Human animal studies

Dr Amy KilBride
Dr Deborah Butler
What is this module about?

Human-Animal Studies?

Animal Studies?

Anthrozoology?
What is this module about?

“Exploring the spaces that animals occupy in human societies”

DeMello, 2012
What is this module about?

“Considering the varied ways in which humans perceive, engage, compete and co-exist with non-human animals in a range of cultural contexts”

Dr Samantha Hurn
What is this module about?

“aims to understand human-animal relations now and in the past, and to understand animals as beings-in-themselves, separate from our knowledge of them.”

British Animal Studies Network
What will the module cover?

• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the complex roles of animals in contemporary societies

• Understand the structure and purpose of the human-animal divide and its role in shaping attitudes towards animals

• Critically assess the material and cultural significance of animals in various modern discourses and cultural forms

• Evaluate the political and ethical issues concerning the position of animals in contemporary society

• Recognise how the roles of animals in human society differ across contemporary societies and have changed over time
Module content

• Broad multidisciplinary content
• Synthesising complex theories, new perspectives
• Grounded in participants experience
• Accessible for all disciplinary backgrounds
Animal roles in human society

Domesticated animals
- Food
- Clothing and other products
- Experimental subjects
- Pets
- Entertainment
- Competitive sport
- Labour / working

Wild animals
- Pests
- Predators
- Pray
- Entertainment
- Agents of disease
Animals experiences of their lives?

- Do animals learn from others?
- Do animals feel pain?
- Do animals experience depression?
- Do animals play?
- Do animals feel joy?
- Do animals remember?
- Do animals grieve?
- Do animals act alteristically?
- Do animals use language?
The human animal border

How are animals different to humans?

- Do animals learn from others?
- Do animals remember?
- Do animals feel pain?
- Do animals experience depression?
- Do animals grieve?
- Do animals play?
- Do animals act alteristically?
- Do animals use language?
- Do animals feel joy?
Animal rights?
Human responsibilities?
What will it be like to take a multidisciplinary module?

Advantages
- Develop new academic skills
- Working with people from different academic backgrounds
- Valuable experience
  - Solutions cross disciplines
- New and interesting!

Challenges
- Unfamiliar language
- New goal posts
- Don’t know your way around
Crossing boundaries

**Intradisciplinary**: working within a single discipline

**Crossdisciplinary**: viewing one discipline from the perspective of another

**Multidisciplinary**: people from different disciplines working together, each drawing on their disciplinary knowledge

**Interdisciplinary**: integrating knowledge and methods from different disciplines, using a real synthesis of approaches

**Transdisciplinary**: creating a unity of intellectual frameworks beyond the disciplinary perspectives
What will be expected of you?

• Attend all lectures and seminars
• Engage with module content and other participants
  – respect other views
• Independent study outside of sessions
  – Essential reading for seminar
  – Additional reading / watching / thinking / discussing
Audio recording of lectures

• Podcasts made available on website
• Signed consent
• No identifying information will be made available
Assessment

• For 12 CATS
  • 2500 word essay  50%
  • Reflective journal  50%

• For 15 CATS
  • 3500 word essay  60%
  • Reflective journal  40%
What is a reflective journal?

- An account of your work in progress
- Reflection on the learning experience
- Analytical rather than descriptive
- Electronic or paper
  - Content rather than presentation
  - Multimedia
Research and writing support

• Amy and Deb
  – Amy office hours; wed 11-1pm
• Student careers and skills
  – Workshops
  – Writing mentors (drop in sessions)
Warwick Student Careers and skills; academic writing program workshops

The Undergraduate Academic Writing Day
15 Feb 2014 10:00-5:00

Introduction to academic writing for science & engineering students
29 Jan 2014 2:00-4:00

Effective literature searching
9 Jan 2014 10:00-12:00
Questions?

a.kilbride@warwick.ac.uk
Life Sciences, office B142 Tel: 75862

Deborah.Butler@hull.ac.uk
Tasks
What is an animal?

• Think about this question and writing some notes (3mins)
• Get into pairs. Discuss your thoughts with your partner (5 min)
• Feed back to the group how your views differed from that of your partner (5min)
Ground rules for discussion

Devised and agreed by the group

- Respect the right of others to have a different opinion to you
- Speak to each other in a polite and respectful way even if you disagree
- Own your opinions and present them as ‘I’ statements rather than facts
- Don’t speak over others while they are talking
- Recognise when you have made your point and take a turn of listening and allowing others to speak
You as a builder of theory

World views / values

Information

Opinions

Disciplinary perspectives

YOUR theory / narrative
Theory building exercise

- ‘Bits’ of information
- Work with group
- Discuss / think / digest
- Build a ‘theory’ or narrative with the material
- Lay it out in your story
- ‘Read’ each others narratives