

The New School for Social Research
Philosophy Graduate Student (Online) Conference

Animalhouse: Animals and Their Environs

April 1 & 2, 2021

Keynote Speakers: Lori Gruen (Wesleyan) and Cary Wolfe (Rice)

The relationship between animals and their environs has become one of the paramount political concerns of our time. In the past year alone, the wildfires in Australia and California, the emergence and spread of the novel coronavirus, and new reports on the rapid decline of biodiversity have only further illustrated the need to critically examine how we understand animals in relation to their surroundings.

While a particular urgency motivates current discussions of animal and its habitat, examining this relationship has yielded significant philosophical development throughout the 20th century. Consider, for instance, how Jakob von Uexküll's concept of the *umwelt* influenced Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Deleuze; or, consider Hans Jonas's assertion that standard ethical paradigms falter insofar as they fail to recognize our responsibility to the environment; or, consider the posthumanist tradition that aims to unsettle rigid distinctions between "the" human, "the" animal, and their proper domains. This conference seeks to develop and examine these traditions, further interrogating the relation of these two shifting concepts: the animal and its environs.

We invite participants to question if and how philosophy's treatment of animals and their environs can help us make sense of our current situation. How have considerations of habitat, dominion, and domesticity determined the (ethical, ontological, rhetorical) status of animals? Conversely, how have presuppositions about "the animal" informed what environs are proper to "man"? What would it mean for an animal to be "at home" in the current world? Can philosophical approaches to animals be more than an instrumentalizing procedure? How will climate change alter not only the vitality of a species but the very grounds from which it lays claim to a home?

This conference welcomes papers that address these themes in the history of philosophy as well as interdisciplinary approaches.

Topics may include but are not limited to:

- Philosophical distinctions of human and animal
- Animality and domesticity
- Public spheres/private spheres
- Philosophical homelessness
- Animal and human *umwelts*
- Climate change and animal habitats
- Architecture and environment
- Gender and animality
- Metaphysics of home
- Animals and the law

- Race and animality
- Philosophy of biology
- Land and property/animals and property
- Technological accelerants of climate change
- Meat consumption and land use
- Indigenous animal practices
- Animal ethics and its history
- Political and ecological diasporas
- Philosophy and literature
- Animals as instruments of industry

To apply, please submit papers suitable for a 15-20 minute presentation to tns.animalhouse@gmail.com . Submissions should be in PDF format with name and affiliation in the body of the email.

This conference will be convene remotely via Zoom.

All submissions are due on or before **Sun, Jan. 10, 2021**.

Please visit <https://animalhouse2020.weebly.com/> for program updates.