

MHB 559/PHIL 543: Animal Bioethics
Syllabus v2, Fall 2012
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A. Administrative Information

Instructor: Professor Robert Streiffer

Lectures: B231 Van Vleck, Monday, 2:25-4:55 (15 minute break at 3:30)

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:15-2:30 in my philosophy office and by appointment

Bioethics Office: 1411 Medical Sciences Center; 262-7490

Philosophy Office: 5101 Helen C. White Hall; 263-9479

E-mail: rstreiffer@wisc.edu . Please begin the subject of all e-mails with “[Animal Bioethics F12]”.

Home Page: <https://mywebspace.wisc.edu/rstreiffer/web/>

B. Course Description

This course is for graduate students and upper-level undergraduates. It is an in-depth study of the main philosophical theories in animal ethics and a survey of the ways that empirical research is important for evaluating the truth of those theories as well as for understanding their practical implications. Although the exact content will vary from year to year, topics covered will include the moral status of animals, different conceptions of animal welfare, animals’ mental lives, the use of animals in research, and the use of animals in agriculture. Additional topics could include disobedience on behalf of animals and the legal and regulatory aspects of animal use oversight.

The topics are intended to hang together in the following way. An understanding of the moral status of animals provides an account of how morally important they and their interests are, in their own right and independently of their utility to others. Are their lives and interests morally irrelevant, do they matter but in a way that can be justifiably sacrificed for the greater good, or are they protected by individual rights that stand as a bar to being sacrificed for the greater good? For animals that do have independent moral importance, the fact that an action would contribute to or detract from their well-being matters morally, and so it is important to understand how to properly define animal well-being. Is animal well-being defined purely in terms of the quality of their subjective experiences, in terms of the satisfaction of their desires, or in terms of objective factors such as physiological health or species-typical functioning? However animal well-being is to be understood, animals with different cognitive and emotive capacities will have different levels of well-being accessible to them. Thus, information about animals’ mental lives is also relevant to understanding how we can affect their well-being. For example, if an animal is not capable of feeling pain, then nothing we can do can hurt it and so we need not have moral concern over that possibility. But if, for example, an animal is capable of feeling love or friendship, then separating it from its parent, child, mate, or friend will be wrong unless adequate moral justification can be found. Moreover, many of the claims about the moral status of different animals depend upon empirical claims about their mental lives, not all of which are equally well-supported by the empirical literature. With some understanding, then, of the moral status of animals, their well-being, and their mental lives, we are then in a position to begin morally evaluating the human use of animals in agriculture and research.

C. Materials:

- The readings will be available electronically. I will discuss the details in class.

- Handouts and news articles distributed in class
- Because the debate is very polarized, you should be careful about relying on the web for information about animal use.

D. Objectives

There are three overall goals of the course:

1. To improve your familiarity with the facts, concepts, theories, and arguments from the relevant scientific, legal, and ethical literature, esp. with regard to theories of the moral status of nonhuman animals, conceptions of animal welfare, and the mental lives of animals.
2. To improve your ability to think through for yourself the ethical issues raised by our use of animals in agriculture and research.
3. To improve your ability to discuss with others the ethical issues raised by our use of animals in agriculture and research.

E. Grading Plan:

I use the following numerical equivalents when calculating your final grades: A=4, AB=3.5, B=3, BC=2.5, C=2, D=1, F=0. After calculating your numerical final total, I round to the nearest letter grade.

F. Requirements:

- (1) Before the class for which they are assigned, read all of the assignments, read them carefully, and read them critically. Come to class ready to discuss the material. The contribution that each person makes to the discussion is important and participation is 10% of your grade.
- (2) Attend all the classes. I will be taking attendance, both to grade attendance and to help me learn your names. Attendance will count as 5% of your final grade. You are entitled to one free unexcused absence. Any excused absences for reasons other than an emergency must be cleared in advance of the class missed. For all excused absences, you must send me an e-mail stating the date and the reason so that I will have a record of it when it comes time to calculate your final grade. Any unexcused absence above your free one will affect your attendance grade as follows:

1 absence	B
2 absences	C
3 absences	D
4 absences	F
5 absences	Fail the class

- (3) Participate in class discussions. Class participation will count for 10% of your grade.
- (4) Several short, in-class, unannounced quizzes, cumulatively worth 20% of your grade. These will be on the readings assigned for that day, and possibly include short-answer, multiple choice, and true/false questions. The grade for the quizzes will be determined by the following formula: (total # of questions answered correctly/total # of questions)*4.
- (5) Undergraduate papers: two 6-8 page papers, per the schedule below. The first is worth 30% of your grade, the second is worth 35%.

- (6) Graduate student papers: a choice between two 8-10 page papers or one 16 page paper in two drafts. By “draft” I mean a draft of a complete paper, not a partial paper. For the two papers or the term paper, you may choose your own topic so long as you discuss it with me beforehand.

UG, Grad, Opt 1: Attendance (5%)+ Participation (10%) + Paper 1 (30%) + Paper 2 (35%) + Quizzes (20%)

Grad, Opt 2: Attendance (5%)+ Participation (10%) + Paper (65%) + Quizzes (20%)

G. Undergraduate Paper Dates:

	Assigned	Due	Paper Length	Grade
1	Oct. 8	Oct. 22	1800-2400 words (6-8 pages)	30%
2	Nov. 19	Dec. 10	1800-2400 words (6-8 pages)	35%

H. Graduate Student Paper Dates:

	Assigned	Due	Paper Length	Grade
1	Oct. 8	Oct. 22	First draft 2,400-3,000 words (8-10 pages); or 2,400-3,000 words (8-10 pages)	NA/30%
2	Nov. 19	Dec. 10	Final draft 4,675-4,925 words (16 pages); or 2,400-3,000 words (8-10 pages)	65%/35%

- Late Paper Policy: You must hand in all the papers in order to pass this course. You may not elect to opt out of a paper and receive an F on it. Papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Papers handed in during class but after the beginning of class will be bumped to the next letter grade or half-letter grade down (e.g., from an A to an AB, from a C to a D.) After that, the penalty is one full letter grade per 24 hours. Any non-emergency extensions must be requested prior to the due date, and will be granted only in rare circumstances. Although you are encouraged to discuss your papers with friends and classmates, no group work is allowed.
- Incompletes: I think incompletes are almost invariably a bad idea both for the student and the professor, and they will only be granted in rare cases of truly extenuating circumstances.

I. Additional Class Policies

Plagiarism and Other Kinds of Academic Misconduct: You must cite all of the sources you use for your papers, except that you need not cite my lectures or my handouts. Instead, cite to the original source, if there is one. The UW Writing Center also has helpful guidelines for appropriate quotation and citation at <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/pdf/Plagiarism.pdf>. Ignorance of what counts as plagiarism is not an acceptable defense. Please note that the imposition of any penalty for any kind of academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, trying to get credit for a class you didn't attend, etc.) can result in a permanent note that goes into your academic file, and that UW can disclose the fact that you were penalized for academic misconduct to interested parties who request that information. I will fail any papers not in compliance with the UW rules governing academic misconduct, which you can find at <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html>. Other penalties may also be used, if appropriate.

Exceptions to the rules: I will not grant anyone an exception to the rules outlined in this syllabus unless that exception is granted to everyone. This means, for example, that since I can't commit to allowing everyone the option of rewriting their paper, I can't allow anyone the option of rewriting their paper.

Classroom Etiquette: You are expected to behave in ways that are appropriate and respectful to the professor and the other students. This includes, but is not limited to

1. The topics in this class are some of the most controversial that are dealt with in any class on campus. While we want to strive for a critical approach to our own views and the views of others, we want to make sure that we are polite and respectful at all times.
2. Any particular views or stories that are discussed in class need to stay in class, as people in class may work within the animal use or activism communities and want to either express their view or try on a view for size without getting hassled by their peers. However, please keep in mind that I am not in a position to guarantee that this rule will be followed.
3. Arriving on time. Students who walk into the classroom late create a distraction.
4. Refraining from private conversations with classmates during lecture or discussion.
5. Being patient and courteous to other students when they ask a question or make a comment.
6. Expressing disagreement with the comments of others in a respectful manner.
7. Removing sunglasses and hats.
8. Staying awake.
9. Refraining from reading any non-course-related material.
10. Refraining from packing up until class is completely over.
11. Turn cell phones off (or to vibrate if you have dependents) when entering class.

J. Outside Resources for Help

The Writing Center has several classes and numerous handouts on academic writing. They will also do provide individual writing instruction. Appointments can be made by stopping in at 6171 Helen C. White or calling 263-1992. Their web site is <http://www.wisc.edu/writing>. They can be much more effective if you approach them early in the writing process. Strunk and White's classic *Elements of Style* is a good general guide to writing, and Anthony Weston's *Rulebook for Arguments* is a good guide to philosophical writing.

Study Skills: UW, as well as many other universities, have on-line materials available on how to improve your study skills as an undergraduate, and I encourage you to take a look at the URLs below and try to benefit from them.

http://guts.studentorg.wisc.edu/resources_ss.htm?page=resources_ss

Students with disabilities should notify me by the end of the second week of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made. Please bring your documentation from the McBurney Center (<http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>).

Jim Pryor has a very helpful page on how to read philosophy papers at

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>

K. A Note about the State of the Literature

The literature on animal ethics amply represents the views of those who are critical of the ways in which animals are typically used, but it is much more limited with regard to the representation of views that are supportive of the ways in which animals are typically used. In a review article, David DeGrazia makes the following observation:

“Also striking is the fact that there is no well-developed theory explicitly addressing the moral status of animals that supports such current practices as factory farming, animal research, and hunting. No philosopher who has developed his or her views to the point of publishing a book on the subject has vindicated the status quo. Michael A. Fox did write a book calling for only modest reforms in current animal research practices (Fox 1986), but his argumentation was severely criticized. Within a year, he recanted his views and joined those opposing the status quo (Fox 1987). Widely perceived to be a staunch opponent of the animal welfare movement, R. G. Frey is often invited to conferences as the sole opponent of Singer, Regan, and others considered radically proanimal. Yet while Frey vigorously opposes Regan’s argumentation for animal rights, his own argumentation suggests he is almost an antivivisectionist (see, e.g., Frey (1987a)). This surprising clustering of the leading theorists on the side of animal welfare changes the meaning of “radical,” “moderate,” and “conservative” as one moves from society at large—which generally accepts meat eating, for example—to the academic arena of animal ethics.”

DeGrazia, “The Moral Status of Animals and Their Use in Research: A Philosophical Review, *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 1 (1991), pp. 48-70.

There are several possible explanations, not mutually exclusive:

1. The fact of clustering lends epistemic support to the idea that the status quo really is indefensible.
2. The fact of clustering shows a systematic bias in the antecedent beliefs of people who tend to work on the philosophy of animal ethics.
3. The fact of clustering reflects the fact that, to those who typically publish on animal ethics, the moral costs of animal use are more easily observed and documented than the moral benefits of animal use.

This asymmetry in the literature makes it challenging to construct an appropriate syllabus.

L. Course Schedule

1. **Monday, September 10**
Course Introduction, Moral Argumentation, Logic Terminology; Kant on Animals
2. **Monday, September 17**
Theories of Moral Status (I): Utilitarian Views (Animal Welfare Views)
Singer argues that the best explanation of why discrimination on the basis of race or sex

is wrong also implies that discrimination on the basis of species is wrong. He argues that sentience is a necessary and sufficient condition for having interests, and that his egalitarianism (understood in preference-utilitarian terms) is consistent with the claim that the lives of persons (human or animal) are more valuable than the lives of merely sentient individuals (human or animal).

- a. Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics 2nd ed.*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 16-26, 55-82, 83-109, 110-135.

3. Monday, September 24

Theories of Moral Status (II): Animal Rights Views

Regan argues that, to avoid the moral problems plaguing perfectionist and utilitarian theories of justice, we need to posit that all moral agents have equal inherent value, and that this value grounds an equal basic moral right of all moral agents against treatment that could only be justified on the assumption that they lack equal inherent value. Regan argues that once the basis for this equal basic right of all moral agents is understood, it can be shown to extend to all subjects-of-a-life, human or nonhuman.

- a. Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), Ch 7 “Justice and Equality,” pp. 232-265 and Ch 8 “The Rights View,” pp. 266-329.

4. Monday, October 1

Theories of Moral Status (III): Indirect Duty Views, Unequal Consideration Views, and Speciesist Views

Frey, Carruthers, Cohen, and VanDeVeer each argue that animals lack some necessary conditions for having the same moral status as (normal adult) human beings. Frey argues that having rights requires having desire-based interests, which in turn require beliefs. But he gives a linguistic analysis of belief states such that animals cannot have beliefs. Carruthers argues that metacognition of a kind unavailable to animals is required for having conscious experiences, and that nonconscious experiences are not themselves morally relevant. Cohen combines considerations of moral autonomy with a kind-based theory of moral status to argue that while all humans have rights, no animals do. And VanDeVeer argues that a view that takes into account both the importance of a preference and the degree of psychological sophistication of its possessor is most plausible.

- a. R. G. Frey, “Rights, Interests, Desires and Beliefs,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 16 (July 1979): pp. 233-239.
- b. Peter Carruthers “Brute Experience,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 86 (May 1989): 258-269.
- c. Carl Cohen, *The Animal Rights Debate* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001), Ch. 5 “Why Animals Do Not Have Rights,” pp.27-40 and Ch. 7 “The Moral Inequality of Species: Why “Speciesism Is Right,” pp. 59-60.
- d. Donald VanDeVeer, “Two Factor Egalitarianism,” *Inquiry* 22 (1979): 55-79.

5. Monday, October 8

Conceptions of Animal Welfare

- a. Michael Appleby and Peter Sandøe, “Philosophical Debate on the Nature of Well-Being,” *Animal Welfare* 2002 (11): 283-294.

- b. David DeGrazia, "The Harms of Suffering, Confinement, and Death," in *Animal Rights: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): 54-65.
- c. Marian Stamp Dawkins, "Suffering, Health, and Productivity," and "Suffering and the 'Unnatural' Life" in *Animal Suffering: The Science of Animal Welfare* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1980): 27-54.
- d. Ian Duncan, "Animal Welfare Defined in Terms of Feelings," *Acta Agriculturae Scandinavica, Section A – Animal Science. Supplementum* 27 (1996): 29-35.
- e. Donald Broom, "Animal Welfare: Concepts and Measurement," *Journal of Animal Science* 69 (1991): 4167-4175.
- f. Stanley Curtis, "Performance Indicates Animal State of Being: A Cinderella Axiom?" *The Professional Animal Scientist* 23 (2007): 573-583.

6. Monday, October 15

Animals' Mental Lives (I): Feelings, Pain, and Desires

- a. Jim Grau, "Learning and Memory without a Brain" in eds. M. Bekoff, C. Allen, and G. Burghardt *The Cognitive Animal: Empirical and Theoretical Approaches on Animal Cognition* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002): pp. 77-87.
- b. Collin Allen, "Animal Pain," *Noûs* 38:4 (2004): 617-643.
- c. Gary Varner, "Which Animals Are Sentient," in *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012): 105-132.

7. Monday, October 22

Animals' Mental Lives (II): Self-Awareness, Altruism, Empathy, Theory of Mind

- a. Gordon Gallup, James Anderson, and Daniel Shillito, "The Mirror Test," in M. Bekoff, C. Allen, and G. Burghardt, eds. *The Cognitive Animal: Empirical and Theoretical Approaches on Animal Cognition* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002): 325-333.
- b. Abigail Rajala, Katharine Reininger, Kimberly Lancaster, Luis Populin, "Rhesus Monkeys (*Macaca Mulatta*) Do Recognize Themselves in the Mirror: Implications for the Evolution of Self-Recognition," *PLoS ONE* 5: 9 (September): 1-8.
- c. David Premack and Guy Woodruff, "Does the Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind?" *Behavioral and Brain sciences* 4 (1978): 515-526.
- d. Jules Masserman, Stanley Wechkin, and William Terris, "Altruistic Behavior in Rhesus Monkeys," *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 121 (Dec. 1964): 584-585.
- e. Joan Silk, Sarah Brosnan, Jennifer Vonk, Joseph Henrich, Daniel Povinelli, Amanda Richardson, Susan Lamberth, Jenny Mascaro, and Steven Schapiro, "Chimpanzees Are Indifferent to the Welfare of Unrelated Group Members," *Nature* 437 (October 2005): 1357-1359.
- f. Felix Warneken, Brian Hare, Alicia Melis, Daniel Hanus, Michael Tomasello, "Spontaneous Altruism by Chimpanzees and Young Children," *PLoS BIOLOGY* 5(July 2007): 1414-1420.
- g. Dale Langford, Sara Crager, Zarrar Shehzad, Shad Smith, Susana Sotocinal, Jeremy Levenstadt, Mona Lisa Chanda, Daniel Levitin, and Jeffrey Mogil, "Social Modulation of Pain as Evidence for Empathy in Mice," *Science* 312 (30 June 2006): 1967-1970.
- h. Greg Miller, "Signs of Empathy Seen in Mice" *Science* 312 (30 June 2006): 1860—1861.
- i. N. J. Emery and N. S. Clayton, "Effects of Experience and Social Context on Prospective Caching Strategies by Scrub Jays," *Nature* 414 (22 November 2001): 443-446.

8. Monday, October 29**Animals' Mental Lives (III): Memory, Planning, Personhood, and Near-Personhood**

- a. C. R. Raby, D. M. Alex, A. Dickinson, and N. S. Clayton, "Planning for the Future by Western Scrub-jays," *Nature* 445 (22 February 2007): 919-921.
- b. Gary Varner, "Personhood and Biography," in *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012): 133-159.
- c. Gary Varner, "Moral Significance and Autonoetic Consciousness (AC)," in *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012): 160-181.
- d. Gary Varner, "Candidates for Near Personhood," in *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012): 182-221.

9. Monday, November 5**Research Uses of Animals (I)**

- a. NAVS, Animals Used in US Research, http://www.navs.org/site/DocServer/Number_of_Animals_Used_in_Research_in_the_US-2001-2007.pdf?docID=1521.
- b. C. R. Gallistel, "Bell, Magendie, and Proposals to Restrict the Use of Animals in Neurobehavioral Research," *The American Psychologist* 36 (1981): 357-362.
- c. Carl Cohen, "What Good Does Animal Experimentation Do?" and "The Proven Accomplishments of Animal Research," in *The Animal Rights Debate* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001): 85-123.
- d. Hugh LaFollette, "Animal Experimentation in Biomedical Research," in *The Oxford Handbook of Animal Ethics* ed. T. Beauchamp and R. Frey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 796-825.

10. Monday, November 12**Research Uses of Animals (II)**

- a. USDA – US Government Principles for Animals
- b. Harlow – Affectional Response in the Infant Monkey
- c. Harry Harlow and Stephen Suomi, "Induced Psychopathology in Monkeys,"
- d. Redacted protocol
- e. Rommeck – The effects of Four Rearing Strategies
- f. Parker – Identifying Key Features of Early Stressful Experience
- g. Gruen – New Maternal Deprivation Research at U of Wisconsin

11. Monday, November 19**Agricultural Uses of Animals (I): Animal Welfare Issues in Agriculture**

- a. United Soybean, "Animal Ag Myths," <http://www.animalag.org/myths.aspx>.
- b. David Fraser, Joy Mench, and Suzanne Millman, "Farm Animals and Their Welfare in 2000," in *The State of the Animals: 2001*, ed. D. Salem and A. Rowan (Gaithersburg: Humane Society Press, 2000): 87-99.
- c. Ian Duncan, "Animal Welfare Issues in the Poultry Industry: Is There a Lesson to Be Learned?" *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 4 (2001): 207-221.
- d. American Veterinary Medical Association, "Welfare Implications of Castration of Cattle"
- e. J. J. McGlone, B. Vines, A. C. Rudine, and P. Dubois, "The Physical Size of Gestating Sows," *Journal of Animal Science* 82 (2004): pp. 2421-2427.
- f. Warrick, "They Die Piece by Piece," *Washington Post* (10 April 2001), p. A01.

- g. Temple Grandin, "Progress and Challenges in Animal Handling and Slaughter," *Applied Animal Behaviour Science* 100 (2006): pp. 129-139.

12. Monday, November 26

Agricultural Uses of Animals (II): Vegetarianism and Veganism

- a. David DeGrazia, "Ch. 5 Meat-eating," in *Taking Animals Seriously: Mental Life and Moral Status* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 67-80.
- b. Peter Singer, "Utilitarianism and Vegetarianism," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 9 (Summer 1980): 325-337.
- c. R. M. Hare, "Why I Am Only a Demi-Vegetarian," *Essays on Bioethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 219-235.
- d. Tom Regan, "Ch. 9.1 Why Vegetarianism Is Obligatory," in *The Case for Animal Rights* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983): 339-353.
- e. Alastair Norcross, "Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases," *Philosophical Perspectives* 18 (Ethics 2004): 229-245.

13. Monday, December 3

Agricultural Uses of Animals (III): Possibilities for Reform

- a. Eric Marcus, "Possibilities for Reform in Animal Agriculture," in *Meat Market: Animals, Ethics, and Money* (Boston: Brio Press, 2005): 49-59.
- b. Jeff McMahan, "Eating Animals the Nice Way," *Daedalus* 137 (Winter 2008), pp. 66-76.
- c. Adam Shriver, "Knocking Out Pain in Livestock: Can Technology Succeed Where Morality Has Stalled?" *Neuroethics* 2 (2009): 115-124.
- d. Patrick Hopkins and Austin Dacey, "Vegetarian Meat: Could Technology Save Animals and Satisfy Meat Eaters?" *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 21 (2008): 579-596.

14. Monday, December 10

Overflow/Review