

SOCY XXXX: Animals and Society

Fall 20XX

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00-2:15, Ketchum Arts and Sciences 1B71

“ We patronize them for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate of having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein we err, and greatly err. For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours, they are more finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth. ” —Henry Beston

Instructor Information

Instructor

Jessica Austin

Please call me Jessica or Jess

Email

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Please put SOCY XXXX in your email's subject line

Office Location & Hours

261F Ketchum Arts and Sciences

Monday, 10-11 a.m., Tuesday, 3-4 p.m., or by appointment

Course Information

Course Description

For thousands of years, non-human animals of all kinds have figured prominently in both the material foundations and the ideological underpinnings of human societies. They are an integral part of our lives, and figure heavily in our language, food, clothing, family structure, economy, education, entertainment, science, and recreation. The ways that humans use other animals produce ambivalent and contradictory attitudes toward them. How do we come to consider some species (dogs and cats) family members, while others (cows, pigs, and chickens) are commodities? What can we learn about society and ourselves by investigating how we regard and treat animals?

This course is devoted to exploring many of the ways that non-human animals and humans interact in sociologically meaningful ways. We will use a sociological perspective to explore the spaces that animals occupy in human social and cultural worlds and the interactions humans have with them. We will examine how nonhuman animals are socially constructed, challenge traditional representations of animals, and study them as minded social actors. We will critically consider our own relationships with other animals, and explore cultural debates about animals and the environment, the industrial food complex, health, zoos, and animal experimentation, among other topics. Finally, we will study the animal rights and welfare movements and their connections to other global movements for cultural, social, and environmental justice.

Please be aware that this class will occasionally deal with unpleasant and troubling topics (e.g., torture and killing of animals, laboratory testing on animals, industrial agriculture), and these issues can create strong emotions among students. I encourage you to use these discussions to develop your own answer to what I regard as one of the most fundamental questions we face: Is society an exclusively human realm? *If not, what are the ethical, ecological, and societal consequences of continuing our current patterns into the 21st century?*

Course Goal

Students will develop and extend empathy to humans and other animals as fellow members of society.

Course Objectives

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the roles of other animals in human society and their interactions with humans
- Question the validity of human social constructs of other animals
- Analyze notions of other animals in cultural and temporal context
- Explain the overlap between animal welfare and other social justice issues
- Engage critically with various philosophical and scientific debates in which other animals figure prominently

General Course Information

*Please note: This syllabus and schedule are subject to change at my discretion.
Students will be notified of changes as soon as possible via email.*

Communication. Email is the single best way to contact me with any questions or concerns. I check email twice per day and will generally respond within 24 hours. I do not answer email before 8 a.m. or after 5 p.m. Please allow additional time during weekends and holidays. All official class communications will be sent to your student (colorado.edu) email address. You are responsible for keeping up with class content via this mode.

Attendance and participation. You are adults who can decide the appropriate level of time and attention you wish to devote to this class. That said, attendance generally correlates with better grades. I will not take attendance, but if you do not attend, you cannot participate in the in-class activities throughout the semester. *These activities cannot be made up for any reason.* If you choose to attend, please arrive on time. Late arrivals disrupt class, and you may miss important information. Additionally, class ends at 2:15. This is the earliest you should start packing up.

Electronics. You are allowed to take notes on a laptop or tablet. However, all phones should be silenced and *put away unless I ask you to use them for an activity.* If you are found to be distracting other students, or engaging in activity other than for this class, I may ask you to leave.

Late assignments. Out of fairness to students who turn assignments in on time, you will lose 10% of possible points for each day your assignment is late. No late assignments will be accepted 48 hours after the due date.

Grading. I do not grade on a curve or offer extra credit. If you find that you are not doing as well as you would like in the course, please come talk to me as soon as possible.

Classroom etiquette. Meaningful and constructive dialogue is the cornerstone of this class. The following guidelines will help us to achieve a welcoming environment for all students:

- Critique ideas, not people.
- Listen to others with the intent to understand, not to respond.

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- Let others speak without interruption or disruption.
- Personal attacks and discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated.
- What is *shared* here, stays here; what is *learned* here, leaves here.

Finally, ***speak your mind responsibly***. This means knowing your words have consequences. Be willing to own them when choosing how you speak.

CU Boulder Policies

Classroom behavior. Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to me with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Accommodation for disabilities. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance.

Religious holidays. Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, missed exams will be offered an essay makeup a week after the exam is given or after religious observations have ended. Paper due date conflicts will be given up to a one-week extension. See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Academic dishonesty. All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#). Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgment. Examples of plagiarism include: failing to use quotation marks when directly quoting from a source; failing to document distinctive ideas from a source; fabricating or inventing sources; and copying information from computer-based sources, i.e., the internet. If you are unclear about the rules regarding plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, please ask for further clarification. ***Evidence of plagiarism will result in an automatic failure in the course and the matter will be turned over to university officials.***

Sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation. CU Boulder is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment,

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intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the [OIEC website](#).

Course Materials

Required Materials

Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human-Animal Studies by Margo DeMello

Paperback – 2012

This book is available [on Amazon](#) for \$35 or less.

Additional weekly readings and films will be posted on Canvas.

Assignments

In-class Activities. Over the course of the semester, we will complete 12 in-class activities. These are pass/fail; you will receive credit simply for completing the assignment. **You can miss two of these activities with no penalty to your grade.** Each of the remaining activities are worth 4 points, or 1% of your course grade, for a total of **10% of your course grade (40 points)**. These activities will not be announced ahead of time; if you complete more than ten, you will not receive any extra credit.

Critical Reflection Essays. You will complete two short essays, each worth 12.5% of your course grade for a total of **25% of your course grade (50 points each, 100 points total)**. Guidelines are available on Canvas.

Fishbowl Discussions. On the second day of class, you will sign up for one fishbowl discussion. We will hold 11 discussions over the course of the semester. This discussion is **15% of your course grade (60 points): 10% for the group conversation you participate in (40 points), and 5% (20 points) for contributing as an audience member.** Guidelines are available on Canvas.

Animal Encounter paper. The Animal Encounter paper is a longer writing assignment that describes and analyzes an event or space where you will observe your own and others' interactions with animals. **The Animal Encounter paper is 25% of your course grade (100 points).** Guidelines are available on Canvas.

Policy Poster. Your final project is a poster that describes a social debate surrounding animals, and proposes a policy to address the problem. On the final day of class, we will hold a gallery walk, where you can view your classmates' posters and share your own. **The Policy Poster is 25% of your course grade (100 points).**

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Guidelines are available on Canvas.

Course Schedule

All readings other than DeMello are on Canvas.

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Week 1: Introduction			
Tu 8.28	Introduction to the course	Syllabus	
Th 8.30	Introduction to animals and society	1) <i>Animals and Sociology</i> – Irvine 2) DeMello, Chapter 1	
Week 2: Thinking with Animals			
Tu 9.4	How and why we think with animals	1) DeMello, Chapter 14 2) <i>What Animals Taught Me About Being Human</i> – Macdonald, New York Times Magazine	
Th 9.6	Human-animal boundaries & domestication	1) DeMello, Chapters 2 and 5	
Week 3: Animal Selves			
Tu 9.11	Animal selfhood	1) DeMello, pp. 357-370 2) <i>George's Bulldog: What Mead's Canine Companion Could Have Told Him about the Self</i> - Irvine	Fishbowl 1
Th 9.13	Animal emotions	1) <i>An Elephant Crackup?</i> – Siebert, New York Times Magazine	
Week 4: Animals and Sociological Theory			
Tu 9.18	Social constructions of animals	1) DeMello, Chapter 3 2) <i>Regarding Rocky: A Theoretical and Ethnographic Exploration of Interspecies Intersubjectivity</i> – Young	Fishbowl 2
Th 9.20	Animals & social problems	1) <i>The Relationship of Animal Abuse to Violence and Other Forms of Antisocial Behavior</i> – Arluke et al. 2) <i>The Discourse of Dog Fighting</i> – Kalof and Taylor	
Week 5: Animals and Human Oppression			
Tu 9.18	Interlinking oppressions: Gender/Sexuality	1) DeMello, Chapter 13 2) <i>Cat Person, Dog Person, Gay, or Heterosexual: The Effect of Labels on a Man's Perceived Masculinity, Femininity, and Likability</i> – Mitchell & Ellis	Fishbowl 3

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Th 9.20	Interlinking oppressions: Race	1) <i>Animal Practices and the Racialization of Filipinas in Los Angeles</i> – Griffith, Wolch, and Lassiter	
Week 6: Animals and Culture			
Tu 9.25	Animals & non-American culture	1) <i>Good to Pet and Eat: The Keeping and Consuming of Dogs and Cats in South Korea</i> – Podberscek 2) <i>Perception, Price and Preference: Consumption and Protection of Wild Animals Used in Traditional Medicine</i> – Liu et al.	
Th 9.27	Animals in popular culture	1) DeMello, Chapter 16 2) <i>Emotion Regulation, Procrastination, and Watching Cat Videos Online: Who Watches Internet Cats, Why, and To What Effect?</i> – Myrick	Critical Reflection 1 due on Canvas 9/28, 11:00 p.m.
Week 7: Close Relationships			
Tu 10.2	Pets & the human-animal bond	1) DeMello, Chapter 8 2) <i>Historical Perspectives on the Human-Animal Bond</i> – Hines	Fishbowl 4
Th 10.4	Pets as friends & family	1) <i>Actions Speak Louder than Words: Close Relationships between Humans and Nonhuman Animals</i> – Sanders 2) <i>Can Pets Function as Family Members?</i> – Cohen	
Week 8: The Dark Side of Human-Animal Relationships			
Tu 10.9	Implications of animal abuse	1) DeMello, Chapter 12 2) <i>A Sociological Analysis of Animal Abuse</i> – Flynn	Fishbowl 5
Th 10.11	Animal abuse & human-directed violence	1) <i>Battered Pets and Domestic Violence: Animal Abuse Reported by Women Experiencing Intimate Violence and by Nonabused Women</i> – Ascione et al.	
Week 9: Animals in Institutions			
Tu 10.16	Animals in laboratories & education	1) DeMello, Chapter 9 2) <i>"We Build a Better Beagle": Fantastic Creatures in Lab Animal Ads</i> – Arluke	Fishbowl 6
Th 10.18	The agricultural industrial complex	1) DeMello, Chapter 7 2) <i>Global Climate Change and the Industrial Animal Agriculture Link: The</i>	

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
		<i>Construction of Risk</i> – Bristow & Fitzgerald	
Week 10: Animals in Institutions, continued			
Tu 10.23	Animals as entertainment or sport	1) DeMello, Chapter 6 2) <i>Use of 'Entertainment' Chimpanzees in Commercials Distorts Public Perception Regarding Their Conservation Status</i> – Hare et al.	Fishbowl 7
Th 10.25	Animals in captivity	1) <i>The Wild Animal in Late Modernity: The Case of the Disneyization of Zoos</i> – Beardsworth & Bryman 2) <i>An Elephant in the Room: The Science and Well-Being of Elephants in Captivity</i> - Barrickman	Critical Reflection 2 due on Canvas 10/26, 11:00 p.m.
Week 11: Wildlife			
Tu 10.30	Zoopolis: Animals in cities	1) <i>City Planning and Animals: Expanding Our Urban Compassion Footprint</i> – Beatley & Bekoff	Fishbowl 8
Th 11.1	Human/wildlife conflict	1) <i>Behavioral Interactions and Conflict Among Domestic Dogs, Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs, and People in Boulder, Colorado</i> – Bekoff & Ickes 2) DeMello, Chapter 4	
Week 12: Animal Law, Welfare, and Rights			
Tu 11.6	Animals' legal status in America	1) <i>Animals as More Than "Mere Things," But Still Property: A Call for Continuing Evolution of the Animal Welfare Paradigm</i> – Cupp 2) <i>An Exploratory Study of Animal Cruelty Prosecution in New York</i> - Kordzek	Fishbowl 9
Th 11.8	Animal welfare & animal rights	1) <i>The Moral Reasoning of Believers in Animal Rights</i> – Block 2) <i>Updating Animal Welfare Thinking: Moving Beyond the "Five Freedoms" Towards "A Life Worth Living"</i> – Mellor	Animal Encounter Paper due on Canvas 11/9, 11:00 p.m.
Week 13: Working with Animals			
Tu 11.13	Veterinary work & ethics	1) <i>Veterinary Dilemmas</i> – Joanna Swabe 2) <i>Death or Declaw: Dealing with Moral Ambiguity in a Veterinary Hospital</i> – Atwood-Harvey	Fishbowl 10

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Th 11.15	Shelter & slaughterhouse workers	1) <i>The Institutional Self of Shelter Workers</i> – Arluke & Sanders 2) <i>The Most Dangerous Job</i> – Excerpt from <i>Fast Food Nation</i> – Eric Schlosser	
NO CLASS WEEK OF NOVEMBER 20 – FALL BREAK			
Week 14: Animals and Human Health			
Tu 11.27	Animal-assisted therapy/service animals	1) DeMello, Chapter 10 2) <i>Effects of Reading with Adult Tutor/Therapy Dog Teams on Elementary Students' Reading Achievement and Attitudes</i> – Levinson et al.	Fishbowl 11
Th 11.29	Animals and public health	1) <i>Shelter from the Storm: Companion Animal Emergency Planning in Nine States</i> – Austin 2) Excerpt from <i>Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic</i> – Quammen	
Week 15: Social Movements			
Tu 12.4	Historical movements	1) DeMello, Chapter 19	
Th 12.6	Contemporary movements	1) <i>Where the Boys Aren't: The Predominance of Women in Animal Rights Activism</i> – Gaarder 2) <i>"I'm Not an Activist!": Animal Rights vs. Animal Welfare in the Purebred Dog Rescue Movement</i> – Greenebaum	
Week 16: Your Choice and Presentations			
Tu 12.11	Students' choice		
Th 12.13	Student presentations		Policy Poster – Due in class

Additional Information and Resources

[Links to research in Human-Animal Studies](#)

[Human-Animal Bond Research Institute research library](#)

[Humane Society of the United States Animal Studies Repository](#)