animal-language:
An Interdisciplinary Conference

march 21 - 23, 2019

Held in conjunction with the 51st Comparative Literature Symposium at Texas Tech University, Lubbock
The boundaries and complementarities relating animals and language have always captured the human imagination. Animal/Language: An Interdisciplinary Conference engages with a central feature of what is becoming known as the “animal turn” in the humanities: the recognition that animals and language have a complicated relationship with one another in human understanding. What it means to be “human” has often been thought through and against the figure of the “animal”, with “language” traditionally seen as constitutive of human identity. However, the desire for—and the realities of—communication between animals and humans and among animals themselves put pressure on these mechanisms of distinction in ways that can be both exciting and unsettling.

The “Animal” in the Humanities Research Group was founded in 2017 with the support of the Humanities Center at Texas Tech in order to foster interdisciplinary, collaborative inquiry into the role played by both “the animal” and real animals in human intellectual landscapes, historical and contemporary. To that end, this international conference brings together scholars from a range of disciplines, including literature, history, anthropology, philosophy, religious studies, the visual arts, the psychological sciences, and companion animal science in order to share their research, investigate the networks of relationships connecting animals, humans, and language in diverse historical, cultural, social, and philosophical contexts, and explore what particular perspectives on these questions reveal about the groups that hold them.

This conference is organized by The “Animal” in the Humanities Research Group: Dr. John Beusterien (Spanish), Dr. Belinda Kleinhans (German), Dr. Katy Schroeder (Animal & Food Sciences), Dr. Lucas Wood (French), Dr. Pamela Zinn (Classics), in collaboration with Joe Arredondo (Landmark Arts) and Dr. Kevin Chua (Art History).

Support for the conference is generously provided by a grant from the City of Lubbock, as recommended by Civic Lubbock, Inc.; the Humanities Center at Texas Tech University through the Office of the Provost; the Office of Research and Innovation; the College of Arts & Sciences; the J. T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts; the Department of Classical & Modern Languages & Literatures; the Department of Animal & Food Sciences; the Ryla T. & John F. Lott Endowment for Excellence in the Visual Arts in the School of Art; the Charles B. Qualia Endowment in the Department of Classical & Modern Languages & Literatures; and Landmark Arts in the School of Art. Exhibitions and speaker programs in the Texas Tech University School of Art are made possible in part through a generous grant from the Helen Jones Foundation of Lubbock, with additional support from the J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts.
Thursday 21st March

5:30 PM, Escondido Theatre, Student Union Building

Welcoming Remarks

Allison Whitney, Humanities Center at Texas Tech University
John Beusterien, Chair, 51st Annual Comparative Literature Symposium

Opening Keynote Address

Susan McHugh, Professor of English, University of New England
“The Language of Swarms in Theory and Fiction”

Introduction by Belinda Kleinhans, Assistant Professor of German, Texas Tech University

Susan McHugh is Professor of English at the University of New England. She is the author of Animal Stories: Narrating across Species Lines (2011), a volume in the University of Minnesota Press’s Posthumanities series, as well as Dog (2004), a volume in Reaktion Books’ groundbreaking Animal series. With colleagues in the UK, she co-edited The Routledge Handbook of Human-Animal Studies (2014) and Literary Animals Look (2013), a special issue of Antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture. Additionally, she has published dozens of essays in edited collections and peer-reviewed journals such as Critical Inquiry, Literature and Medicine, and PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America. Her ongoing research focuses on the intersections of biological and cultural extinction. McHugh is Series Co-editor of Palgrave Studies in Animals and Literature, the first academic book series devoted to literary animal studies. As well as serving as the Humanities Managing Editor for the scholarly journal Society and Animals, she is Editorial Board Member of Animalibus: Of Animals and Cultures (academic book series); Antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture; Animal Studies Journal; Environment and History; H-Animal Discussion Network; and Humanimalia: A Journal of Human-Animal Interface Studies. She is an International Associate of the New Zealand Centre for Human-Animal Studies, and she is the faculty advisor to Zephyr: UNE’s Journal of Artistic Expression. She was a founding fellow of UNE’s Center for Global Humanities.

Welcome Reception Matador Lounge, Student Union Building

Friday 22nd March

All morning and afternoon sessions in the Student Union Building

8:30 – 9:15 AM: Coffee service; Registration outside Senate Room

9:15 AM: Announcements Senate Room

9:30 – 11:00 AM: Panel Session I: Ancient Origins of Ongoing Debates Senate Room
Chair: Don Lavigne, Associate Professor of Classics, Texas Tech University
Kenneth Kitchell, Professor Emeritus of Classics, Louisiana State University and University of Massachusetts, Amherst
“Animal-Human Communication in Greco-Roman Antiquity”
Fabio Tutrone, Lecturer in Latin Language and Literature, University of Palermo
“Dumb Animals: On the History and Cultural Roots of A Classical Prejudice”
Pamela Zinn, Assistant Professor of Classics, Texas Tech University
“Muta Animalia?: Lucretius on Animal Language”

11:00 – 11:30 AM: Coffee Break outside Senate Room

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM: Panel Session II: Speaking Over the Animal Senate Room
Chair: Philip Marshall, Professor of Psychological Sciences, Texas Tech University
Catalina Popescu, Independent scholar and Latin teacher at Holland Hall College Preparatory Academy
“(Un)Civilized Bodies: Music and Animalia in Ovid’s Metamorphoses, Book XI”
Serena Mangona, PhD student in Psychology, Texas Tech University
“Confirmation Bias and the Perception of Canine Breed Aggression”
Annika Hugosson, MS student in Anthrozoology, Canisius College
“The Feminization of Pit Bull Advocacy Work in the United States”

1:00 – 2:30 PM: Lunch and Second Keynote Address Mesa Room

Robin Foster, Research Professor in Psychology, University of Puget Sound and Affiliate Professor, University of Washington
“Anthropomorphism in Human-Horse Interactions”

Introduction by Katy Schroeder, Assistant Professor of Companion Animal Science, Texas Tech University

Dr. Robin Foster holds a PhD in Animal Behavior from the University of Washington, and a dual BS in Biology and Psychology from the University of Michigan. After two decades as Professor and Chair in the Department of Psychology and Co-Director of the Neuroscience Program at the University of Puget Sound, she retired from full-time teaching in 2011 to devote more time to issues in applied animal behavior and animal welfare. She continues to pursue
Dr. Foster currently teaches Behavioral Studies of Zoo Animals at the University of Washington and co-instructs a six-week online course titled “Resolving Fear-Based Behavior in Horses” through the IAABC. In her consulting practice, Dr. Foster works with horses and dogs that present with serious behavior issues. Dr. Foster currently chairs the Animal Behavior Society’s Applied Animal Behavior Committee and holds professional certifications as a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist and as a Certified Horse Behavior Consultant.

2:30 – 4:00 PM: Panel Session III (Parallel Panels A & B)

Panel A: Bird Talk Senate Room

Chair: Carole Edwards, Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies, Texas Tech University
Charles Grair, Associate Professor of German, Texas Tech University
“The Voice of the Raven: Folklore and Mythology of the Northern Peoples”

John Beusterien, Professor of Spanish, Texas Tech University
“Talking Birds in Cervantes’s The Great Sultana”

Anthony Qualin, Associate Professor of Russian, Texas Tech University
“Lamentations and Peregrinations: Birds in the Works of Chingiz Aitmatov”

Panel B: Speech/Act Lubbock Room

Chair: Kanika Batra, Associate Professor of English, Texas Tech University
Marjean D. Purinton, Professor of English, Texas Tech University
“Animals at Play on the British Romantic Stage”

Anton Killin, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Philosophy, Australian National University
“Animal Vocal Traditions, Vocal Learning, and Modelling Cultural Transmission”

Lindsey Stern, PhD student in Comparative Literature, Yale University
“What the Lion Would Say: Or, What Wittgenstein Would Say to Biolinguists”

4:00 – 4:30 PM: Coffee Break outside Senate Room

4:30 – 6:00 PM: Panel Session IV: Animals and the Arts Senate Room

Chair: Victoria Surliuga, Associate Professor of Italian, Texas Tech University
Martha Otis, Senior Lecturer in English, University of Miami
“Music and Language and the Radically Receptive Listener”

Maria Lux, Assistant Professor of Art, Whitman College
“Animal Language Pioneers: The Possibilities and Pitfalls of Reimagining Animals as Explorers through Visual Art”

Kevin Chua, Associate Professor of Art History, Texas Tech University
“From Animal Iconography to Animal Image”

6:00 – 6:15 PM: Change venues to English Lecture Hall 001

6:15 – 7:15 PM: Third Keynote Address

Catherine Chalmers, Distinguished Artist, New York City
“Collaborating with Insects”

Introduction by Kevin Chua, Associate Professor of Art History, Texas Tech University

Catherine Chalmers holds a BS in Engineering from Stanford University and an MFA in Painting from the Royal College of Art in London. She has exhibited her artwork in museums around the world, including MoMA P.S.1; MASS MoCA; Kunsthalle Vienna; Today Art Museum, and Beijing. Her work has appeared in a variety of publications, including the New York Times, Washington Post, ArtNews and Artforum. She has been featured on PBS, CNN, NPR, and the BBC. Two books have been published on her work: Food Chain (Aperture 2000) and American Cockroach (Aperture 2004). Her video “Safari” received a Jury Award (Best Experimental Short) at SXSW Film Festival in 2008. In 2010 Chalmers received a Guggenheim Fellowship and in 2015 she was awarded a Rauschenberg Residency. In 2018 she created and taught a course called Art & Environmental Engagement at Stanford University. Her video “Leafcutters” won Best Environmental Short at the 2018 Natourale Film Festival in Wiesbaden, Germany. She lives in New York City.

7:30 PM: Reception for Exhibition Landmark Gallery, School of Art Building

Assembling Animal Language

Curated by Kevin Chua, Associate Professor of Art History, Texas Tech University
Saturday 23rd March
All morning sessions in the Student Union Building.

8:00 – 8:30 AM: Coffee Service outside Soapsuds Room

8:30 – 10:00 AM: Panel Session V (Parallel Panels C & D)

Panel C: Animal Language, Human Justice Soapsuds Room
Chair: Christopher Witmore, Professor of Archeology and Classics, Texas Tech University
Jeremy McInerney, Professor of Classical Studies, University of Pennsylvania
“Yelping, Whimpering and Mooing: The Animal Speech of Aeschylus’ Eumenides”
Julie Chamberlin, PhD student in English, Indiana University, Bloomington
“Ful Louder: The Power of Animal Voices in the Medieval Fable Tradition”
Marissa Crannel-Ash, PhD student in History, University of Rochester
“The Squeals of Guilt: Animal Confessions in Medieval Animal Trials”

Panel D: Discourses of Inclusion and Exclusion Bell Tower Room
Chair: Susan Larson, Charles B. Qualia Professor of Spanish, Texas Tech University
James Haney, MA student in Spanish, Texas Tech University
“Animals in the Gutter: An Analysis of a Graphic Novel of a Play by Miguel de Cervantes”
Gabriela Jarzabowska, PhD student in Cultural Studies, University of Warsaw, Fulbright Fellow, Wesleyan University
“The Enemy and Filth: Urban Rats in Polish Postwar Pest Control Language”
Sigmund Jakob Michael Stephan, MA Student in Intercultural German Studies, University of Mannheim and University of Waterloo
“When Species Meet and Talk at the Heterotopia”

10:00 – 10:30 AM: Coffee Break stations set up outside each session room

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM: Panel Session VI (Parallel Panels E & F)

Panel E: Animal Bodies, Ethical Narratives Soapsuds Room
Chair: Alec Cattell, Assistant Professor of Practice in Humanities and Applied Linguistics, Texas Tech University
Stephen Newmyer, Professor of Classics, Duquesne University
“Plutarch on Animal Language and Human Morality”
Belinda Kleinhans, Assistant Professor of German, Texas Tech University
“Meat and Metaphysics”
Howard Curzer, Professor of Philosophy, Texas Tech University
“A Rising Tide Floats One Boat: Noah’s Response to Climate Change”

Panel F: Animal Metaphor Bell Tower Room
Chair: Kurt Caswell, Associate Professor, Honors College, Texas Tech University
Adrienne Hagen, Assistant Professor of Classics, Monmouth College
“Maternal Expressions of Love and Loss in Homeric Animal Similes”
Ata Sunucu, BA Student in Comparative Literature, Boston University
“The Harmony of Adversity: Marianne Moore’s Animals”
Lucas Wood, Assistant Professor of French, Texas Tech University
“Animal Metaphors and Pedagogies of Consent in Medieval Fabliaux”

12:00-1:30 PM Lunch and Fourth Keynote Address Matador Room, Student Union Building
Adrienne L. Martín, Professor Emerita of Spanish, University of California, Davis
“Animalspeak and the Construction of Character in Miguel de Cervantes’s, The Colloquy of the Dogs”
An interdisciplinary conference

Introduction by John Beusterien, Professor of Spanish, Texas Tech University

Adrienne L. Martí (PhD, Harvard University) is Professor Emerita of Early Modern Spanish Literature and former Associate Vice Provost for Global Affairs at the University of California, Davis. She has published extensively on all genres of early modern Spanish literature and a broad range of authors and topics, including Cervantes, Góngora, Lope de Vega, Quevedo, humor, sexuality, eroticism and most recently on animal studies. She is the author of Cervantes and the Burlesque Sonnet and An Erotic Philology of Golden Age Spain; co-editor of Venus venerada: Tradiciones eróticas de la literatura española; Venus venerada II: Literatura erótica y modernidad en España; Spain’s Multicultural Legacies; and Lives and Works of Early Modern Women in Iberia and the Americas: Studies in Law, Society, Art, and Literature; and guest editor of a special issue of Calíope: Journal of the Society for Renaissance and Baroque Hispanic Poetry on erotic poetry. She is past President of the Society for Renaissance and Baroque Hispanic Poetry and of the Cervantes Society of America. She is currently writing a book on Cervantes from the perspective of animal studies.

1:30-1:45 PM Change venues to Livestock Arena

1:45-4:00 PM: Interspecies Nonverbal Communication: Live Presentations of Canine-Human and Equine-Human Interactions

Opening remarks by Katy Schroeder, Assistant Professor of Companion Animal Science, Texas Tech University

1:45-2:45 PM: Katy Schroeder and Tangi Irwin, Program Director, Texas Tech Therapeutic Riding and Therapy Center


2:45-3:00 PM: Mini-break

3:00-4:00 PM: Megan Arant, PhD student in Animal Science, and Alexandra Protopopova, Assistant Professor of Companion Animal Science, Texas Tech University

“What About the Dog? Assessing Preference and Choice of Therapy Dogs During Sessions with Children”

“How to Speak Dog: Using Behavioral Ethograms to Understand Intention within Dog Social Play”

4:00-4:15 PM: Change venue to Ranching Heritage Center (RHC)

4:15-5:15 PM: Roundtable Discussion and Concluding Remarks

5:15-6:15 PM: Refreshments and Time to Explore RHC Exhibitions

6:15 PM: Closing Dinner Party
