

# Argument and persuasion

Human animal studies

# Objectives

- Reflect on module content
- Prepare for essay
- Chance for discussion
  - Considering new view points
  - Persuading others to your view point
  - Thinking about essay titles from new perspectives

# HAS module 2016

- Disciplines: Biology, Psychology, History, Philosophy, Sociology
- Roles: companions, sport, food, wild animals
- Key questions:
  - What are 'they' to 'us'
  - Human animal border
  - Animal minds
  - Ethics of animal use
- ~~Law, policy, disease, abuse, religion, zoos/conservation, etc~~

# Critical thinking

- Identifying and challenging assumptions
- Awareness and exploration of context
  - everything is contextual
- Imagining and exploring alternatives
- Analysis, judgement, resolution and action
- Reflective scepticism
  - particularly to claims of universal truth

(Brookfield 1987)

# Academic argument

Academic discourse is centered on the concept of critical and analytical objectivity

Ideas presented must

- result from critical analysis
- be supported by evidence

In your essays you will make a 'claim' and use evidence to support it

- *defend* the claim(s) you make
- offer the reader reasons to believe them

# Fact? Idea?

- Ideas + evidence
- What is the evidence for your idea?
  - Thought experiment/ logical argument, if  $a+b=c$  then it follows...
  - Scientific evidence
  - Testimony
- What counter evidence is there?
- Language must reflect uncertainty
  - Propose, suggest, likely, may

e.g. Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492

## Is that a fact?

- Who was Christopher Columbus?
  - Anglicized version of Latin version of Castilian name **Cristóbal Colón**
  - Led expedition but land sighted by one of his sailors
- What do we mean by discovered?
  - Europeans found it [euro-centric]
  - Viking archaeological evidence
  - Indigenous population
- Where and what is America?
  - Didn't land on mainland until 1498 and never in North America
  - Thought it was the East Indies
  - Who called it America? Probably Martin Waldseemüller in 1507 after a later explorer **Amerigo Vespucci**
- What do we mean by 1492?
  - Whose calendar? Etc. etc

(Peters 2009, Teaching Critical Thinking)

# Resources

- Hand-out on academic argument  
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/argument/>
- Warwick academic writing program e learning  
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/skills/academicwriting/>



# Argue in pairs (15min)

- Pairs
- Choose a agree/disagree statement
  - pet keeping is unethical
  - understanding animal consciousness is a priority for those concerned about animal welfare
  - humans and other animals are the same in all ways that matter
- Choose a 'side' to argue
- Support your argument

# Devise group discussion questions (10 min)

- Groups of three
- Devise three (or more) questions / statements for discussion with the bigger group
  - Dichotomous answers, eg yes/no; agree/ disagree; fair/unfair
  - Draw on essay titles / reflective journals

# Spectrum lines (35mins)

- Ends of the spectrum describe complete agreement / disagreement
- Position self on line to indicate level of agreement / disagreement
- Discuss / defend /advocate position
- Be willing to move if you find argument persuasive!

# Essay practicalities

Referencing style - Harvard

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/students/referencing/>

Reference program – endnote

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/students/endnote/>

# Assessed work submission

- Deadline: **Tue 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015 12pm**
- Submit via Tabula  
<https://tabula.warwick.ac.uk/>
- Submission of a hard copy of your work is not required
- No word limit on reflective journal