

5th Annual 2020 Student for Critical Animal Studies Conference

March 14th, 2020 / From 10 am to 5 pm
Berkey Hall, Room 211A



The Students for Critical Animal Studies (SCAS), rooted in animal liberation and anarchism, is an international association of students, from high schools to online colleges to graduate schools, dedicated to the abolition of animal and ecological exploitation, and to dismantle all systems of domination and oppression, in hopes for a just, equitable, inclusive, and peaceful world. SCAS challenges students to view social justice from a more inclusive and intersectional perspective, while providing a forum for the meeting of academia and activism.

This 5th annual conference will provide a platform for students, activists, and professors to critically assess the animal liberation, oppression, and domination theoretically and empirically. Our hope is that the conference will encourage both a productive reflexion that challenges normalcy of systemic oppression that implements discrimination and networking among those who do academic and pragmatic social justice work.

Hosted by



Conference Committee

Annie Bernatchez, PhD (c) in sociology
University of Ottawa, Canada

Nathan Poirier, PhD (c) in sociology
Michigan State University, US

Acknowledgement

This conference has been made possible through the generous funding of Animal Studies at Michigan State University

Panel 1 – 10 am to 11:00 am

THE PRAGMATISM OF ANIMAL LIBERATION

SAMYUKTHA IYER | Michigan State University, United States

In 2018 Michigan State University Veg Club was started for students who are vegan, vegetarian, or just curious. The club educates and encourages others to adopt a plant-based diet. This is done through meetings with members where they discuss a range of topics including ethics, the environment and health. Along with educating their members, they expand to a wider audience by running public events, such as presenting to and with other environmental clubs, movie screenings of vegan documentaries, and demos with vegan samples and literature about veganism.

Intersectional Veganism

Intersectionality is vital to a healthy and equitable movement regardless of the field it is in. For veganism especially, “wealthy” and “white” seem to have become encoded in the movement - making it inaccessible to others. However, veganism is about far more than just a diet fad, it is about equity and equality that extends to every conscious creature on Earth. It follows especially in a movement founded on compassion and ethics that the same care is extended to every being involved. That is why it is vital to include - and center - racial, gender, and economic work in animal rights activism. It is not feasible to ask someone living in a food desert to go vegan. Similarly, Western ideas have convinced people that there is one way to be vegan when animal rights work and philosophies have existed in non-Western societies for a long time. There can be many ways to view veganism and intersectionality allows for multiple narratives. Speciesism - the idea that humans are superior to other animals - can only be addressed if humans are treated equally in the first place. Being intersectional is vital to furthering the ethical goals of veganism and will help inspire a more holistic and equal movement.

MARK SUCHYTA | Michigan State University, United States

Mark Suchyta is an environmental sociologist and current graduate student at Michigan State University. His research broadly focuses on individuals’ attitudes toward the natural environment and non-human animals, especially farmed animals. He is currently working on his dissertation which explores the relationship between human well-being and the natural environment. Prior to his time at Michigan State, Mark had a brief career in social work and earned a Master’s Degree from Penn State University. He is an active environmental and animal rights activist who has partnered with several local and national organizations.

The Importance of Appealing to Values in Animal Liberation Activism

Social psychologists have long emphasized how values are the cognitive building blocks of beliefs and attitudes and therefore an essential consideration in changing them. While animal liberation activists and organizations put a lot of resources into changing beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, the role of values is often overlooked. Drawing from survey research and concepts based in social psychology, this study demonstrates how individuals’ beliefs about and concern for farmed animals can be traced to particular values, as well as other demographic variables. In doing so, I emphasize how an understanding of values can help animal liberation activists navigate the landscape they are working in and how appealing to such values can increase the effectiveness of their message.

Panel 2 – 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

SPECIESISM AND THE STATE

DENIZ HOSBAY BAYRAKTAR | Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University, Turkey

Deniz Hosbay Bayraktar is a research assistant in the Department of Management and Organization at Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University. She graduated from Business Administration at Dokuz Eylul University in 2008. In 2013, she completed her MA in Business Administration at Akdeniz University. Deniz also graduated from Anadolu University Associate Degree Veterinary Department in 2012. Now she is a phd student in the department of Management and Organization in Yildirim Beyazit University, preparing a thesis about Animal Rights Organizations in Turkey. Having been a vegetarian for 20 years, Deniz has been interested in protecting animals and treating stray animals since she knew herself. She lives with three disabled cats and two dogs.

The Conflict Management in Turkey: The Case of Animal Domination in Istanbul Adalar

Animals are exploited in many ways by the human. Although there are other alternatives, today animals continue to be used in transportation. For example, phaeton is still being used as the main means of transportation in Istanbul Adalar. Five hundred horses die annually due to phaetons in Istanbul Adalar; these deaths and the exploitation continue despite the protests of many animal right activists and some inhabitants of Adalar. With the change of the mayor of Istanbul in June, a workshop about the phaetons was organized in September 2019 and the parties came together but no result could be reached. After a while this meeting, it was explained that the horses were infected with Ruam disease with the additive effect of the unhealthy conditions and 105 horses were killed rapidly. And then the other horses in the region were quarantined and the using the phaeton was largely canceled during the three-month period with the help of radical activists' protests.

In the Adalar case, –as stated at the number 4 and 5 Principles of CAS- it can be revealed that hierarchical, speciesist, neoliberal ideologies lead to the exploitation of the horses. It will be expressed how the exploitation, domination and oppression of power is realized through horses. Also explained the systematic exploitation of horses, the attacks of phaeton owners, the struggles of radical animal rights groups who opposed the hierarchical politics that allowed the exploitation of the horses used for the phaetons, inhabitants of the Adalar, and the state's response to actions.

MARYLINE EL KHOURY | University of Paris, France

KENZO JACQUEMIN | University of Liège, Belgium

Maryline El Khoury – studies political sociology at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne in Paris (Master 2). She is writing a thesis on Animal Rights Activists, questioning what the repression of animal liberationists in France says about the structural system of speciesism and how can we understand the actual criminalization of the movement.

Kenzo Jacquemin – studies anthropology at Université de Liège in Belgium (Master 1). He is working on the links between anarchism and antispeciesism, on the 269LA's sanctuary, and on the rats in town. He is also an activist for 269LA.

About an Anarchist Sanctuary. For a Materialistic Definition of Antispeciesism (SKYPE)

The perspective we'd like to underline in our work, converging with the framework of CAS is the understanding of speciesism as a system of domination, reinforced and reproduced through social institutions, social practices and ideological discourses of domination. What is interesting about the sanctuary we'd like to talk about is that it allows to see how the social institutions of exploitation and domination of the nonhuman animals affect the bodies of the latter. It allows to see other possibilities for the living, challenge the fences - threshold - outsides and question the socially constructed categories of 'humans' and 'animals'. Bring nonhuman's culture, material conditions of living back to the center. We'd like to explore how it is possible to frame the nonhuman world and the animal life with a non anthropocentric eye. As the practice of veganism makes it possible not to view animals as commodities; the habilitation of sanctuaries is a political act that aims to resist geographically and politically to the politics of domination. We explore the geography of violence (and thus non violence - resistance) and the animal geography to try to understand the human and nonhuman relations through the power and domination that structure them. In sum, what brings us closer to the CAS is the normative statement and the political engagement we advocate for and which aims to deconstruct speciesism as a structure of domination. This leads us to look at the interactions in a wider context of power and human domination over the animal world. We also try to question the animal conditions of living and bring critical sociology in the critical study of species. Finally,

we try to empower the definition David Nibert gives to speciesism which is the one 269 LA fights for in the French animal advocacy world. As we said, they are very marginalized and we think their struggle is worth being studied because even if it is marginal and cannot overturn the general systemic violence that is operated every day over millions of individuals, the geographical space of resistance they created gives lessons for the liberationist movement in general.

DENIZ HOSBAY BAYRAKTAR | Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University, Turkey

OZGUR BAYRAKTAR | Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University, Turkey

Deniz Hosbay Bayraktar is a research assistant in the Department of Management and Organization at Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University. She graduated from Business Administration at Dokuz Eylul University in 2008. In 2013, she completed her MA in Business Administration at Akdeniz University. Deniz also graduated from Anadolu University Associate Degree Veterinary Department in 2012. Now she is a PhD student in the department of Management and Organization in Yildirim Beyazit University, preparing a thesis about Animal Rights Organizations in Turkey. Having been a vegetarian for 20 years, Deniz has been interested in protecting animals and treating stray animals since she knew herself. She lives with three disabled cats and two dogs.

Ozgur Bayraktar has been a research assistant in the Department of Political Science at Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University since 2011, graduated from Public Administration at Dokuz Eylul University in 2011. In 2012, Ozgur started his MA in Political Science at Hacettepe University and received his MA degree in 2016 with his dissertation titled *Separation at Nationalist Movement: Nationalist Movement Party and Grand Unity Party*. Ozgur is a PhD student at Hacettepe University, Department of Political Science and currently writing a dissertation titled *Being the Other in Turkey: Staying out of the Nationalist Conservative Framework*. Also he lives with three disabled cats and two dogs.

A Comparison of the Local Governments in Terms of Approaches to Stray Animals in Turkey

When the history of Turkey is examined, it is seen that the ways of the struggle with the stray animals of the local administrations differ according to the ideology of the mayor. The stray animals have been perceived as a problem for municipalities in Turkey since the early days of the republic. Even before the republic -during the Ottoman Empire-, the number of the stray animals was very high. In order to reduce this number, the Ottoman administration carried out various massacres. The biggest massacre for stray animals is the Hayırsızada Massacre in 1910. Eighty thousand dogs were taken to the island and left to die. Although the people who tried to protect the animals and established foundations for them opposed to this situation they could not prevent it. Also in the Turkey Republic, many massacres were made by poisoning the stray animals. Some local administrations consisted of people who did not think differently from Sultan Mehmet Reşat V, who carried out the biggest massacre in the past. In Turkey, some mayors tried to find a solution without killing animals, while some mayors and governors gave the rifle to the people and asked them to shoot the stray dogs and paid them for per corpse. The study is related to the massacres of stray animals made by the state. In this study, it is concluded that animals are more exposed to oppression, torture and killing during the period of right-wing market-oriented neoliberal parties -compatible with the principles of CAS 1st and 5th-. In order to reach this conclusion, it will be discussed the ways in which local governments kill and legitimize the stray animals in Turkey history.

Lunch – 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm

(Woody's Oasis, Mediterranean, catered and free!)

Panel 3 – 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

MOVING THE PARADIGMS FORWARD

SARAH TOMASELLO | Canisius College, United States

Sarah Tomasello received her B.A. in Anthropology and Religious Studies and has a master's degree in Anthrozoology from Canisius College. She is especially interested in the intersections between decolonization, animal rights, feminism and wildlife conservation. More specifically, she hopes to learn about the importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge to conservation initiatives, and how methodologies can be improved so that conservationists can work more respectfully with Indigenous communities. She is also intrigued by more-than-human ethnography, and research which aims to understand the realities of the nonhuman species most marginalized by human society, such as those labeled as "pests."

Nonhuman "Others": A Theology of Hope and Liberation (SKYPE)

Liberation theology is a movement that emerged during the 1960's as both an intellectual and religious response to the poverty, marginalization, and oppression faced by millions of humans across Latin America. Built from the perspective of the poor, its mission is to reject and overcome the underlying systems of oppression that result in unjust social relations. Since its inception, this movement has expanded across the globe, encouraging Christians to become actively involved in political and civic affairs in attempt to create a society free of oppression. This has inspired a number of liberation movements, including Black theology, LGBTQ theology, feminist theology, and most recently, eco-theology. However, whether liberation theology could be expanded to include the liberation of nonhuman 'others' has not been made explicitly clear. This paper, therefore, will examine academic literature in hopes of gaining an understanding of how, if at all, liberation theology has addressed the suffering of nonhuman 'others'. Utilizing Joseph Cardinal Cardijn's See-Judge-Act methodology, it will then offer suggestions of ways in which this movement could grow in order to better include nonhuman animals in its scope of concern.

ALAINA INTERISANO | York University, Canada

Alaina Interisano is a second year PhD student at York University in the Faculty of Environmental Studies. She obtained her BA and MA in sociology at Brock University, concentrating in critical animal studies. In her MA thesis research, she examined student perspectives of animal experimentation to understand how this exploitative practice in science education, and the status quo of animal models in research and testing, are maintained and reproduced through post-secondary education. Her current research interests center around the convergence of environmental education and critical animal pedagogy, and human-animal relations in science education and research. For her PhD research, she will explore the implementation of humane education principles and non-animal alternative methods and technologies in post-secondary science education.

"It's a Privilege": A Critical Examination of University Students' Perspectives of Animal Experimentation in Science Education

Across North America the number of animals used for research, education and testing continues to increase annually, despite the fact that the technology and availability of non-animal alternatives in science has improved and advanced over the past several decades. This increase runs contrary to the principles that are often propagated by the scientific community of replacing, reducing and refining the use of animals in science. The socialization process of animal experimentation begins through pedagogy, making the university an important site in the knowledge development of future researchers; as research suggests that the practices students are taught with in education influences their techniques, values, preferred methods and treatment of non-human animals later in their careers. Using the data from interviews with undergraduate science students who have engaged in animal experimentation, this presentation will analyze speciesist relations between students and non-human animals in university science education. It looks at how students are taught to make sense of this practice as a part of their education and conceptualize non-human animals as research objects, thus perpetuating dominative human-animal relations in science. This presentation uses critical animal studies and critical pedagogy as frameworks for identifying and deconstructing themes in students' accounts and experiences with non-human animals in classroom settings. The results show that students' experiences of animal experimentation pedagogy have instilled in them a reliance and perceived necessity of this exploitative practice in education. Most notably, instructors are depicted by students as highly

influential in shaping their acceptance of animal experimentation, as well as coercive when students express ethical concerns and hesitation in participating, which will be discussed in relation to broader implications of animal experimentation pedagogy.

VARUN JOSHI | University of Guelph, Canada

I am in my second semester at the University of Guelph in my PhD in sociology. I completed a bachelors of arts in Criminology and another combined bachelor of arts in History and sociology at Carleton University. I studied under Dr. Amy Fitzgerald, a pioneer in Canadian green criminology at the University of Windsor for my master's degree and became committed to becoming a green criminologist who addresses oppressions that harm nonhuman animals, humans and the ecological environment. Using an integrative intersectional feminist lens, I intend on challenging the harms that Canadian prison systems produce through animal agriculture.

Prisoners and Farming/Slaughtering Animals

Canadian penitentiaries are currently reviving prison farms in Kingston, Ontario. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has authorized establishing an industrial goat dairy operation. Eligible inmates will farm food products from goats, which will be exported to Feihe International, a Chinese company that produces infant formula. This decision will produce two distinct types of oppressions. First, goats will experience oppression through being farmed, which will include psychological and physical suffering, followed by slaughter. Second, inmates will work setting that will compromise their reintegration into society. Inmates are expected to form bonds with docile animals to ensure the farming process is as efficient as possible. Yet these bonds are severed in the most literal ways when inmates must farm and slaughter them. This process may compromise their values and goals, which produces the caring-killing paradox. The caring-killing paradox is a known phenomenon in veterinarians and its emergence in an institutional setting like a prison needs to be studied so that effective feedback can be provided to Canadian programs as they attempt to assist inmates in developing job skills. This study will propose an alternative animal program developed under a sanctuary model, where inmates will not have to farm animals. In a sanctuary model, inmates would assist in rehabilitating abused animals instead of killing them and provide therapeutic benefits that reduce risk factors for offenders. Implementing a sanctuary model can challenge the oppressions that current agriculture model will produce.

BENJAMIN J. KAPRON | York University, Canada

Benjamin J. Kapron is a Ph.D. candidate in York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies, exploring how he might develop and inform his decolonial and ethical praxes, as a settler, through understanding Land to be a decolonial agent and teacher. In his work, Ben aims to bring into conversation environmental ethics and philosophy; decolonization, Indigenous studies, and settler colonial studies; and critical environmental thought challenging human exceptionalism and exemptionalism. Ben is the managing editor of *UnderCurrents: journal of critical environmental studies*. His Ph.D. research is supported by a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship.

"[A] Vision and Vital Condition to Endure, to Outwit Evil and Dominance, and to Deny Victimry": Exploring Animal Survivance

This paper extends Gerald Vizenor's concept of "survivance" to other-than-human animals, in order to affirm their agency and challenge damage-centered understandings of them. Indigenous scholars, including Vizenor, emphasize that believing Indigenous Peoples are (inevitably) going extinct commits discursive violence against Indigenous Peoples, denying Indigenous agency, foreclosing Indigenous futures, and supporting material violence committed against Indigenous Peoples. Survivance refuses that Indigenous Peoples are going extinct, affirming that their continued survival against settler colonialism is active and agential: Indigenous Peoples are not merely passively still alive despite settler colonialism; they continuously undertake strategies to survive against settler colonialism and maintain their ways of life. Eve Tuck takes up survivance to oppose research that she labels "damage-centered": where research acknowledges only the hardships that Indigenous Peoples face—even research intended to improve the lives of Indigenous Peoples—it "reinforces and reinscribes a one-dimensional notion of these people as depleted, ruined, and hopeless" (409; original italicized). Survivance rejects essentializing Indigenous Peoples as victims or fundamentally damaged. The author of this paper asserts that concerns over animal exploitation, abuse, and extinction—although necessary—have similarly served to essentialize animals as suffering, creating damage-centered understandings of animals. Although critical animal studies scholars may focus on these topics out of care and concern for other animals, understanding animals

through a damage-centered lens denies animal agency. Utilizing the continued survival of bison in Makħóšiča (the badlands of South Dakota) as a case study, the author examines how the lived survivance of animals rejects animal victimry, affirms animal presence, and upholds animal agency.

Works Cited: Tuck, Eve. "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities." *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 79, no. 3, 2009, pp. 409-427.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*. U of Nebraska P, 2003.

Roundtable – 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm
CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES AS A CAREER