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Office hours: Thursdays, 2-3:30 pm

PHIL446: Political philosophy and non-human animals

Fall 2017

Course description: While the status of non-human animals has been discussed by moral philosophers for some time, this issue has gained interest among political philosophers only very recently. Should non-human animals be included as part of a theory of justice? Can current theories of justice be extended to include animals and if so, how? In what ways can animals be understood as ‘members’ of political communities? How would a just society approach the interests of animals, including domesticated and wild animals, and the relationship between humans and animals? In considering these questions, students will be introduced to major issues and theories in current thinking about justice in contemporary political philosophy.

To provide background for subsequent reading, the course begins with a brief introduction to John Rawls’s main work on justice, *A Theory of Justice* (1971). We then consider whether Rawls’s account can be extended to include non-human animals by considering Robert Garner’s proposal in *A Theory of Justice for Animals*. The remainder of the semester will focus on Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka’s *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights* (2011), which proposes that we think of the rights of different categories of animals – domesticated, wild and liminal – in terms of the rights of citizenship, sovereignty and denizenship, respectively. In addition to *Zoopolis*, we will read and discuss critical responses by other philosophers as well as additional readings on closely related debates in contemporary political philosophy.

Class days and times: Fridays, 8:35-11:25 am, starting 8 September.

Location: LEA 210

Course materials:

Sue Donaldson & Will Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights* (Oxford, 2011). Unfortunately this book is not available online and must be purchased (paperback, \$31.50). *Books have been ordered by The Word on Milton Street.* (NB they only accept cash and cheque.)

All other readings will be made available on myCourses.

I will also make available additional materials that are relevant to the topics we’re discussing throughout the course.

Prerequisites: You should have taken a political philosophy class, e.g. PHIL 240. If you are unsure whether you meet the prerequisites, please contact me.

Assignment and evaluation:

Grades for this class are based on three elements:

- (1) Reading reflections (10%). Each week (starting the week of 11 September), you must submit reflections on the required readings of the respective week. This assignment must be emailed to me (kristin.voigt@mcgill.ca) by 9 am on the Thursday before each class (please use 'reading reflections' or similar as the subject line so I can distinguish these emails from other inquiries).

The assignment is:

After completing the required readings, write brief responses to the following 3 questions:

- 1. What are the main claims of the reading (1-2 sentences for each assigned item)?*
- 2. What did you find surprising or interesting? Why? (1-2 sentences)*
- 3. What did you find confusing? Why? (1-2 sentences)*

These questions are used for assessment but also help me identify particular interests that you'd like to discuss in class and any concerns or questions that should be addressed. Your responses will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis, and your grade will be calculated as the total number of passes out of 11. Failure to submit your reading questions or late submission will count as a Fail (no exceptions).

- (2) Response papers (25% each). Two short response papers (500-750 words each), discussing one of the book chapters/articles assigned for the course. These can be submitted at any point during the semester but must be submitted within one week of the day that the piece you are responding to was discussed in class.
- (3) Final paper (40%), up to 2,500 words. Essay questions will be made available through myCourses. Final papers are due by 11 pm on 7 December.

Some more information about written work:

- (1) Since the response papers are fairly short, it is important to be focused and concise. There is no set 'recipe' for these papers and different approaches will work. The purpose of the paper is for you to begin thinking critically about the arguments presented, for example by identifying possible inconsistencies, problems or omissions in the author's argument. Keep exposition of the overall argument in the article/chapter you're discussing concise so as to leave yourself enough room to develop your own idea.
- (2) The final paper allows you to explore in more detail a particular problem or issue raised by the readings that is of particular interest to you. Some of the essay questions are very broad so as to accommodate different interests students might have; these questions need to be narrowed down for the purposes of writing your paper. (I will say more about this when I make the final paper questions available.)

- (3) The final paper can draw on your response papers. For example, one of your response papers may identify a particular problem with an argument that the author does not address; your final paper could then discuss the problem in more detail, consider possible responses the author might give, etc. Students often begin thinking about a particular question in the context of a response paper and then return to that issue in their final paper.
- (4) I am happy to read drafts and outlines and to provide feedback (but bear in mind that turnaround may be longer if we're close to a deadline). If you'd like comments on a draft, it's best to agree on a timeline with me in advance. It's easiest if you email me a Word document so I can add comments directly in the file.
- (5) I will provide more details in class on how to approach your written work, especially the response papers and the final paper. Please don't hesitate to approach me if you are unclear about anything.

Submission of work: All work must be submitted via email to kristin.voigt@mcgill.ca, as a PDF or MS Word file. Please do *not* leave submissions in my department mailbox as I don't check it every day.

Late submissions: Late submissions incur a grade penalty. Essays turned in late without an extension will be penalized at the rate of 1/3 of a grade (e.g., from a B to a B-) per *calendar day* of lateness. Submission of corrupted files or files that cannot be opened do *not* count as submission of your work.

Extensions: Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and only if supported by a medical note or other appropriate documentation.

Resources:

- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu/>
- Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy [available as eBook through McGill library]
- International Encyclopedia of Ethics [online access through McGill library]
- Tips and suggestions on writing philosophy papers:
 - http://cstl-cla.semo.edu/hill/writing_a_philosophy_paper.htm [also see further links at bottom of page]
 - <http://www.mcgill.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/advising/writing>
 - Vaughn & McIntosh, *Writing Philosophy: A Guide for Canadian Students*. Available as 3-hour reserve loan at the library. [selected chapters available through myCourses]

Language policy: In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Academic integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and

other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

Access: If you have a disability please feel free to contact me to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you could also contact the **Office for Students with Disabilities** (www.mcgill.ca/osd) at 514-398-6009 to make them aware of any requirements you may have.

Course outline and required readings

8 September: Introduction to course

D. McDermott (2008), 'Analytical political philosophy', from *Political Theory: Methods and approaches*, ed. D. Leopold and M. Stears (Oxford: OUP).

A. Swift and S. White (2008), 'Political theory, social science, and real politics', from *Political Theory: Methods and approaches*, ed. D. Leopold and M. Stears (Oxford: OUP).

Rawls's Theory of Justice and non-human animals

15 September: Rawls's Theory of Justice

S. Mulhall & A. Swift (1996), 'Rawls's original position', from their *Liberals and Communitarians*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell).

Selection from John Rawls's Theory of Justice, from Cahn, *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*.

22 September: Theories of justice and non-human animals I

A. Cochrane, 'Liberalism and animals' from his *Introduction to Animals and Political Theory*.

R. Garner (2013), *A Theory of Justice for Animals* (Oxford: OUP), introduction and ch. 2

29 September: Theories of justice and non-human animals II

Garner, *A Theory of Justice for Animals*, chs. 6 and 8.

Non-human animals and rights

6 October

S. Donaldson and W. Kymlicka, *Zoopolis*, ch. 2: Universal basic rights for animals.

J. Waldron (1992), Introduction, from *Theories of Rights*, ed. J. Waldron (Oxford: OUP).

W. Edmundson (2015), Do animals need rights? *Journal of Political Philosophy* 23(3), 345-360.

Group-differentiated rights for non-human animals: Zoopolis and beyond

13 October: Domesticated animals and citizenship I

D&K, *Zoopolis*, ch. 3: Extending animal rights theory via citizenship theory

D&K, *Zoopolis*, ch. 4: Domesticated animals within ART

20 October: Domesticated animals and citizenship II

D&K, *Zoopolis*, ch. 5: Domesticated animals and citizenship

C. Hinchcliffe (2015), Animals and the limits of citizenship: Zoopolis and the concept of citizenship', *Journal of Political Philosophy* 23(3), 302-320.

S. Donaldson & W. Kymlicka (2015), Interspecies politics: response to Hinchcliffe and Ladwig, *Journal of Political Philosophy* 23(3), 321-344. [*feel free to skip section III, which is a response to a different paper and about a part of Zoopolis that we haven't yet discussed*]

27 October: Wild animals and predation

D&K, *Zoopolis*, ch. 6: Wild animals.

Andrée-Anne Cormier and Mauro Rossi (in press), The problem of predation in Zoopolis, *Journal of Applied Philosophy*.

Oscar Horta (2013), *Zoopolis*, intervention and the state of nature, *Law, Ethics & Philosophy*, 1: 113-125.

3 November: Liminal animals and the right to exclude

D&K, *Zoopolis*, ch. 7: Liminal animals.

Sarah Fine (2013), The Ethics of Immigration: Self-Determination and the Right to Exclude, *Philosophy Compass* 8(3): 254–268.

David Miller (2005), Immigration: the case for limits, in *Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics*, ed. Andrew I. Cohen and Christopher Heath Wellman (Oxford: Blackwell).

10 November: Zoopolis and group-differentiated rights

D&K, *Zoopolis*, ch. 8: Conclusion.

Alasdair Cochrane (2013), *Cosmozoopolis: The Case Against Group-Differentiated Animal Rights*, *Law, Ethics & Philosophy*, 1: 127-141.

Donaldson & Kymlicka (2013), A Defense of Animal Citizens and Sovereigns, *Law, Ethics & Philosophy*, 1: 143-160.

17 November: A 'multicultural zoopolis'? Animals and minority rights

- *Recommended podcast: [Will Kymlicka on Minority Rights](#) (Philosophy Bites). More podcasts on this topic: <http://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/multiculturalism-bites>.*

Will Kymlicka, Justice and minority rights, extract from his *Multicultural Citizenship*, reprinted in Goodin & Pettit (ed.), *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Anthology*.

Alasdair Cochrane (2012), Animals and cultural practices, from his *Animal Rights without Liberation* (New York: Columbia University Press).

W. Kymlicka & S. Donaldson, Animal rights and aboriginal rights, forthcoming.

W. Kymlicka, Realigning multiculturalism and animal rights, forthcoming.

24 November: Student presentations and Q&A for final paper (no readings)

We will use this week for students to present their final paper ideas and get feedback from the rest of the class on how they might develop their arguments. This is not compulsory and will not be graded – it is an opportunity for you to test out the ideas and argument you plan to make in your final paper, and to see how other students approach the final paper. You will also have an opportunity to ask any questions you might have about the final paper.

1 December: Conclusion to course

F. Schmitz (2016), Animal ethics and human institutions: integrating animals into political theory, from *The Political Turn in Animal Ethics*, ed. R. Garner and S. O’Sullivan (London: Rowman & Littlefield).

I am open to assigning different readings for the final week if there are any topics from the course that you’d like to discuss in more detail, or if you are interested in an issue that we haven’t yet discussed. I’ll bring this up during class, but you can also email me with suggestions or requests.