

FIL 2302 Anvendt etikk (Applied ethics)

Autumn 2022

Teacher: Arne Johan Vetlesen

The course will provide an introduction to central issues in current philosophical debates about animals, ranging from the question what kind of beings animals are, to their moral and political status, keeping in mind that animals do not form a homogeneous group and differ greatly among themselves. The approach to animals found in classics like Aristotle, Descartes and Bentham will be presented, but the main emphasis will be on contemporary discussions, much influenced by Peter Singer's contribution. In addition to the capacities-based debates over the moral standing or lack of such of animals in Western philosophy and ethics, questions will be raised about the rapidly changing role of animals in modern society, given that the animals we relate to will be pets and domestic ones rather than wild. The fact that many species of animals are on the brink of extinction raises difficult questions about how to protect them and according to what kind of criteria.

Required reading:

Irus Bravermann: *Wild Life. The Institution of Nature*. Stanford U.P., 2015.

Alice Crary & Lou Gruen: *Animal Crisis*. Polity Press, 2022.

Jacques Derrida: *The Animal that therefore I am*. Fordham U.P., 2008.

Linda Kalof & Amy Fitzgerald, eds.: *The Animals Reader*. Routledge, 2022.

Midgley, Mary: *Animals and why they Matter*. Georgia U.P., 1998.

Paul Shepard: *The Others. How Animals made us Human*. Island Press, 1997.