Syllabus

Seminar in Animal Rights: Theory and Practice

Topical Outline

Week I. What is ethics?

Week II. Historical and conceptual introduction to animal ethics. Pure and applied philosophy. The role of the philosopher in social change. Law and morality. Cruelty and the humane ethic.


Possible seminar paper topics: Critique of Rollin. Alternative bases for ethics. Defense of excluding animals from the moral arena.

Week V. Rights ethics, utilitarian ethics, mixed ethics. Morality and law.

Readings: 1. B. Rollin, *ARHM*, Part II
2. Peter Singer, in Armstrong & Botzler (A&B), pp 33-45
3. Tom Regan, in A&B, pp 17-25

Possible seminar paper topics: Defense of utilitarianism, attack on utilitarianism, comparison of Rollin and Singer, attack on rights, Regan’s views, comparison of Rollin and Regan.

Week VI. Detailed examination of issues raised by our ethic: Killing animals, individuals versus species, drawing the line, predation, etc.

Readings: 1. Ruth Cigman, "Why Death Does not Harm Animals"
2. Tom Regan, "Why Death Does Harm Animals"
3. Holmes Rolston, "The Value of Species"
4. B. Rollin, "Environmental Ethics and International Justice"
5. A. Naess, "The Deep Ecology Movement"
Week VII. Applications of the ethic: Research.

Readings:
1. Rollin, ARHM, Part III
2. Regan in A&B, pp. 247-252
3. DeGrazia in A&B, pp. 252-262
Possible seminar paper topics: Compare Rollin and Singer on animal research. Discuss some aspect of animal research.

Week VIII. Application of the ethic: Pet animals.
Readings:
1. Rollin, ARHM, Part IV
2. Rollin, "Euthanasia and Moral Stress"
3. Rollin & Rollin in A&B, pp. 504-510

Week IX and X. Application of the ethic: Farm animals.
Reading:
1. Singer, chapter III, Mason, "Brave New Farm"
2. Rollin, Farm Animal Welfare
3. A&B, pp. 177-222 – all readings

Week XI. Survey of other problems: Zoos, wildlife, entertainment, genetic engineering, environmental ethics

Readings:
1. B. Rollin, "On Telos and Genetic Engineering in A&B, pp. 342-351"
2. B. Rollin, “The Frankenstein Syndrome”
3. D. Jamieson, "Against Zoos"
4. Rollin in A&B, pp 490-498 (Rodeo)
Possible seminar paper topics: Present an issue.

Week XII and XIII. Animal Consciousness and Science: Science and Common Sense; Science and Value; anthropomorphism; anecdote; scientific change.

Reading: 1. A&B pp 65-116 – all readings
Possible seminar paper topics: Choose an issue from above discussion.

Week XIV. Animal Consciousness (continued): Animal Pain.

Reading: 1. B. Rollin, UC, chapters 5-7

Week XV. Animal Consciousness (continued): The study of consciousness, ethology and ethics.

Reading: 1. B. Rollin, UC, chapter 8-10
Course Requirements

As you can see from the above, I would like part of most classes to be spent on short student seminar papers germane to the topic of discussion. These will be assigned early in the semester, and students will be expected to present and defend them during the relevant class period. The seminar topics listed are presented as examples, and the list is not intended to be exhaustive. Each student will be expected to give at least one presentation.

In addition, each student must do a detailed (at least 15 page) paper on a topic related to the seminar, due two weeks before the last day of class, topic to be cleared with me.

A final examination will be administered.

Texts:

1) B Rollin, Animal Rights & Human Morality
2) B Rollin, Farm Animal Welfare
3) S. Armstrong & R Botzler, The Animal Ethics Reader
4) Packet of Readings available in the Philosophy Office, (243 Eddy Building)