

**Philosophy 174a
Ethics and Animals
Fall 2017**

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Thursdays 2:00-4:00

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Description:

Do human beings have moral obligations to the other animals? If so, what are they, and why? Should or could non-human animals have legal rights? Should we treat wild and domestic animals differently? Do human beings have the right to eat the other animals, raise them for that purpose on factory farms, use them in experiments, display them in zoos and circuses, make them race or fight for our entertainment, make them work for us, and keep them as pets? We will examine the work of utilitarian, Kantian, and Aristotelian philosophers, and others who have tried to answer these questions.

This course, when taken for a letter grade, meets the General Education requirement for Ethical Reasoning.

Sources and How to Get Them:

Many of the sources from we will be reading from onto the course web site, but you will need to have copies of Singer's *Animal Liberation*, Regan's *The Case for Animal Rights*, Mill's *Utilitarianism* and Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*. I have ordered all the main books from which we will be reading (except my own book, which is not yet published) at the Coop.

The main books we will be using are:

Animal Liberation, by Peter Singer. Updated edition, 2009, by Harper Collins Publishers.

The Case for Animal Rights, by Tom Regan. University of California Press, 2004.

Fellow Creatures: Our Obligations to the Other Animals, by Christine M. Korsgaard. In manuscript, forthcoming from Oxford University Press.

Utilitarianism, by John Stuart Mill. Hackett Publishing Co., 2002.

The Oxford Handbook of Animal Ethics, edited by Tom L. Beauchamp and R. G. Frey. Oxford, 2011. I have ordered this book at the Coop. The Oxford Scholarship Online version of the Handbook is available to Harvard students at:
http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebook:GEN_5371963

Animal Rights: Current Debates and New Directions, edited by Cass Sunstein and Martha Nussbaum. Oxford, 2004. I have ordered this book at the Coop. The Oxford Scholarship Online version of the book is available to Harvard students at: http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebook:GEN_9780195305104

The Lives of Animals, by J. M. Coetzee. Princeton, 1999.

I have also ordered one recommended book, a good general introduction to the subject: *Ethics and Animals: An Introduction*. By Lori Gruen. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

All other works assigned and most recommended are on the course website.

Assignments and Grading Policies:

Papers: There will be three papers of about 8-10 pages or 2000-2500 words, to be turned in by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 13, Friday, November 17, and Thursday, December 14. In order to pass the course, you must turn in all three papers. (I will not average in failing grades for missing papers. If any paper is missing, you fail the course.) Papers must be submitted in a .doc or .docx format. Topics will be suggested. You may also write on a topic of your choice with the permission of your section leader. Extensions on the two midterm papers must be requested before the date on which the paper is due. Work that is late without an extension or beyond an extension will be discounted at the rate of one-third of a grade per day (A to A-, A- to B+, and so forth). No extensions will be granted on the final paper. If your paper receives a grade of B- or below for reasons other than lateness you may rewrite it for a higher grade under the guidance of your section leader. The three papers will count approximately equally, but active participation in section discussions and marked improvement in your written work will weigh in your favor.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

Note: All assignments that are not in Singer, Regan, Mill, or Coetzee are available on the course website, including the ones from *The Oxford Handbook of Animal Ethics* (OH) and *Animal Rights: Current Debates and New Directions* (AR), in the folder "Files." The schedule is tentative and subject to change.

Also Note: We will meet for lecture Friday September 1 for the convenience of shoppers but thereafter we will use the Friday slot for discussion section.

Wednesday, August 30: Introduction

Friday, September 1: Factory Farming

Singer, *Animal Liberation*, Chapter 3, "Down on the Factory Farm," pp. 95-157

**Wednesday, September 6:
Pain and Experiments**

Singer, *Animal Liberation*, Chapter 2, “Tools for Research,” pp. 25-94
Braithwaite, “What is Pain and Why Does It Hurt?” Chapter 2 of *Do Fish Feel Pain?*,
pp. 25-44

Also Recommended:

Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, §12.5, “The Use of Animals in Scientific Experiments,”

**Monday, September 11 – Wednesday, September 20
Moral Theory, Singer, and Utilitarianism**

Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Chapter Two, “What Utilitarianism Is,” pp. 6-25
Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Chapter Five, “On the Connection Between Justice and Utility,”
pp. 41-63
Singer, *Animal Liberation*, Chapter 1, “All Animals are Equal,” pp. 1-23
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, §4.4 “Are Humans Better off than the Other
Animals?”

Also Recommended:

Rawls, “Two Concepts of Rules”

Singer, *Practical Ethics*, Essay 3: “Equality for Animals?”

**Monday, September 25-Wednesday September 27
Singer and Utilitarianism, Continued**

Singer, *Animal Liberation*, first section of Chapter 4, “Becoming a Vegetarian,”
pp. 159-164
Singer, “Killing Humans and Killing Animals,” pp. 145-156
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, §5.2 “Against the Argument from Marginal Cases,”

Also Recommended:

Singer, *Practical Ethics*, Essay 5: “Taking Life: Animals”

**Monday, October 2 – Wednesday, October 4
Regan’s Rights-Based Approach to Animal Ethics**

Regan, “The Case for Animal Rights” (the paper)
Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, Chapter 7, “Justice and Equality,” pp. 232-265

Wednesday, October 11 – Monday, October 16
Regan's Rights-Based Approach to Animal Ethics, continued

Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, Chapter 8, "The Rights View," pp. 266-329
Singer and Regan, "The Dog in the Lifeboat: An Exchange," pp. 1-4

Also Recommended:
Taurek, "Should the Numbers Count?"

*****First Paper Due Friday, October 13*****

Wednesday, October 18:
Some Protests

Cora Diamond, "Eating Meat and Eating People," AR pp. 93-107
Bernard Williams, "The Human Prejudice"

Monday, October 23 – Wednesday October 25
A Kantian Approach to Animal Ethics

Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, §5.1, "Human Beings as Ends in Themselves"
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, Chapter 7: "Kant against the Animals, 2: Reciprocity
and the Grounds of Obligation"
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, Chapter 2: "Animal Selves and the Good"

Also Recommended:
Korsgaard, "Introduction to the Groundwork"
Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Section 2

Monday, October 30 – Wednesday, November 1
A Kantian Approach to Animal Ethics

Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, Chapter 8: "A Kantian Case for Our Obligations to the
Other Animals"
Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*, pp. 15-69

Monday, November 6 -Wednesday November 8
The Badness of Death and the Question of Humane Farming

Nagel, "Death." From *Mortal Questions*, pp. 73-80
Williams, "The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of
Immortality," from *Problems of the Self*, pp. 82-100
Singer, "Reflections," in Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*, pp. 85-91
McMahan, Selections from *The Ethics of Killing*, pp. 189-203

McMahan, §4.3 “The Time-Relative Interest Account” from “The Comparative Badness for Animals of Suffering and Death,” pp. 1-2
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, §12.3 “Eating Animals,” pp. 9-20

Also Recommended:

McMahan, “The Comparative Badness for Animals of Suffering and Death”

Monday, November 13 - Wednesday, November 15

Wild Animals, Endangered Species, and the Problem of Predation

McMann, “The Meat Eaters” *New York Times* Op Ed, September 19, 2010, pp. 1-8
Palmer, “The Moral Relevance of the Distinction between Domestic and Wild Animals,” OH, pp. 701-725
Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, Chapter 9, Section 3 “How to Worry about Endangered Species,” pp. 359-361
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, from Chapter 10, “The Animal Antinomy, 1: Creation Ethics,” §10.1, §10.4, §10.5
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, from Chapter 11, “Species, Communities, and Habitat Loss,” §11.1-11.5

Also Recommended:

Powell, “On the Nature of Species and the Moral Significance of their Extinction,” OH, pp. 603-627

*****Second Paper Due Friday, November 17*****

Monday, November 20

The Ethics of Having Pets

Bok, “Keeping Pets” OH, pp. 769-795
Selections on Pets from the PETA website.
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, §12.6 “Companion Animals”
Korsgaard, *Fellow Creatures*, §11.9.1 (first section of “Should Humans Go Extinct?”)

Monday, November 27-Wednesday November 29

The Question of Legal Rights for Animals

Wolfson and Sullivan, “Foxes in the Henhouse: Animals, Agribusiness, and the Law: A Modern American Fable,” AR, pp. 205-233
Sunstein, “Can Animals Sue?,” AR, pp. 251-262
Favre, “A New Property Status for Animals: Equitable Self-Ownership,” AR pp. 234-250

Also Recommended:

Francione, “Animals: Property or Persons?,” AR, pp. 108-142
Korsgaard, “The Claims of Animals and the Needs of Strangers: Two

Cases of Imperfect Right.”

******Final Paper Due Thursday, December 14******