must appear on stage. Autocratic vanity features heavily in Shakespeare's play – but much more so in Newdigate’s play. Shakespeare's play involves, in part, the downfall of a Caesar who acts like an emperor although he is not quite one; Newdigate's play focuses on the madness of an actual emperor, Nero, but, more crucially, dramatizes the rise and fall of a sycophant, Crispinus. This sounds Jonsonian in its similarities to Jonson’s Sejanus, but the play has a Shakespearean disregard for traditional unities and, essentially, has a Shakespearean feel in that it is stuffed full of animal references. The idea of transgressive sex being inspired by alcohol that “prouok’t the appetite” recalls Macbeth's Porter but, also, the play's copious references to animals – "Neros dog", “partridges”, “lambskin”, “chickens”, “nightingales”, “the yong cormorant”, “the next horse race”, “harvest goose”, “milliners dog”, “silly turtles”, “cade lambs” etc. – recalls the Macbeth milieu of domestic and wild animals being repeatedly cited as if to comment on the unpredictable animality of the characters of the play.

The play's investment in animal imagery also recalls Timon of Athens: in a broad sense, the fall of the sometime-wealthy Crispinus recalls the fall of the sometime-wealthy Timon; on a less macro level, Newdigate’s satire of lavish spending, the rich folks' patronage of a "wseless poet", the greed of a "Goldsmith", and the expressed conceit of "inviting hem to a banquet" but serving them nothing except humiliation seem almost directly lifted from Shakespeare's play. But what it is important is that as in Timon of Athens there are endlessly bleak comparisons made between the comfortless world of humanity and the comfortless world experienced by exploited animals.

Shakespeare does not overtly satirise any political faction in his plays; in contradistinction to Shakespeare’s inscrutability, Newdigate clearly satirises the alleged inhumanity of a Stuart regime that dislikes, distrusts and abuses its own people. Newdigate almost seems to attack the dramatists of the previous forty years, inventing and then scoffing at a Nero-sponsored
play-within-the-play that is “absurd” and “shall not touch the present times”. Newdigate appears to assert that drama must “touch the present time” and it must condemn those who treat people as if they are animals. But from our twenty-first century perspective we may note that actually humans are rather more like animals than early modern thinkers cared to admit – a point made in recent critical work by scholars including Bruce Boehler, Erica Fudge, and Karen Raber. There is nothing much wrong with being like a horse or being like a pig: this crucial early modern play ultimately works to dignify the animal as well as the human and to dismantle boundaries between dispossessed, exploited and unfree humans and animals.

Chris Pak
University of Birmingham
chrispak650@hotmail.com

‘His Labor is a Chant, / His Idleness a Tune’: A Corpus Linguistic Analysis of Representations of the Bee in News Media

The multiple ways in which animals are represented in a variety of discourses has become an increasingly urgent question in the light of global climate change. This new context for reading animals and their relationship to society has thrown into relief society's dependence on animals to realise a range of physical and psychological needs. This paper makes use of the tools offered by the use of computerised methods for the linguistic analysis of large bodies of texts, known as “corpus linguistics", to examine these relationships using the case study of the bee in UK newspapers. Contemporary discourse about bees exemplifies this dependence on the animal, providing a nexus for considering a variety of positions toward them. Their potential disappearance threatens widespread impact on food production, paralleling concerns over the risk to the food industry caused by climate change. Analysis of samples of the discourse produced by institutions can reveal the ways in which the human relationship to the bee is imagined and written about in the UK in the last twenty years.

This paper presents the ongoing work of a Leverhulme funded collaboration between researchers at King’s College London and The University of Birmingham. It will present findings on the ways in which the bee has been written about in news media. Corpus linguistics will aid in identifying patterns of language specific to this particular genre of discourse, along with those patterns that reach beyond their appearance within a circumscribed domain. Several corpus-based methodologies offer ways to approach this examination, including collocations, keyness and concordances; this paper will present the results of these analyses. It will use this quantitative analysis to support a qualitative examination of the relationships that are represented, deploying critical discourse analysis to consider their salient characteristics. Ultimately, this paper shows how the tools offered by corpus linguistics can ground an examination of the human representation of and relationships to bees, findings that offer the potential for informing further interdisciplinary research on animals.

Laura Pearson
University of Leeds
lauraaapearson@gmail.com

(Re-)Imagining “White Death” in Matt Dembicki’s XOC: The Journey of a Great White

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Talking animals in comics and graphic novels immediately summon charges of anthropomorphism. “Real” great white sharks, loggerhead sea turtles, and pinniped seals do not use human language and certainly not English conversation in the way the ones in XOC: The Journey of a Great White (2012) do. Yet, as is now importantly being reexamined, anthropomorphism does not always equate to pure human allegory—allegory in the exacting sense of flatly anthropocentric motivations and human stand-ins—and anthropomorphism can be a “potentially productive critical tool that has similarities to empathy within recent historical research” (Weil 15). Matt Dembicki’s graphic novel provides a multi-modal viewpoint from which to analyze contemporary perspectives on the cultural iconicity and historical representation of the great white shark, while also performing a contemporary ecological tale. My paper addresses the text’s engagement with didacticism and advocacy in its materializing of current issues surrounding ecocritical and zooritical urgencies, such as oceanic slow violence and shark misconceptions. Concurrently exploring how this text intersects with iconic (ie. “Jaws”) and material (ie. shark finning) investments and realities, I will argue that Dembicki’s text illuminates Nicole Shukin’s claim that “the mimicry of animal capital is a ‘messy,’ contested, and unstable assemblage of uncoordinated wills to power, as well as immanent resistances to that power” (18). Entrenched in multiple registers of shark currency as a paradoxical site of meaning making, what this text ultimately gets at are contingent values of anthropomorphism that may gesture beyond the humanimals behind these talking animals.

References:


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Katy Peplin
kralko@umich.edu

**Kittens and Stilettos – Crush Films, Freedom of Expression, and Digital Media**

If a kitten was crushed to death under a stiletto heel in front of an officer of the law, the case for animal cruelty would be, in most states, locked up. However, a video of the same act is a different case, and the legal and ethical reasons why tell us much about the public understandings of the profilmic, digital media and freedom of expression. Crush films depict the literal crushing of an object, food or toy, or a living creature, under a foot for the purpose of sexual pleasure, and are separated into “soft crush”, or invertebrate animals and “hard crush”, vertebrates. As with other types of sexually explicit media, their dissemination has been greatly aided by the internet, and despite their tenuous legal status in this country and across the globe, they are available through a variety of sources online. A federal law was passed in 1999 to near unanimous support to make the interstate sale of these films illegal, which effectively made the creation of the films illegal. However, while the law targeted crush films and was used several times to prosecute the creators of those films, the language could be read to include any number of representations of animals being hurt or killed. The Court ruled in an 8 to 1 decision on April 20, 2010 that the law was overbroad and therefore unconstitutional, and the entirety of the law was dismissed. Although the original iteration of the law was found unconstitutional, a new law was drafted and quickly passed in July of 2010 and remains on the books.
Complicating the discussion even further is the changing theoretical landscape surrounding the power of images, virtual and photographic. While all fifty states have laws that protect animals against cruelty, making the actual act depicted in the crush film criminal, introducing a representational image, especially a photographic or virtual one, changes the parameters of the argument. Justice Ginsburg argued that the "abuse of the [animal] and the promotion of [that abuse] is separate from the filming of it". While many of the theoretical treatments of the semiotics of the virtual image, and the ethics of the camera in the realm of the profilmic may seem abstract, this legal case and its discussions show that these issues are far from an isolated academic concern. The arguments presented to the Supreme Court centered on the power of the image, and this paper ties those arguments with the long tradition of documentary ethics debates in order to give real, living stakes to the growing conversations about animals and their representations in media.

Antonia Perikou
University of Cyprus
antonia.perikou@gmail.com

Untamed Animot: Bestial Representations of Otherness in Angela Carter’s fairy tales

Throughout history, many philosophers have tried to investigate the human by trying to understand the minds of other creatures. In his ten-hour address at the 1997 Cérisy conference titled The Animal That Therefore I Am, Jacques Derrida engages with other philosophers such as Descartes, Levinas, Heidegger in order to interrogate the question each poses with respect to the animal, tracing those elements that, according to them, the animal lacks. In the philosophical journey to discover what "subjectivity" really is in the post-modern era and to define what it means to be human, Derrida pries open a space in which humans are no longer defined by what they are not, but in terms of the differences that emerge within the plurality of the living. Essentially, Derrida exposes the fundamental need for the radical reconfiguration of the notions of "Man", "animal", "self", "other", "cruelty", "pity", "tradition; "ethics" etc.

One genre that allows for such refashioning of reality is the fairy tale, a privileged space in which gendered, racial and social ideas infiltrate mythical traditions to create a fusion of the imaginary with the real enabling the rethinking of boundaries. With her works, 20th-century author Angela Carter, moves away from the traditional fairy tale to open up a new space within the genre to create a new world that not only plays with the boundaries between real/imaginary but challenges our traditional view of the fairy tale itself. Hence, these creatures that populate Carter’s fictional world are neither completely human nor completely animal; they are distinct singularities that cannot be subsumed under any species concept, do not fall into any overarching categories and therefore they do not serve as "representatives" of a set of general abilities, features, attributes and characteristics. In effect, they hold the dispersed position of Jacques Derrida’s "l’animot".

Mareile Pfannebecker
University of Manchester
mareile.pfannebecker@manchester.ac.uk
Early modern bêtise: stubborn animal politics in Shakespeare's plays

In the first semester of his final seminar, 'The Beast and the Sovereign', Jacques Derrida uses the coincidence of stubbornness, stupidity and a certain kind of animality in the term bêtise to organise much of his discussion of the ways in which concepts of political and personal sovereignty meet and trouble human/animal distinctions. While, as I argue, the potential of bêtise as a critical concept in Derrida's late work on animals has been underestimated at large, it is a particularly fruitful term for a new angle on representations of the political in early modern drama where animals – mythical and real- are never far away from descriptions of the sovereign. In Shakespeare, Coriolanus' and Lear's dragon, and the various bears and lions in many of the Roman plays, history plays and comedies are a good starting point here. My aim in this paper is to trace how bêtise in these plays opens up an early modern perspective on a liminal concept of sovereignty far beyond the critical commonplace of the king's two bodies. If the beast is the sovereign here, what does this mean in a specifically early modern context, where concepts of kingship are increasingly contested and heterogenous? Equally, what can Shakespeare's and Derrida's stubborn political animals offer to debates about political power today? While much of the current debate in animal studies has insisted on resisting abstraction and the reduction of animals in literature and beyond to figures of thought, my paper claims that thinking with animals as literary figures can lead to an important rethinking of the political that points beyond human and humanist limits.

Leah Phillips
Warwick University
L.B.Phillips@warwick.ac.uk

Shapeshifters: Animals (or humans?) in Disguise

Daine and Maerad, the heroines, respectively, of Tamora Pierce's Immortals quartet and Alison Croggon's The Books of Pellinor, are shapeshifters: they transform into animals. However, their transformations are not as straightforward (human to animal) as it might appear. For both girls, the animal is constructed as integral to their identity: they are not simply girls, female adolescents; they are also the animal(s) into which they transform. For Daine, this is owing to her demi-god status. Gifted with 'wild magic', she shares a unique bond with the People (animals) that not only allows her to shapeshift but to also communicate with them, even when in human form. For Maerad, it is owing to her Elemental heritage. She is "triple tongued" and "triple named" (not to mentioned prophesied to save the world), and this Elemental aspect of her tripartite identity allows her transform into a wolf.

Thus, a transition that would appear superficial – she changes shape – reaches deeper, it affects identity. It affects the identity of both the girl who shapeshifts and the animal(s) into which she changes. Neither girl nor animal entirely remains, and it is this instability that concerns this paper. The opposition between animal and human is troubled, and in so being, these narrations of change question both what it means to be human as well as what it means to be animal. For the adolescent girl – whose very existence seems to depend upon her body, her physical appearance, the implications of such instability on identity are far reaching. However, it is an instability that also impacts not only conceptions of individual animals (those changed into) but also the notion 'animal'. Essentially, the question becomes three-part: what does it mean to be girl; what does it mean to be animal, and how very different are they?
Insofar as animal-engaged literary texts are said to be invested in an ‘alternative’ mode of subjectivity and being-in-the-world, this paper accounts for the attempt of proposing a theory of language and symbolicity as always already grounded on animality. The limitations of a certain mimetic power in literary language are said to be exposed precisely at the sites in which animals are figured in texts as unappropriatable otherness. In opposition to that, I propose animality-as-embodiment as one of the conditions of the linguistic Symbolic Order or precisely that which language has to articulate as foreign to its domain for it to function properly. I focus on a formulation of the Symbolic Order which more readily acknowledges the role of materiality as an element in the constitution of language. I refer to Freud's account of the 'origin' of the Symbolic Law in Totem and Taboo as that which will inscribe embodiment as an effect and condition of symbolicity. In the same way that the Phallus works to organize the Symbolic as that which will compensate for an originary lack, the totem can be said to produce the symbolic system which will substitute for the death (murder) of the father. Proximity to the primordial, originary, legendary father functions exactly as the proximity to the mother's body or the phallic notion of corporal coherence in primitive infancy. The loss of that father must be accounted for by the means of totemism as a writing system which will be able to symbolize that loss (or on the account of that loss. If totemism is supposed to prefigure the constitution of the Symbolic by the Oedipus complex, I intend to reinscribe the totemic animal in the oedipal drama, so that the animal's materiality will be central to any possibility of language.

The Vegan Lens: Reading Veganism in Chris Morris’ Four Lions and Kamila Shamsie’s Burnt

Existing literary scholarship has begun to define the idea of a British-Muslim literary canon based around shared thematic concerns (Chambers, 2012). There has also been significant work around the idea of racialized masculinity (see, for example, Ranasinha, 2009). However, the key significance meat-eating discourse plays in both of these areas has been neglected. This paper addresses such a lacuna through its focus on the role the consumption of animal flesh plays in the demarcation of national, religious and gendered identity in contemporary British-Muslim novels. It relies on close textual analysis of Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers and Robin Yassin-Kassab’s The Road from Damascus and utilises the artificial binary drawn between halal and non-halal in an Islamophobic climate to evaluate the potent cultural value of meat.

Exploring the parallels between animal slaughter, honour killing and symbolic female dismemberment, and fasting and abstinence affects our understanding of both novels’ narrative focus on the interplay between Islamic and secular identity. With reference to Carol J. Adams’ argument that ‘the male prerogative to eat meat is an external, observable activity
implicitly reflecting a recurring fact: meat is a symbol of male dominance’ (176), this paper concludes that animal slaughter and consumption contains pertinent parallels to female repression under the operations of patriarchal society. As such, the presentation of meat-eating within this postcolonial, literary canon should be recognised as a vehicle for the relentless re-assertion of male identity.

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**Adela Ramos**  
Pacific Lutheran University  
ramosam@plu.edu

‘An Animal of a Different Species’: Hares, Women, and Anthropomorphism in Henry Fielding’s *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*

From Barbara Johnson's ‘Anthropomorphism in Lyric and Law’ and Erica Fudge's *Perceiving Animals* to Laura Brown's *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes*, recent studies on anthropomorphism foreground how this age-old habit of mind shapes and is shaped by historically specific debates about the conceptual categories of the human and the animal. In early modern England, as Fudge demonstrates, “anthropomorphism creates anthropocentrism”; the work of anthropomorphism is to “place the human and the human vision at the center” thereby attempting to separate the human from other animals. Yet, as Fudge argues, this separation is not uniform: it also serves to deny particular groups of humans their “human-ness” and to warrant their abuse. In this paper, I examine how in Henry Fielding’s famous novels *Joseph Andrews* (1742) and *Tom Jones* (1749) a social discourse of hunting – specifically hare-hunting – erases difference between hares and women to underscore their shared status as property and, thereby, to justify their degradation. I reveal how Fielding’s narrators take issue with this discourse by engaging what I term anthropomorphic thinking: a fantasizing about humans and animals that can either attribute to animals features which in the eighteenth century are defined as exclusively human – reason, language, and the soul – or attribute to humans animal behaviour – crawling or barking – a kind of animalization. As I unfold how the novels write against the discourse of hunting, I demonstrate how even as they deploy anthropomorphism to humanize women, they finally suggest that to preserve the social order woman must remain, at least to an extent, an animal of a different species. Ultimately, Fielding’s novels demonstrate that in eighteenth-century Britain, anthropomorphism defines the human not only in relation to animals, but also, and as significantly, in relation to gender.

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**Susan Richardson**  
susan@susanrichardsonwriter.co.uk

**Writing On All Fours**

Where is the borderline between animality and humanity? My third collection of poetry, to be published by Cinnamon Press in 2015, is themed around animal-human metamorphosis and it explores our dys/functional relationship with the wild. My sources of inspiration include
animal-human shapeshifting tales from a number of different cultures, from Inuit to Celtic, Native American to Norse, as well as the work of visual and performance artists including Marcus Coates, Oleg Kulik and Simon Whitehead, plus extensive personal experience of/training in shamanic journeying and shamanic trance dance. For this panel, I will intersperse an overview of the research I have undertaken over the past two years with performances of new poems that explore a range of questions: What are the animal possibilities of the self? Is it feasible to believe that exploring the 'becoming animal' theme through poetry may help to re-establish the connection with the animal parts of ourselves and with the wider natural world, where we are just one animal among many, that Western culture has lost?

My performance/presentation will aim to convey, too, how the animal-human metamorphosis theme can be reflected in the form and language of the poem. Linguistic transformations will take place, mirroring the subject-matter. Language will slip and slide and shapeshift, with verbs becoming nouns and adjectives morphing into verbs. Dramatic monologues, written in the first person, will transform into third person poems, and vice versa. Tenses that may trap a stanza in the present or past will start to loosen their grip. As a backdrop to my performance/presentation, animal-human shapeshifting prints by visual artist Pat Gregory, with whom I have previously collaborated and whose work will feature in my new collection, will also be displayed and referenced.

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**Virginia Richter**
*Bern University*

[va.richter@ens.unibe.ch](mailto:virginia.richter@ens.unibe.ch)

**Mon semblable, mon singe? Anti-Anthropomorphism in Colin McAdam’s A Beautiful Truth**

Since the 1980s, novels about Great Apes have been proliferating, including as diverse works as Michael Crichton’s *Congo* (1980), Robert Merle’s *Le Propre de l’homme* (1989), Peter Høeg’s *The Woman and the Ape* (1996), Will Self’s *Great Apes* (1997), and the more recent novels by Sara Gruen, *Ape House* (2010), and Benjamin Hale, *The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore* (2011). Clearly, in an age when humans' close relationship to chimps and bonobos has been firmly established through genetic and primatological research, the question of what is 'proper to man', and conversely, of the shared creatureliness of different species, is being explored through the figure of the ape. Communication, cooperation and culture are no longer seen as the prerogative of the human animal; as Cary Wolfe has argued, the species distinction between Homo sapiens and 'everything else' no longer underlies discussions of the subject (*Animal Rites*, 2003). Recent ape novels are informed by this shift, and they are preponderantly committed to anti-speciesism. However, often this stance goes hand in hand with an anthropomorphisation of the depicted apes, to the point of endowing them with articulate speech, and thereby fails to take into account their distinctiveness. In consequence, some ape novels fall short of imagining how cognitive processes, social interaction and a sense of self could work differently in apes, in short, what it is like to be an ape. This is precisely the attempt made in Colin McAdam’s novel *A Beautiful Truth* (2013), whose simian protagonist is first raised by a human couple but then, when he becomes too big and beastlike, ends up in a primate research centre where he is subjected to HIV research. Significant parts of the novel are focalised through the eyes of chimpanzees. By striving to render this non-human perspective in an appropriate language, *A Beautiful Truth* resists a too facile identification of humans and apes, and simultaneously, invites readers to reflect upon
the options and limitations of human language and empathy. Almost uniquely among recent ape novels, *A Beautiful Truth* takes on the challenge of resisting anthropomorphism on a stylistic level as well as on the level of content, and thus offers a creative way of reading animals.

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**Victoria de Rijke**  
*Middlesex University*  
v.derijke@mdx.ac.uk

**Reading Animation Biopolitically: the Fox and Wolf dichotomy.**

This presentation proposes to use a short scene from Wes Anderson's 2009 animation *Fantastic Mr. Fox* featuring the figures of Fox and Wolf, where the Director departed radically from the original fable (Dahl, 1970), suggesting animated creatures 'redraw the human' (Fudge, 2002), provoking thinking with animals across English studies. It has been argued that Disney style animations 'deny' wildness and difference in animal representation (Murphy, 1995). Anderson's characterization of the wolf departs from this by confronting the tensions between animalization and anthropomorphism. Deliberately using old-style stop frame and puppet methods, Anderson achieves 'critical' or 'investigative anthropomorphism' (Griffin & Burghardt) rather than cute or didactic modes. The fox and wolf are symbolic, metaphoric creatures 'tied into a historiography of human evolution and development' (Wells, 2009), expressing something of the bio-political friction of what is termed 're-wilding'. Through engagement with the bio-philosophies of Deleuze, and Haraway's recent work on companion species, animal specialists now 'cautiously affirm the potential of a biopolitics of rewilding for the flourishing of nonhuman difference' (Driessen & Lorimer, 2013).

Facing similar challenges to the 1954 Halas & Bachelor version of Orwell's *Animal Farm*, the scene demanded animal dignity and mutual respect. Anderson achieves this by explicit means: a witty metafictive script, soundtrack and set, but also hidden direction that led to spontaneous improvisation. He has said himself that this one scene was the entire reason he wanted to make the film. I will argue the scene calls up key philosophical 21st century challenges. If the wolf did become extinct, could we simply rebuild the species genetically? What is our moral position now? How does *Fantastic Mr. Fox* offer new, yet nostalgic readings? In this new context, biopolitics requires radical re-thinking, not least in relation to animal depiction in the arts and literature.

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**Richard De Ritter**  
*University of Leeds*  
r.deritter@leeds.ac.uk

**“Guided by Instinct”: John Aikin’s *The Transmigrations of Indur* and the Limits of Reason**

In *The Philosophy of Natural History* (1790), William Smellie proposes that 'all animals are, in some measure, rational beings'. It was, and perhaps still is, a provocative statement. Traditionally, reason was considered the exclusive property of humans, while animal behaviour was commonly attributed to instinct. As Alexander Pope noted in *An Essay on Man*, the two were separated by a 'nice barrier', which kept them '[f]or ever separate, yet for ever
near’. Pope’s insistence on the nicety of this distinction proved long-lived. In *Instinct Displayed* (1811), the educationalist Priscilla Wakefield suggests that the precise distinction between reason and instinct ‘has exercised the ingenuity of [...] philosophers, hitherto without success’. The ‘nice barrier’ thus represents a significant obstacle, confirming the inviolability of human and animal identity by impeding movement between the two.

This paper explores the way in which this ‘barrier’ was negotiated in children’s literature of the Romantic period. Its primary focus is John Aikin and Anna Barbauld’s ‘The Transmigrations of Indur’ – a short tale that traces the journey of an Indian Brahmin’s soul as it moves from the body of one animal to another. While its depiction of a rational human consciousness inhabiting animal bodies could be interpreted as drawing upon Cartesian dualism, the fantasy element of the story sees the distinction between reason and instinct becoming blurred, highlighting the fluid contours of human and animal identities. Rather than the anthropomorphism that characterises much writing for children, the story’s pedagogic agenda means that it focuses on the particularity of animal bodies and behaviours. As the story moves between the discourses of philosophy, natural history and Orientalist fantasy, Aikin and Barbauld encourage their young readers to re-examine their interactions with, and valuation of, animal life.

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**Venetia Robertson**

*University of Sydney*

[venetia.robertson@sydney.edu.au](mailto:venetia.robertson@sydney.edu.au)

**Autobiographical Animals: Mythologies and Ontologies in the Online Therianthropy Community**

This paper looks at the conceptualisation of animals in the specific context of an online community of individuals who believe that they have non-human animal souls. Though human in physical form, these people, who call themselves Therianthropes, consider their spiritual self to be animal. A number of such other-than-human identity groups flourish on the Internet, as those with non-normative and marginalised identities often turn to this global medium to find the ontologically alike. However, the Therianthropy community is particularly interesting – while other groups may draw from the culture surrounding the robotic and machinic or the supernatural and fantastic to articulate their other-than-human selfhood, Therianthropes tend toward the natural world and the animal kingdom. In doing so, certain narratives about animals are being formed, told, and woven into the lives of human beings and their journey towards an understanding of an authentic self.

Delving into the plethora of personal mythologies shared in the online community by Therianthropes, via blogs, forum discussions, tumblr and so forth, the ways in which the interspecies relationship has been reworked can be seen. Here, the autobiographical narrativisation of animal-human hybridity, metaphysical shape-shifting, and fragmented identities brings together notions of animality ranging from myth to materiality, spiritual belief to phenomenological experience. The human and the animal are inscribed onto one another through a process infused with religiosity, the resulting humanimal hybrid seen as symbolic, as sacred, and as self rather than ‘other’. Existing, as one Therianthrope says, “with one paw in the galaxies, one on earth,” provides a unique reading of animal-being from the perspective of those who see themselves ontologically as transspecies. This brief talk will provide an overview of Therianthropy as an online movement and shed light on the lenses being used to see animality as not so much juxtaposed with but intricately and intimately
involved in the lived experience of these individuals, as told through their personal journeys.

Rachel Rochester  
University of Oregon  
rachelr@uoregon.edu

Honey bees, Migrant Labor, and the Commodification of Sadness in Salvador Plascencia’s The People of Paper

Despite the fact that the European honey bee is not endemic to the North American continent, it has nonetheless become a critical component of regional agribusiness: commercial production of more than ninety U.S. crops depends upon the labor of bees. Similarly, in 2006 77 percent of all agricultural workers in the United States were foreign-born – a percentage largely comprised of undocumented workers from Mexico. Despite the importance of both the European honey bee and immigrants from Mexico to the modern food chain, however, both have nonetheless been treated ambivalently within mainstream Anglo American culture: fear of bees is one of the most common phobias; illegal immigration is an incendiary issue across political party lines; and both bees and migrant laborers remain disproportionately vulnerable to the environmental risks of agribusiness, particularly pesticide poisoning. Nevertheless, recent recognition that declining immigration rates and honey bee populations could lead to food shortages and profit losses within the United States has catalyzed some demand for protecting both vulnerable populations; the impetus for preserving both populations depends entirely upon the value of the commodities they are able to produce. In The People of Paper, Salvador Plascencia draws upon the storied history of the honey bee to expose the vulnerable position of Mexican immigrants and Chicana/o’s within the United States and to dramatize the effects of oppressive systems of power on both human and non-human animal populations. By analyzing the bee’s contribution to both the structural form of Plascencia’s novel and its content, contextualized against contemporary rhetoric surrounding the European honey bee within the United States and the status of the Mexican population of agricultural laborers, this paper works to show how Plascencia uses the bee to add layers of political and environmental commentary to an already multivalent novel.

Derek Ryan  
University of Kent  
D.J.Ryan@kent.ac.uk

Flesh, Filth, Flush: Bovine Territories in Victorian London

Virginia Woolf’s animals have for a long time been seen to serve as metaphors, symbols and allegories for primarily human concerns – Woolf’s cocker spaniel protagonist in Flush (1933) has, for example, been read as a vehicle through which she examines gender, class and racial hierarchies. In more recent years, however, critics have returned to Woolf’s underdog book and read it as a sophisticated modernist consideration of canine animality, opening up her writing to wider debates in animal studies.

And yet, in these critical discussions Woolf’s exploration of other animal lives in Flush is often overlooked. This paper focuses on a key section in the fourth chapter – after Flush has
been dognapped from his home in Wimpole Street, and before we learn of his suffering in the seedy area of Whitechapel where he is held for ransom—when attention is turned to the plight of cows resident nearby. Detailing how Woolf’s modernist text makes use of Victorian sources, and drawing on studies of cow-sheds and private slaughterhouses, I will suggest that one of the most historically illuminating and ethically charged passages of Flush concerns specifically bovine territories in Victorian London.

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Gerard Sargent  
University of Leeds  
gedsargent@icloud.com

“...not subject to a beast?”: Bestial Sovereignty and the Rejection of Exile in Timon of Athens

This paper explores the recurrent animal imagery in Timon of Athens, and shows how such imagery informs Timon’s fantasy of a sovereign autonomy in his self-exile from Athens.

Timon of Athens is a title that suggests from the outset a protagonist defined as much by the polis as by his name. However, much of Timon’s drama lies in his whole-hearted rejection of this same world, a rejection expressed through his self-exile into the woods beyond the city walls. Here, Timon imagines finding “Th’unkindest beast more kinder than mankind,” but his wish is an impossible one. In ascribing values of ‘kindness’ and ‘unkindness’—as that which can be “gentle, sympathetic [...] generous, liberal, courteous,”—to the beast in general, Timon reveals an understanding of the world still governed by a system he has ostensibly renounced: namely, a humanity defined by the economy of exchange, credit and debt. What’s more, Timon’s use of ‘kind’ here can also mean a relationship bound “by kinship; of kin”; a bond with beasts that offers a kind of sovereign transcendence above and beyond the rule of man.

However, this paper will also demonstrate how such fantasies are undermined twofold in the play: firstly, in the play’s preoccupation with dogs in particular, linking the protagonist with a creature that was often presented in conflicting and ambiguous ways throughout the early modern period, and secondly, in his contrast with Alcibiades, the play’s other main figure of exile who returns to overthrow Athens. Against Alcibiades, Timon’s fantasy of bestial transcendence is shown to lack a fundamental and defining aspect of sovereignty: the force that grants him exception beyond all law as it confers protection on those it simultaneously threatens with terror.

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Barbara Seeber  
Brock University  
bseeber@brocku.ca

Pug and Other Pets in Mansfield Park

As Erica Fudge writes, “we could say that pets are animals out of place, and that in that ‘out-of-placedness’ they disturb the hygiene of the boundaries that give us certainty about who we are.” It is significant that Jane Austen’s Mansfield Park (1814) includes pets in its cast: Lady Bertram’s pug, Fanny’s pony, her mare, and, I argue, at times Fanny herself. Building on
feminist arguments that the novel explores the connections between imperialism abroad and patriarchy at home, I expand the scope of Austen’s critique by reading the animals of Mansfield Park. Austen uses the figure of the pet to explore the intersections of species, gender, class, and race. It is telling that Lady Bertram does not name her pug and only identifies him by generic breed; that Mrs. Norris only pretends to “feel for the horses”; and that all the young men are hunters. Fanny’s attitude towards animals stands out. The heroine forms an affective bond with the animal world, in part because she is treated as an animal by the Bertrams, who are concerned about “the distinction proper to be made” between Fanny and themselves. The pet’s ambiguous status is mirrored in Fanny’s. Mrs. Norris’s injunction to remember “who and what she is” captures this perfectly. Fanny is and is not a member of the Bertram family; she is and is not human. And her almost perpetual “gratitude” is akin to the unconditional loyalty human owners expect from their pets, and it is telling that her gratitude is often mixed with “pain.” Mansfield Park not only demonstrates the interconnectedness of the ideologies which objectify women, slaves, the poor, and animals but also directly challenges these ideologies by establishing Fanny as the most feeling and reflective being in the novel.

Undine Sellbach
University of Tasmania
U.sellbach@utas.edu.au

Co-authored with

Stephen Loo
University of Tasmania

The Big and Small of the Entomological Imagination in Childhood.

Sentience is often appealed to, in the field of animal studies in support of the moral standing of non-human creatures. In these debates, the sentience at stake is traditionally identified with discrete states, such as the capacity to suffer or be self-consciousness, with an established moral or political significance. Yet many of the pressing problems we currently face in this more-than-human world concern the edges of sentience.

Insects bring this to the fore: on the one hand they inhabit their own tiny sensorial worlds very different from our own, on the other hand they help generate vast natural processes with life-like agencies. Traditionally they are considered too tiny, diverse and instinct-like to
register in debates about our obligations to other animals or the formation of community relations. But it may no longer be possible to disconnect ethical thinking from insects and the big and small at the edges of sentience they inhabit and provoke. As philosopher Isabelle Stengers points out, we are ecologically entangled in ways we often only dimly perceive and are impacting other life forms and the environment in ways we frequently ignore. At the same time, we are vulnerable to powerful and increasingly unpredictable forces of nature that are indifferent to us, to our gestures of sentiment and feeling.

Our paper sets out to reframe ethical approaches to sentience, in relation to its ethological, ecological and psychoanalytic edges. To do so, we will mobilize the entomological imagination of childhood, a realm where the instincts of children, entangle with the instincts of insects, and with emergent ethical and social feelings and relations. By drawing on a scene from J.M.G Le Clezio's novel Terra Amata, which tells the story of the instincts of a small boy, the minute sensoria of some bugs and a cosmic catastrophe, we hope to show how sensations that are too proximate or distant to register a legible moral meaning may nevertheless be important participants in an ethical life.

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**Jane Spencer**  
*University of Exeter*  
*J.Spencer@exeter.ac.uk*

'With an ass, I can commune for ever': Tristram Shandy's ass encounter in the light of Apuleius and Balaam.

Tristram Shandy’s claim to be able to understand the thoughts of the ass he meets in Lyons in the seventh book of his Life and Opinions was traditionally interpreted as Sterne’s mockery of his own asinine reader. More recently, the sympathy Tristram expresses for the donkey has been taken seriously by critics such as Jonathan Lamb and Heather Keenleyside, reflecting the endeavour within animal studies to combat the erasure of the literary animal threatened in allegorical interpretations. In this paper, I read Tristram’s ass encounter through the lens of two earlier literary asses, both influential in Sterne’s time: the animal into which Lucius is transformed in the Metamorphoses of Apuleius, otherwise known as The Golden Ass, a Latin novel of the late 2nd century AD; and Balaam’s ass, whose mouth is opened by the Lord to rebuke his master in chapter 22 of Numbers. Eighteenth-century reinterpretations of Balaam’s ass took the donkey’s words literally as an expression of her own feelings about Balaam’s treatment of her, and drew a new anti-cruelty message from the Biblical text, which was repeatedly invoked in animal advocacy literature. Meanwhile The Golden Ass, through its association of the act of narration with asinine transformation, left its mark not only on the narrator of Tristram Shandy but on other narrative works. The paper discusses Tristram’s ambivalent animal sympathies as a joint legacy of these two ancient donkeys. I end by briefly mentioning some early nineteenth-century literary asses from Wordsworth’s Peter Bell to the children’s story The Adventures of a Donkey, suggesting that the absurdity associated with the ass haunted attempts in this period to write of sympathetic communion with animals.

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**Kim Stallwood**  
*Author and Independent Scholar*  
*kim@kimstallwood.com*
**Topsy, An Elephant We Must Never Forget**

My paper is about an Asian elephant called Topsy who was electrocuted publicly by Thomas Edison in New York in 1903. I will first explore the fate of one particular elephant as a representative of the treatment of wild-caught mammals exploited in the entertainment industry. Then, I will situate her death as a key moment in the development of the industrial manufacturing empire established by the USA at the beginning of the twentieth century. Topsy was murdered because expediency and spectacle conspired with power and profit.

Tormented and abused, she killed people through no fault of her own when she was part of a touring amusement park. Topsy eventually became a dangerous embarrassment to one of America’s first amusement parks on Coney Island. Newspaper reports on her death claim she was 28. This means that she was probably caught in India, Sri Lanka, Indochina, or Indonesia in the mid-1870s. With 1,500 spectators, Topsy was electrocuted on January 4, 1903. It took 10 seconds for the 6,600 volts of electricity to kill her. The footage shot by Edison of Topsy’s electrocution is recognised as an important development in history of film making.

Edison wanted to prove that direct current was safer than alternating current (the alternative promoted by his rival, George Westinghouse) and thereby win the battle to electrify America. In 1887, Edison began experimenting with animals, primarily unwanted dogs and cats, by electrocuting them to prove AC was more dangerous than DC. These experiments were demonstrated to the press. Even though he opposed capital punishment, Edison secretly paid for the first electric chair to be built for the State of New York to demonstrate that AC was deadlier than DC.

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**Aline Steinbrecher**  
*University of Konstanz, Germany*

‘Lost! – Missing-Dog Reports in Newspapers of the Early Nineteenth Century’

My paper looks at the numerous missing-dog reports in the German newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Nachrichten during the first half of the nineteenth century. I argue that these reports form a valuable document of human-dog relationships.

In order to contextualize this claim I first outline the contemporary ‘dog culture’ in cityscapes during the first half of the nineteenth century. Many of the fundamental changes in cities of this period, I propose, were in part brought about by animal actors. One crucial factor of animal agency was the enormous quantitative presence of animals in urban environments. The efforts of municipal authorities to prevent inhabitants from keeping domestic animals were largely ineffective: packs of dogs were a ubiquitous presence in European cities. In early nineteenth-century Vienna, for instance, single houses often counted 30 or even 40 dogs.

I argue that the widespread pet-keeping culture was a constitutive part of bourgeois culture. The role of dogs as status symbols was underlined by dog accessories. Analyses of contemporary imagery and reports of missing dog reveal that domestic animals were often dressed up with bells, ribbons and other finery. However, these reports also show that it
clearly mattered to dog owners to relocate their own specific dog. Therefore the missing-dog reports are a valuable source for the study of the emotional bond between the keeper and his dog and shed light onto the living conditions of companion animals.

Christina Stephens
Purdue University
christa.r.stephens@gmail.com

Enter the Void: Ontology and Rights in *Frankenstein*

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* questions the human in human rights. Despite exhaustive examination of Shelley's creature as this biological species or that metaphorical embodiment, the ways in which the novel questions rights ideology goes largely unexamined. My critical focus on ontology and rights in *Frankenstein* opens up a posthuman space within rights discourse. Human rights as something that are inherent to a particular species or as natural phenomenon collide with *Frankenstein's* unnatural life form. As Victor obsesses over natural philosophy and the reanimation of lifeless matter, he remains ignorant to the potential political effects of his labor. The progenitor exiles his monster to the apolitical realm; however, as its bodily existence intersects with politics and law, it brings a reworking of anthropocentric rights discourse. Not quite human, not quite animal, but still possessing characteristics of both, the novel disrupts rights discourse when Victor's creature declares human rights. *Frankenstein* engages the question of rights (as human, as natural, and in need of a recognizable subject) and reboots the program by which we configure ontology, rights, and community. To evidence, I will first examine the creature's state of nature through the lens of a postcolonial "mimic man," as the being in question that does not have an identifiable collective with which to say "we," yet rearticulates hegemonic ideology nonetheless. It's in this ontological void that the creature, in a radical boundary crossing, claims the rights of man and the citizen—rights it does not officially have as a creaturely entity. I will then link the creature's demand for (and subsequent refusal of) a species community with the biolopolitical enemy—that excess, nameable species that presents a threat to humanity. En masse, the creature's political seizure manifests a new, provocative indeterminate rights subject, and detaches being human from bearing rights.

John Stokes
King's College, London
johnstokes27@gmail.com

‘A Question of Perspective’: Uccello's ‘Night Hunt’ and the modern poet.

Two widely-admired contemporary poets – Derek Mahon and John Burnside – have both published short ‘ekphrastic’ poems inspired by Paolo Uccello’s painting ‘The Night Hunt’ which is housed in the Ashmolean in Oxford. In this paper I compare the two works and suggest that, in quite different ways, both poets attempt to replace the historical mythology of the hunt with a more holistic vision of the natural world and to overcome sacrificial rites with reconciliation between species – while, at the same time, retaining a sense of the power and mystery of the original painting. My readings show how Uccello’s dramatic use of perspective is reflected verbally and note the significance of mirroring animal shapes. I go on to contrast the Uccello poems with other poems by these authors on related themes: Mahon’s ‘St. Eustace’ about a painting by Pisanello of a Christian martyr of the 2nd century who converted when he
saw a vision of the saviour between the antlers of a deer but who was later put to death when he refused to participate in a pagan sacrifice, and Burnside’s ‘Saint Hubert and the Deer’ about another medieval saint (often compared with Saint Eustache) who gave up hunting when he saw a similar vision. Texts of the poems would be provided together with Powerpoint images of the various paintings.

Su Chiu-Hua
Soochow University, Taiwan
schtteaching@gmail.com

Training, Stereotypy, Assembly: A Posthuman Perspective

In a previous study, I have dealt with training through Merleau-Ponty’s concept of behavior and body schema, hoping to rethink “life” and reformulate the relationships between humanity and animality. In this study, I would like to continue the project in order to probe deeper into the idea of the (post)human.

Via Merleau-Ponty, I argued that behavior training commonly adopted in modern zoos brought into question the distinction between the reflexive and habitual, biological and cultural, instinctive and aesthetic. The argument will, in this project, be expanded to the idea of technical body elaborated on in Bernard Stiegler’s appropriation of André Leroi-Gourhan in the first volume of Technics and Time. Deconstructing the dichotomy between man/tool, consciousness/behavior, interior/exterior, Stiegler advances a radical statement: as technology opens up human history, our consciousness is conditioned by our technical body. By posing the theoretical framework of behavior and body, I want to investigate the implications of training and stereotypy through the posthuman perspective.

Manifested as mechanical repetitive behaviors, stereotypy, commonly observed not only in captive animals but also in autistics, will be reexamined in the above mentioned theoretical foundation. In this study, I would venture to draw an analogy between stereotypy and training by taking examples from Temple Grandin and Vicki Hearne, believing that their writings offer a double-up view from inside-out and outside-in. As an autistic scholar and activist, Grandin has long been working with stockyards, slaughter houses, and zoos to better the facilities of humane handling and/or slaughtering animals. It is observable in her writings that humans, animals, and facilities come together to form “collectives”— Bruno Latour’s idea of the new social formation based on the Non-modern Constitution. In other words, human actors and non-human actants, organic or inorganic, are disposed in ways which may not guarantee human dominance in training rings, zoo fences, or farms stables. However, regarding her as a pivotal figure hinting at the possibility of New Democracy, I think her thought falls short of questioning the humanistic assumption of interior/exterior hierarchy. I would, therefore, resort to the outside-in perspective rendered through Hearne’s essays on animal training. A renowned dog and horse trainer, poet, and philosopher, Hearne in Adam’s Task mentions that the task of training an animal resembles that of teaching an autistic to speak, a claim echoing Grandin’s animal-autistic analogy. I would argue that the reciprocity fostered by the mechanical repetitive operation of training could undermine the consciousness/behavior, interior/exterior hierarchy in the humanistic tradition. By analogizing stereotype and training through Latour’s collective, I hope to consider further the transition from the instinctual to the symbolic or to the aesthetic in Merleau-Pontian phenomenology, as well as the subversion of tool/man, technology/humanity distinction in Stiegler.
Anja Schwarz  
_University of Potsdam, Germany_

‘Schomburgk’s Chook: A human/animal biography of Berlin’s Malleefowl’

In the course of the nineteenth century, improved techniques for preserving animal bodies together with an ever-increasing interest in natural history and accelerating global expansion resulted in the creation of vast research archives of animal bodies in the museum collections of Europe’s metropolises. Archived according to presumably timeless taxonomic principles, the dead animals that entered these collections were, for the most part, divested of the historical circumstances of their life and capture.

In seeking to redress this deliberate oblivion that characterises our natural history archives, my paper endeavours to present a joint biography of human and animal: of an Australian malleefowl in Berlin’s Museum of Natural History and of the Prussian émigré Richard Schomburgk, who sent it there in the 1860s. In the museum’s malleefowl mount, human and non-human history become enmeshed in ways that link the fate of a small Australian bird to the German revolutionary generation of the 48ers, to Germany’s nineteenth-century imperial aspirations and to settler-Indigenous relations in the Australian colonies.

Adrian Tait  
_Independent Scholar_  
adrian.tait@me.com

Hardy’s Animal Encounters as ‘Conversazione’

Although best known for his novels, Thomas Hardy’s verse represents a substantial and deeply personal body of work most notable for the animal encounters it describes. For Hardy, this is, centrally, a problem of form, a problem reflected in the restless variety of those encounters, which range from the didactic story, such as ‘The Bird-Catcher’s Boy’, to the pet memoir, most notably ‘Last Words to a Dumb Friend’. Over time, however, Hardy also developed what might best be described as a ‘conversazione’. Never less than self-aware and self-reflexive, Hardy’s animal encounters are always in some sense a conversation about the formal limits of literature, but the conversazione is in fact a word rooted in both the Middle English sense of ‘living among, familiarity, intimacy’, and the Latin conversari, to ‘keep company (with)’. In poems like ‘The Darkling Thrush’, Hardy offers just this kind of neighbourly association, which as Richard Mabey recently observed, ‘permits concern, shared circumstance, even love from afar, but demands no reciprocity’, and therefore offers a less philosophically fraught way in which ‘to approach and write about our relations with our fellow organisms’. Above all, it reflects his growing recognition that, notwithstanding the ethical imperative (and ethical extensionism) implicit in Darwin’s ‘common origins’, the animal remains what Morton provocatively calls a ‘strange stranger’, deeply embedded in its own perceptual reality.
The aim of this paper is, therefore, to trace the emergence of this template through the thirty-year history of Hardy's verse collections, and through often overlooked poems such as 'Snow in the Suburbs', 'Winter Night in Woodland', and 'I Watched a Blackbird', as well as those much better known, amongst them ‘An August Midnight’ and ‘The Darkling Thrush’.

Antoine Traisnel
Cornell University
agt24@cornell.edu

Cryptozoa: Illegible Animals in Poe's Urban Fictions

As they become ever more ubiquitous in the booming arenas of science and art, animals appear ever more lost in the bustling ecology of the nineteenth-century metropolises. But animals do not simply “vanish,” Nicole Shukin has argued pace Akira Mizuta Lippit. Rather, they are increasingly incorporated into the machinery of modern capital(s) as protein or “rendered material.” In this paper, I propose to reassess Shukin's polemical rebuttal of Lippit's account of the “disappearance of animals.” I take Edgar Allan Poe's urban fictions as exemplary sites to suggest that animals do disappear in modernity because of the city dweller's inability to detect them in the new urban topographies. Following Walter Benjamin's insight in The Arcades Project that the figure of the detective is the modern hunter, I will show how Poe resuscitates the archaic figure of the hunter in the character of Detective Dupin, who alone is capable of tracking down animals turned criminals by decrypting signs that come across as meaningless to the police. The problem of the “capital animal,” which allegedly cannot write and thus cannot be read, raises the question of reading as an act of decryption, that is, as the possibility to extricate the animal from what Lippit has called “the crypt of modernity.”

Lynn Turner
Goldsmiths
L.J.Turner@gold.ac.uk

Stuck in the Throat: the Animal as the new Real

This paper will initiate a disciplinary investigation into how we think of ‘the voice’ in light of theoretical developments in critical animal studies. Numerous scholars today firmly dispel the Cartesian legacy that habitually divides the speaking - human - subject from the ‘dumb’ animal since that blunt division has so persistently legislated for the violent appropriation of the latter by the former. My task, however, is not to take up ‘the voice’ as figure to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. It is rather to follow the hermeneutic suspicion that even the most sophisticated recent psychoanalytic engagements with the question of the animal produce a new problem for critical animal studies. The move that I identify as a problem absorbs ‘the animal’ as the anterior ground of ‘the human’ even though that ground may return symptomatically, traumatically.

Of the two authors who raise this concern for me, one is more explicitly involved in a kind of land grab to entrench the voice as the proper object of psychoanalysis embedding its traumatic qualities as effecting a properly human trouble (Mladen Dolar); the other, having developed a theoretically less partisan body of work investigating what he names the
percussive field, has recently raised the spectre of the domestication of animals as traumatic only to retain the latter within a psychoanalytic frame privileging speech as the means of abreaction, albeit through the category he renders constitutively ambiguous – the ‘whisper’ (John Mowitt). Appreciative as Mowitt is of work demonstrating the root and branch transformation of the ‘humanities’ by writers such as Cary Wolfe (who he affirmatively cites), his investment in a psychoanalysis relatively untouched by such a transformation risks disappearing the trauma of animals as anything exterior to the formation of human subjectivity. My suspicion is thus that ‘the animal’ risks becoming the new Real. This new corral is contrasted by the Derridean ethics of infinite hospitality. For the latter, one will never know in advance from where - from whom or from what - an ethical call will come or what form it will take.

William Viney  
Durham University  
william.viney@durham.ac.uk

Are twin studies the closest we get to doing animal experiments on humans?

The paper will advance the thesis that human twins are useful for their status as quasi-animals in the natural and social sciences, especially for their adaptive capacity to demarcate the borders between human, animal, and mineral. Such a structurally dynamic perspective allows me to throw fresh light over the double status of twins as both more-than and less-than human animals; thus, since Francis Galton, twins have been understood to be ‘unique’ experimental subjects in the laboratory sciences. The thesis of this paper is as follows: though twins offer an experiment that is necessarily performed they are equally suspended between the idealised experimental conditions of the animal-based laboratory experiments of a ‘pure’ science and one claimed to be free from the contingent artifice of laboratory conditions.

The paper will begin by citing a peculiarly boastful piece of PR, included in a university press release, and distributed in 2013 to promote the work of a leading UK genetics research centre that is funded by the Wellcome Trust and the European Union. A researcher, who has used twins in his genetic and epidemiological research for over 21 years, claimed that research using human twins constituted “the closest we can get to doing animal experiments on humans”. I want to draw attention to the utility of twins in the experimental sciences and show how this utility has drawn on the figure of the animal for its rhetorical power. My presentation aims to unfurl the implications of this statement, for the 1.5 million twins who currently participate in genetic research worldwide, for the technological and epistemological hierarchies suggested in the phrase “doing animal experiments on humans”, and link this with the long history – scientific, anthropological, theological, and philosophical – of modelling the polymorphous and transformative qualities of human twinning with reference to human-animal distinctions.

Sue Vice  
University of Sheffield  
s.vice@sheffield.ac.uk

'The Ambivalence of the Monstrous’: Wolves in Holocaust Literature
In this paper, I will explore the ambivalent meanings of the wolf in Holocaust representation. The presence of other animals in Holocaust literature most usually signifies a particular facet of that experience. For instance, the metaphor of sheep going to the slaughter implies victimhood as well as abnegation of agency, while the mice of Art Spiegelman’s graphic novel Maus are verminous yet human. The figure of the wolf embodies a greater range of extreme associations, which produces a complex oscillation of subject-positions in Holocaust writing.

In order to explore the significance of the wolf in this context, I will draw on work by Peter Arnds and Jacques Derrida, in his seminar ‘La bête et le souverain’, both of whom argue for the animal’s embodiment of the figure of predator and victim, particularly so in times of unrest and war. This extreme equivocality is apparent in such works as Surviving with Wolves by Misha Defonseca, in its written and film versions, and Stolen Soul by Bernard Holstein; in both texts, the figure of the wolf was central to the revelation of their status as false testimonies.

The wolf is invoked, as either metaphor or animal, to different effect in such testimonies as Sophia Richman’s A Wolf in the Attic, where the child misrecognizes the ‘wolf’ of her nightmares as an aggressor when it is her own father; while in Rose Zar’s In the Mouth of the Wolf the eponymous animal is at first identified with the Nazis among whom the young Jewish protagonist works, but again a moral transformation eventually takes place. Lastly, Bruno Apitz’s Naked Among Wolves ostensibly repeats the association between animal and Nazi in this East German Holocaust novel set in Buchenwald, but its focus on the rescue of a ‘wolfish’ Jewish boy by adult inmates of the camp reveals that the invocation of the wolf itself encodes radical ambiguity.

In all of these instances, a child’s perspective is crucial to the presence of the wolf, signalling both the figure’s emergence from mythology and fairytale, and, as Arnds argues, an important element of identification, since the child itself may be viewed with the ambivalence directed at the animal, as both outlaw and martyr.

Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel  
University of Sydney  
dinesh.wadiwel@sydney.edu.au

Robbing Peter to Pay Paul: Marx, Derrida and the Animal as Commodity

Examining the first chapter of Karl Marx’s Capital vol. 1 – “The Commodity” – this paper will explore the imposition of a value equivalence upon the life (and death) of the animal within industrialised animal production. I will argue that this process does not focus on merely recognizing value in the form of money, but realizes value in a side by side process of fostering species differentiation between human and non human: “Peter only relates to himself as a man through his relation to another man, Paul, in whom he recognizes his likeness. With this, however, Paul also becomes from head to toe, in his physical form as Paul, the form of the species man for Peter” (Marx, 1986: 144n).

Turning to Jacques Derrida’s 1971 essay “White Mythology,” I will explore Derrida’s examination of the metaphor and its connection (or lost connection) to original value. I will argue, in line with Derrida’s later concern with the term “animal” itself, that the imposition of value is always a violent form of metaphoricisation that threatens to flatten our multiple
difference. In this sense the commodity value of animals as property might be understood as an intertwining process of material and epistemic violence.

This paper aims to reanimate consideration of a political economy of animals within contemporary industrialised (and post-industrialised) capitalism, with a view to mapping forms of political subjectivity, collectivity and resistance.

Sue Walsh
University of Reading
s.a.h.walsh@reading.ac.uk

The Hieroglyphic Animal

Through focus on the animal stories and nature writing of North American writers such as John Muir, John Burroughs, Jack London, Ernest Thompson Seton, William J. Long and Charles G. D. Roberts, this paper will explore the implications of an odd and apparently out of place set of references and allusions to hieroglyphs and other ancient Egyptian cultural artefacts (bound up with notions about human-animal kinship, primitiveness and the origins of language) in this work for what it can tell us about the cultural significance of animals in the North American imagination at the turn of the last century. I will elaborate how these images of ancient Egypt seem to be a residue of the influence of transcendentalism combined with an early to mid-nineteenth century Egyptomania, and I will build my observations on John T. Irwin's suggestive connection of the decipherment of hieroglyphics by Champollion in 1822 with the appearance of Darwin's theory of evolution as 'two of the most significant scientific interventions in the nineteenth century' (American Hieroglyphics, 1980). My reading will also take into account Scott Trafton's critique of Irwin's avoidance of issues of race and American racialization when addressing the Egyptian theme in transcendentalist and other early nineteenth century American literature (Egypt Land, 2004) and will seek to tease out the ways in which the realistic animal stories and nature essays of the later period mobilize a range of culturally and ethologically important ideas about language, race/ethnicity, extinction and interspecies kinship through the figure of the hieroglyphic animal.

Shannon Walton
sawalton@umich.edu

Rising Up and Falling Down: the animation of posture and the fluidity of species in visual and literary images of animals and women

If there is one thing that stands between humans and animals, both in literature and in the world, it is quite literally the fact that humans stand. It is our upright status as bipedal animals, our evolutionary gift and our oedipal curse, that is "scientific proof" of our categorical difference. However absurd this may seem, one must only turn to Nigel Rothfels' image of the upright circus elephant standing on two feet to experience how shifts in posture can animate the fluidity of species through the uncanny disruption of the human/animal binary. One cannot help but be a little unsettled by the sense of movement present even in the stillness of the frame; the labored bend of the elephant's knees and the way her arms (have they at this point become arms?) are stretched out in front of her resemble a toddler learning to walk. The rising up of animals, however, only addresses one half of the human/animal
binary. In order to address the other half, I turn to the literary image of the woman on all fours and the literature of Charlotte Brontë, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Djuna Barnes. Like the animal who rises up, the woman on all fours disrupts the human/animal binary through a similar shift in posture, one that represents her fall from the position of the upright subject; as she grovels, creeps, and drags across the floor, the woman on all fours becomes the embodiment of oppression in the form of “the animal.” However, in light of these observations, one must pause to consider disability as an additional site for disruption and oppression. This paper is interested in examining posture in relation to the oppression and empowerment of animals and humans both inside and outside of literature.

Diana Webber
Utah Valley University
Diana.Webber@uvu.edu

To ‘Keep the saddle’: Equestrian Imagery in Jane Austen and Eighteenth-century Pornography

‘Spicy allusions,’ argues Jillian Heydt-Stevenson, ‘abound in Austen's novels.’ Austen’s Unbecoming Conjunctions carefully deconstructs the popular image of Jane Austen as a prim spinster consumed with notions of propriety, arguing instead that carefully placed puns and subtle metaphors belie an awareness of the bawdiness which typified eighteenth-century print culture. Animals particularly provide a means of exploring these explicit themes, for as Erica Fudge succinctly states, ‘They are both similar to and different from us.’ Self-identification with non-human animals allows literature to explore these transgressive sexualities.

This concept is encapsulated in Austen’s Northanger Abbey. John Thorpe, Catherine Morland’s inept suitor in Northanger Abbey, displays a preoccupation with horses, dogs and other Regency-era sports. Heydt-Stevenson contends his hobbies reveal ‘a queer interest.’ While I agree with her assertion that Thorpe’s animal interests carry great sexual significance, this 20-minute paper will suggest that Northanger Abbey recalls the equestrian imagery of heterosexual interludes in eighteenth-century pornographic novels. Indeed, comparisons can be made between Thorpe’s insistence on whipping his horses and the flagellation narratives seen in novels such as Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure and Justine. Ultimately, the equestrian symbolism highlights the commodification of human/animal interactions, suggesting that women in these texts are similarly seen are objects of exchange. While it is debatable, even doubtful, that Austen was intimately acquainted with these texts by John Cleland and the Marquis de Sade, this paper will propose that it is nevertheless imperative to fully recognize how an underlying culture of taboo sexuality to some extent informed the mainstream culture readers witness in popular literature by relying on the comparatively benign images of domestic animals as a means of mitigating these explicit themes.

Anna West
University of St Andrews
aew5@st-andrews.ac.uk

Mrs Yeobright and the Adder: The Ethics of Encounter in Thomas Hardy's The Return of the Native
What does it mean to have a face? In *The Return of the Native* (1878), Thomas Hardy describes the faces of humans, animals, and even inanimate objects such as the embers of a fire with vivid and specific detail. In my paper, I examine human and nonhuman animal faces in *The Return of the Native*, considering the way Hardy's depictions throughout the novel not only seem to play with Lavater's pseudoscientific treatise on physiognomy and to echo Darwin's groundbreaking work on expression but also to foreshadow the twentieth-century philosopher Levinas's concept of the face as an indicator of our moral obligation to the other.

Specifically, my paper focuses on a pivotal scene in the novel: an encounter between the dying Mrs Yeobright and an adder about to be killed for her benefit. She makes eye contact with the snake and averts her gaze – much in the manner that her daughter-in-law earlier in the novel met and avoided her. Hardy highlights this moment of encounter across the human-animal boundary with one of his favourite human-animal bending terms, creature, and with a brief conversation between on-looking characters that relates manslaughter to poaching.

While Levinas struggled over the idea of whether an animal – be it a snake or even a dog – could have a face, Hardy seems to imply that the adder in this encounter does possess a face. Furthermore, my paper traces the way the novel emphasizes the fact that appearances can foil the truth and the capacity of the face alone to dissemble without the assistance of verbal language. For Hardy, the refusal to recognize the face of the other – human or animal – indicates a blindness in the self.

Ben Westwood
btwestwood1@gmail.com

**Dogs, Farming, and the Metamorphosis of Genre in Oliver Twist**

This paper considers the links between animals, character, mode and genre in Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. Laura Brown's *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes* briefly discusses the debt Florence Dombey's dog, Diogenes, owes to a certain tradition of eighteenth-century lap dog narratives, but otherwise there has been no discussion of the relations between animals and genre in Dickens. Dickens's novels are, generically, extraordinarily rich; comedy, satire, melodrama and tragedy frequently and promiscuously intermingle, and these modulations, I argue, rely on complex textual interactions between human and nonhuman animals. This paper proposes that what it means to represent a dog or a lamb (two key figures in the novel), to be treated like one or act like one, are questions tied up with considerations of mode and genre in *Oliver Twist*; and are in fact integral to the way the text is shaped.

Developing previous accounts of the text that have seen it as fundamentally divided, the paper discusses how the novel's twist from satire to melodrama is predicated on, and worked through, a parallel shift in its representational focus: from agriculture and farm animals, to a distinctly canine ecology. Drawing on literary theorists of mode and genre, such as Northrop Frye and Peter Brooks, the historical work of Harriet Ritvo, and texts contemporary to the novel, such as Dickens's own "Mudfog Papers," and Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*, Twist emerges from this reading as a text vibrantly animated by its nonhuman inhabitants, and Dickens as an author peculiarly alive to the entanglement of animals and literary form. Articulating a surprising new understanding of the text itself, the paper also extends the possibilities for analyses of animals and genre in the novel more broadly.
Wendy Woodward  
*University of the Western Cape*  
Wendywoodward97@gmail.com

**Reading closure: human-nonhuman border crossings and endings in Gillian Mears’ *Foal’s Bread* and Ibrahim al-Koni’s *Gold Dust***

Only through the focused practice of reading animals can one begin to consider the ethical substance of many contemporary novels, including, in particular, the two under discussion here—*Foal’s Bread* about an Australian family’s involvement in equine high jump competitions from the 1930s, and *Gold Dust* about a Tuareg’s nightmare desert journey with his beloved piebald camel. This paper, via a posthuman reading of the novels, will discuss to what extent border crossings between human and nonhuman animals mitigate or contribute to the novels’ harrowing endings, and to what extent the animals themselves are knowing, participating subjects.

Both Mears and al-Koni narrate traumatic stories which centrally include affinities between a rider and the animal whom s/he rides. Ideally, riding is not imposed on the animal; it is a non-dual embodied experience shared by both human and nonhuman, a riding ‘with’ as Gala Argent suggests. Relationships between horse and human, camel and human, may not be represented as hierarchical in *Foal’s Bread* and *Gold Dust* even as cruelty frames such connections. The writers imagine the potential of border crossings, spaces of common embodied vulnerabilities and finitude. Riding ‘with’ in both novels comes to represent a liminal space, a threshold linking sanity and obsession, spirit and body, life and death.

Narrative closures including the non-human tend, too often, to be tragic. These stories of “shared trans-species beings”, to borrow a term from Cary Wolfe, are also brought to distressing endings. Trans-species affiliations are not sustainable in societies which fail to value animality or the human outsider who connects deeply with non-human beings. Lacking the acceptance of human hospitality, both the female protagonist in Gillian Mears’ *Foal’s Bread* and the male protagonist in Ibrahim al-Koni’s *Gold Dust* choose violent, sacrificial deaths in which their adored animals are implicated.

Lydia Zeldenrust  
QMUL  
lzeldenrust@qmul.ac.uk

**More Serpent than Woman? How to Read Animals and Half-Animals in the Medieval Chivalric Romance of Mélusine***

The story of the beautiful Mélusine – a lady cursed to become a half-serpent every Saturday – has captured the imagination of many readers and authors from the late Middle Ages onward. In fact, the first complete versions of the Mélusine romance – written in Middle French by Jean d’Arras and Coudrette – were so popular that they were soon translated into several different languages, including Middle English. So far, most research on the figure of Mélusine has questioned her degree of humanity and her possible fairy or demonic nature. However, such research overlooks one of the most fundamental aspects of Mélusine’s monstrous form:
the fact that she is an unnatural mix of animal and human. In this paper, I wish to examine Mélusine not from a perspective focusing on her human qualities, but instead I will look at her much neglected animal nature. By first considering the way in which other animals – the boar hunted down by Mélusine’s husband and the dangerous serpents that guard Mélusine’s sister – are presented in the narrative, we can begin to read Mélusine’s animal-human hybrid form and see how it exposes and challenges the normative distinction between Man and Animal found in medieval chivalric romance. Whereas a knight knows he ought to rescue or marry beautiful maidens and kill dangerous beasts, the question remains as to what should do with a creature that is a combination of both. I wish to show that the story of Mélusine presents us with an interesting case study of how reading animals – even half-animals – can help us make clear the structures and hierarchies of the ultimately anthropocentric world portrayed within medieval chivalric romance.
PRE-FORMED PANEL RATIONALES

'A shape and a fleeting harmony': Speaking of animal form

Steve Baker, Garry Marvin, Susan McHugh

Animals are such weighty subjects – weighed down by the trappings of human expectation – that the *form* in which they are presented to an audience does not necessarily register unless it is seen as contravening those expectations. All ‘readings’ of animals might be characterized as encounters with animal form, but the reader’s, viewer’s, or audience’s interpretations of that form are not the immediate subject of this panel proposal. Instead, the distinct (and distinctly challenging) work of shaping animal form will be its focus. This is the work of the writer, the performer, the artist, the advocate, and it is of course sometimes undertaken with living animals, or with animal materials, the weightiness of which can be deployed either in harmony with or as a challenge to cultural expectations.

The deceptively mild title for this panel draws on an observation by the philosopher François Zumbiehl who, writing of the Spanish bullfight, notes that the matador has ‘the obligation of finding, with an unknown animal, the thread that will permit him ... to achieve both a shape and a fleeting harmony’. The description works well enough for what writers, artists and others are trying to do with animal form too, and has the advantage of indicating at the outset that formal considerations and ethical considerations will not always sit comfortably together. As Cary Wolfe has rightly noted, the ‘question of form’ has been moved ‘out of the domain of the strictly literary’ and, even more importantly, has been uncoupled ‘from the humanist project of moral edification and ethical education’.

Juxtaposing the perspectives of literature, anthropology and art, this panel is therefore proposed as a contribution to the ‘Arts, Aesthetics, Philosophies’ strand that is planned for the conference. It is subtitled ‘Speaking of animal form’ rather than ‘Reading animal form’ because its concern is the perspective (and frequently the words) of the form-shaper. What goes into the active shaping of form, as distinct from the subsequent interpretation or appreciation of the ‘finished’ shape? And where are the spaces in which critical interpretation might itself extend and prolong that creative shaping of animal form?

Animals in Nineteenth-century Cityscapes (and Beyond): Presence, Presentation, Preservation

Roman Bartosch, Aline Steibrecher, Anja Schwarz,

The nineteenth century brought about crucial changes in the way cities were perceived, inhabited, and understood. While the influence of these changes on the human subject has been discussed in Marxist theory, with Simmel’s concept of the ‘blasé outlook’ and in the context of literary engagements with flânerie and the (un)readability of the urban in Dickens, Gaskell and others, the multiform roles of animals in this transforming urban environment still puzzles us. The problem lies in the polyvalent status of urban animals as actual beings who collaborate and compete with human co-inhabitants, on the one hand, and their more elusive but likewise more common existence as represented, culturally transformed bodies, be it in literary narratives, in missing-dog reports or in museum displays of ‘stuffed’ animals. All of these animal representations entailed particular political, gender-related or economic ideologies and had specific enduring effects.

The papers in this panel will address some of the intricate enmeshments of real and imagined nineteenth-century animals by focussing on desperate doghunts in newspaper reports on
missing canines (Steinbrecher), on the way literary texts negotiated the concept of animality (Bartosch) and on the cultural practices that brought dead animal bodies into the museum space (Schwarz).

**Reading Shapeshifting Narratives**

Jo Blake Cave, Joanna Coleman, Susan Richardson

Myth and fairy tale present a world in which becoming-animal is a matter of wish or will. Transformation is a constant and the human body is an unstable site, feathered, furred or scaled in accordance with word or spell. It is, we might say, Deleuze and Guattari’s "world of pure intensities, where all forms come undone" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986). In today's unsteady ecological climate, how do our contemporary forms of media read and re-read becoming animal? In the following panel we will explore shapeshifting through storytelling, poetry and contemporary fiction to consider the relationship between word, wonder, and the more-than-human world.