

Animals as spectacle and entertainment

February 18th 2015

Human-Animal Studies

Lecture outline

- Aims
- To provide an understanding by what is meant by animal spectacles, who watches them, in what form?
- To discuss the ways animals have been used for entertainment
- To analyse how human-animal spectacles can be understood sociologically

What are animal spectacles?

- Long history
- Many animal spectacles designed ‘to celebrate the ability of humans to develop a culture that separated and protected them from the menacing savagery and unpredictability of nature’ (Shelton, 2007:97).
- Brutal killings of 1000s of animals

Legitimate victims of institutionalised violence

- ‘The arena was a human construction that brought into sharp relief the boundaries between order and chaos, culture and nature, human and animal. It was a place where the community gathered to witness and celebrate the elimination of threats to its security. The spectacles of the torment and death of animals and bestial humans provided the audience with the assurance that their state could triumph over the menacing chaos of nature.’ (126)

What happens in contemporary era?





Why is animal spectacle significant?

- Questions of Animal Welfare
- Domination
- Part of the leisure industries
- Gambling involved
- Some defined as sport
- Sport defined as a form of play set apart from everyday life, so for e.g. Horseracing early
- C.18Th

- So what does spectacle say about human-animal relations?
- And how is a animal spectacle understood sociologically?
- Using the readings to give an idea of how they're understanding animal spectacle
- 1st Garry Marvin

'On being human in the bullfight'

- 4 contrasts
- Wild v domestic
- Nature v culture
- Animal v human
- Male v female

Bullfighting

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/matador>



http://woa.tv/articles/at_sanchezc.html



Greyhound racing

- So what does greyhound racing say about human-animal relations?
- And how is it understood sociologically?
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jculKwbtjvE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smz2CpOryVw>
- (Link to Panorama documentary on integrity of greyhound racing).

Greyhound racing

- Working class, male and masculinist
- Elias's notion of civilising process in key reading
- Sport as mimetic
- 'sports spectators are excited by the often rough and violent competitive exchange between the participants, yet feel neither guilt nor repugnance in watching the battles since they are not perceived as real' (216)

Haraway

- Human-animal partnership
- Chapter about dog training and dog agility
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQwldKEe1Bw>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bP8FiXAzCRg>
- ‘training together, a particular woman and a particular dog, not Man and Animal in the abstract, is a historically located, multispecies, subject-shaping encounter in a contact zone fraught with power, knowledge and technique, moral questions – and the chance for joint, cross-species invention that is simultaneously work and play.’ (Haraway, 2008: 205).
- Authority and trust

Egs of spectacle and entertainment

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Osq-lwEb4WA>

Horseracing

- Sport of Kings
- Different codes of racing



Classed and gendered

- Male dominated
- Aristocratic beginnings
- Part of the leisure industry

Summary

- Humans in control
- Dominance and control
- Spectacle part of the leisure industry
- Animals as commodities
- Have an entertainment value