

**Course Syllabus E/CS 1134**  
**RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND OTHER ANIMALS**  
**Spring 2000, Episcopal Divinity School, Wednesdays 10AM-12 Noon**

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(Seminar open to all graduate students; 24 course hours, 2 hrs/week over a 12 week term)

(Enrollment, Spring 2000: 4 students for credit, 2 auditors)

**Pedagogical Reflections**—The goals of the course are set forth below. What worked particularly well in this small seminar was inclusion of students' background experiences with nonhuman animals. For example, each student discussed her background experiences in fairly specific form, so that others could gather why she was interested in nonhuman animals. The Reflection Paper assignments worked well. The assigned readings in this version of the course need to be adjusted. The course was taught twice as a way to help develop readings like the following:

Waldau, P. 2001. *The Specter of Speciesism: Buddhist and Christian Views of Animals*, New York: Oxford University Press

Waldau, P. 2001. "Religion and Which Sciences? Science and Which Community?", *The Journal of Faith and Science*, IV:115-142

Waldau, P. 2000, editor. Special edition of the journal *Animals and Society* on the topic "Religion and Animals", Volume 8:3, November 2000; on general issues, see the editor's introductory article entitled "Religion and Other Animals: Ancient Themes, Contemporary Challenges", *Animals and Society*, 8:3, 227-244.

## **I. GOALS OF THE COURSE**

In this course, we work together to consider and cross-relate topics that come under the general headings "religion and animals" and "religion and science." We address the extent to which religious traditions have affected the ways in which we see and speak about animals other than humans, as well as the manner in which contemporary scientists view and speak about animals. We also ask, "In what ways (1) have these traditions affected each other, and (2) can they in the future affect each other with regard to an understanding of nonhuman animals?"

We will examine the nature of claims about other animals found, either explicitly or implicitly, in many religious traditions' writings and beliefs. We ask how specific traditions deal with new findings regarding the lives and complex realities of large-brained social animals such as cetaceans (whales and dolphins), nonhuman great apes, or elephants. What do traditions do when new, observation-based findings contradict traditional, mainline interpretations that these animals are simple, lacking in mental complexities, "red in tooth and claw," or exist solely for the use of the human species?

**The primary goals of this course are:**

1. To develop a sense of religious traditions' many different ways of seeing and comprehending nonhuman animals.

2. To assess the sources, nature, and types of views of nonhuman animals found in sciences.
3. To cultivate awareness of how the relationship of scientific and religious views is poorly described as science *versus* religion. Rather, both sciences and religions have had very complex features in the way they approach the nonhuman living beings on the earth.
4. To recognize that, historically, some religious traditions and many sciences have been extremely limited in the manner in which they have approached nonhuman animals, and that there are important parallels between various human groups' marginalization of (1) other humans *and* (1) the marginalization of all nonhuman animals.
5. To gain awareness of our own habits when viewing both nonhuman animals and the issues discussed in this class, and to recognize that "doing archeology on" our own views *and* then talking together carefully about these subjects are preconditions to seeing these issues well.

## **II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Initial reading of the assigned texts (typically not more than 70 pages per week).
2. Regular attendance and thoughtful, respectful participation in class meetings (see Some Notes on Pedagogy below).
3. Timely completion of assigned Reflection Papers (students are asked to keep these to one typed page, single-spaced). Students may, from time to time, be asked to read their Reflection Paper on a particular topic in order to begin or develop an in-class discussion.
4. One scholarly term paper due at the end of the semester, around 20 pages in length.  
A preliminary outline of this paper must be submitted by the 6th week of class, and a final outline submitted (in response to instructor's comments) by the 9th week of class.
5. Course grades will be based on 1-4 above.

## **III. SOME NOTES ON PEDAGOGY**

While classes are a combination of lecture and discussion, the goal is collaborative learning. Due to the collaborative nature of this effort, grades will be based, in part, on participation (see section V. Examinations, Papers, and Grading for more on this topic).

Some of the sessions will involve longer class-wide or smaller group discussions. Each student is encouraged to articulate her views of the subjects discussed, and each student is expected to handle in a respectful manner the opinions expressed and questions asked by others. Listening to others' questions carefully is as important as attempting to answer one's own questions. Asking questions and listening carefully are skills that can be acquired and enhanced, and each of us is benefited when we inquire individually and collectively in a respectful and sensitive manner.

The texts you will read are challenging texts, but you will be expected to have read them carefully and to be prepared to discuss them. In addition, the materials in the various handouts will be the subject of discussion, and students may from time to time be asked to relate them to an ongoing discussions or lecture materials presented.

## **IV. OVERALL BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The following is only a partial bibliography. Additional materials will be presented during the course.

**A. REQUIRED TEXTS** (these can be purchased at The Coop; the prices listed below are the Amazon.com prices)

Barbour, Ian 1997. *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues* (revised and expanded edition of *Religion in an Age of Science*), San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco. Cost: \$19.00.

Callicott, J. Baird 1997. *Earth's Insights: A Survey of the Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback*, Berkeley: University of California Press. Cost: \$13.56

Kinsley, David 1995. *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Cost: \$27.00.

Shepard, Paul 1996. *The Others: How Animals Made Us Human*, Washington, D.C.: Island Press/Shearwater Books. Cost: \$14.36.

In addition to these readings, (1) short handouts with relevant quotes from various other sources and (2) various short articles by the instructor will be distributed. These will be used to frame basic issues; students will be asked to comment on these materials as a part of class discussion.

## **B. SOME ADDITIONAL REFERENCES TO RELIGIOUS STUDIES ISSUES**

Adams, Carol J., ed., 1993. *Ecofeminism and the Sacred* (New York: Continuum)

Adams, Carol J. 1994. *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*, New York: Continuum, 1991, reprinted 1994

Adams, Carol J. 1994a. *Neither Beast Nor Man: Feminism and the Defense of Animals*, New York: Continuum

Adams, Carol J., and Donovan, Josephine, eds., 1995. *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations*, Durham and London: Duke University Press

Berry, Thomas 1996. "Ethics and Ecology: A paper delivered to the Harvard Seminar on Environmental Values, Harvard University, April 9, 1996 (available at <http://divweb.harvard.edu/csvpl/ee/>)

Berry, Thomas 1990 (originally 1988). *The Dream of the Earth*, San Francisco: Sierra Club Books

Berry, Thomas 1999. *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future*, New York: Bell Tower

Cartmill, Matt 1993. *A View to a Death in the Morning: Hunting and Nature through History*, London and Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press

Chapple, Christopher Key 1993. *Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press

- Cohen, Jeremy 1989. *"Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It": The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text*, London and Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press
- Donovan, Josephine, and Adams, Carol J., eds., 1996. *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethic for the Treatment of Animals*, New York, Continuum
- Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and Danger*, London: Routledge
- Gaard, Greta Claire, ed., 1993. *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press
- George, Wilma, and Yapp, Brunson 1991. *The Naming of the Beasts: Natural History in the Medieval Bestiary*, London: Duckworth
- Hume, C. W. 1980 (originally 1957). *The Status of Animals in the Christian Religion*, Herfordshire, United Kingdom: Universities Federation for Animal Welfare
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude 1963 (originally published in French in 1962). *Totemism*, trans. by Rodney Needham, Boston: Beacon
- Linzey, Andrew 1991 (originally 1987). *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, New York: Crossroad
- Linzey, Andrew 1994. *Animal Theology* (London: SCM Press; and Chicago: University of Illinois)
- Linzey, Andrew, and Regan, Tom 1988. *Animals and Christianity: A Book of Readings* (New York: Crossroad)
- Linzey, Andrew, and Yamamoto, Dorothy, eds., 1998. *Animals on the Agenda : Questions About Animals for Theology and Ethics*, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press
- Lowenstein, Tom 1993. *Ancient Land: Sacred Whale: The Inuit Hunt and Its Rituals*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux
- Mack, Arien (ed.), 1995. *Humans and Other Animals*, Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press
- Masri, B. A. 1989. *Animals in Islam*, Petersfield, England: The Athene Trust
- Masri, B. A. 1987. *Islamic Concern for Animals*, Petersfield, England: The Athene Trust
- McDaniel, Jay B. 1989. *Of God and Pelicans: A Theology of Reverence for Life*, Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press
- McDaniel, Jay B. 1994. *Earth, Sky, Gods, and Mortals: A Theology of Ecology for the Twenty First Century*, Twenty-Third Publications
- McDaniel, Jay B. 1995. *With Roots and Wings: Christianity in an Age of Ecology and Dialogue*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis

McDermott, James P. 1989. 'Animals and Humans in Early Buddhism', *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 32, No. 4, 269-280

*Parabola*, Vol.8, No. 2, Spring/May 1983

Regan, Tom, ed., 1986. *Animal Sacrifices: Religious Perspectives on the Use of Animals in Science*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Ruegg, D. Seyforth 1980. 'Ahi.msaa and Vegetarianism in the History of Buddhism', in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Walpola Rahula*, ed. Somaratna Balasooriya and others, London: Gordon Fraser; and Sri Lanka: Vimamsa, 1980, 234-241

Salisbury, Joyce E. 1994. *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, New York and London: Routledge

Schochet, Elijah Judah 1984. *Animal Life in Jewish Traditions: Attitudes and Relationships* New York: Ktav

Sorabji, Richard 1993. *Animals Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of the Western Debate*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press

Story, Francis 1964. *The Place of Animals in Buddhism*, Kandy, Ceylon: Buddhist Publication Society. This may also be found in Volume II, Publication No. B 23, in the Bodhi Leaves Series by the same publisher [n.d.].

Sullivan, Lawrence E. 1988. *Icanchu's Drum: An Orientation to Meaning in South American Religions*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company; London: Collier Macmillan Publishers

Suzuki, David, and Knudtson, Peter 1992. *Wisdom of the Elders: Honoring Sacred Native Visions of Nature*, New York: Bantam

Toperoff, Shlomo Pesach 1995. *The Animal Kingdom in Jewish Thought*, Northvale, N.J.: J. Aronson

Tucker, Mary Evelyn, and Duncan Ryuken Williams 1997. *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions

Urton, Gary 1985. *Animal myths and metaphors in South America*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press

Webb, Stephen H. 1997. *On God and Dogs: A Christian Theology of Compassion for Animals*, New York: Oxford University Press

Westra, Laura, and Peter S. Wenz, eds., 1995. *Faces of Environmental Racism: Confronting Issues of Global Justice* (Studies in Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy), Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield

Wilbert, Johannes, and Simoneau, Karin, eds. 1970-1992. *Folk Literature of [Various Tribes of South American Indians]*, 24 vols, Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications

Williams, George H. 1971. 'Christian Attitudes Toward Nature', in *Christian Scholar's Review*, vol. 2, No.1, Fall 1971, 3-35, and vol 2, No.2, Spring 1972, 112-126

## V. EXAMINATIONS, PAPERS AND GRADING

Due to the collaborative nature of this course, attendance, reading, and participation are essential. Grades will be based on presence and participation in class, working knowledge of the assigned readings, and the quality of the analysis of written assignments, which must be submitted within the applicable deadlines.

(1) There will be no midterm or final examination.

(2) Reflection Papers (one page, single-spaced, i.e., no more than roughly 500 words) are, from time to time, required from each student. Arrangements will be made so that these are submitted BEFORE class time; this will allow the instructor to review and then use them as part of the class. Ideally, these will be emailed to Dr. Waldau by 6 PM of the day before class. These will constitute 25% of the final grade.

(3) A twenty-page paper (double-spaced, typed, that is, about 5000 words) on a pre-approved topic will constitute 50% of the final grade.

(4) Participation will constitute 25% of the final grade.

**Special requirements:** Meetings with Dr. Waldau (this can be done by email if necessary, but ideally it will be done in person). The purpose of such meetings is twofold: first, to discuss the topic of the student's long paper, and, second, to encourage as much participation in the class as possible, since by framing specific questions the student will advance his or her ability, as well as the abilities of others in the class, to inquire into this complex subject matter.

## CLASS TOPICS, READINGS SCHEDULE, AND ASSIGNMENTS

### **WEEK 1 (beginning January 31, 2000)—Introduction: The Basic Issues.**

Introductions, and discussion about this class's goals.

Engaging nonhuman animals: a brief overview of the rich history of this topic will focus on the many ways in which individuals and cultures have come to their views of animals, human and nonhuman alike. Examples from both world religious traditions and more local/indigenous traditions will be cited. We will next inventory our own personal sources for views regarding nonhuman animals.

During class, students will write a Reflection Paper on religion and animals. These papers will address at least these subjects: the relevance of symbolism to the study of religion and animals, and treatment of natural world individuals/groups.

**Reading:** Barbour 1997, Chapters 1-3 (pages 3-74). These chapters provide much background material for the engagement between religious traditions and modern sciences, and will be used constantly throughout the class.

During this class, several Handouts (#1, various quotes and names, and #2, two articles by Paul Waldau) will be distributed.

**Assignment for next week:** write a Reflection Paper (please make this no longer than one typed page, single-spaced) on this question: "How has science seen and treated animals?" We will discuss one or more of these papers at the beginning of the next session. Submit this paper via email to Dr. Waldau by 6PM Tuesday night before our Wednesday class.

### **WEEK 2—Part One. Assessing Religious Traditions' Views of Animals.**

We begin with discussion of student science reflection papers. There will then be brief comments on one contemporary study of nonhuman animals.

We then turn to our main topic: retrieving and assessing religious traditions' views of animals. We begin by distinguishing (1) purely symbolic references to nonhuman animals from (2) other references that might be used when assessing the nature of views regarding various nonhuman species (examples from both eastern and western religious traditions will be used). We will identify the many different ways in which religious traditions are a source of concepts about animals, and the ways in which religious ideas of "tradition" and "authority" affect the willingness of believers to see and inquire about animals which are not familiar to them. We will address the central relationship of these concepts to religious ideas of community, compassion, and ethical behavior. Consider, for example, how the dominant images of other animals within religious traditions operated as answers to the question, "Who are the others that I, as an individual capable of caring about others, am supposed to respect, protect, and foster?"

We will conclude with a class-wide discussion that attempts to identify the different versions of contemporary assessments of the nature and abilities of nonhuman animals, and address the role of personal experiences in the development of these views.

**Reading:** Shepard 1996, Introduction and Chapters 1, 2 and 13 (pages 15-40, and 167-172); Handout #2: Two articles by Paul Waldau: first on Andrew Linzey's language in his *Animal Theology*, and second on the areas covered by the phrase "religion and animals" (from Paul Waldau opening presentation at the May 1999 Harvard Conference "Religion and Animals").

During this class, Handout #3 (examples of language from economics, law, and media) will be distributed.

**Assignment for next week:** write a Reflection Paper on this topic: How you learned about nonhuman animals (due Tuesday 6PM by email).

### **WEEK 3—Focusing on Empirical Inquiry and Language**

We will first address the Reflection Papers. There will then be brief comments on one contemporary study of nonhuman animals and an indigenous tradition's views of nonhuman animals for the purpose of showing what is meant by "empirical inquiry." We will consider, in a preliminary way, the issue of whose domain empirical inquiry is. Does empirical inquiry belong to science alone, or is it both implicit and explicit in many religious inquiries and part of ordinary life as well? We will ask in precisely what ways the methods of modern sciences are distinctive in this regard, and in what ways the insights of empiricism, the hypothetico-deductive method, and critical realism are implicit in many values found throughout religious traditions and daily life.

We then continue our course-long attempt to work our way through the problem of jargon and differing vocabularies. We will, as a class and throughout this course, attempt to develop the habit of speaking carefully by being self-conscious about the words we choose when discussing these complex issues. We will also consider these questions: Does contemporary, secular public discourse, including that of science, economics, law and the academic world, reflect views that were religious in origin? Do these secular realms remain resistant to correction by new information?

Finally, we will consider what can be called "sociology of knowledge" considerations, that is, the relevance to all of us, whether scientist, theologian, or basic citizen, of basic questions regarding how we get information about other animals. In doing so, we will return to our own lives, and ask about western, secular concepts of other animals as played out in actions and daily language. The issue "sociology of knowledge" is, in essence, a series of problems in religion and science which arise from the fact that, as language users, we inherit broad generalizations that are often under-determined by facts and over-determined by agenda-laden ideologies. How can science and religion "talk" to one another about these issues, and thereby teach us to see our own valuing and acting better?

**Reading:** Barbour 1997, Chapters 4-5 (pages 77-136). We will also discuss Ian Barbour's language regarding the relationship between (1) humans and (2) all other animals. This distinguished scholar has a very distinctive vocabulary for this issue, and we will consider its

strengths and possible shortcomings. See, specifically, Barbour's references to animals at pages 58, 59, 60, 74, 254-5, 259, 270, 278, and 280. See, also, the references in Barbour 1997 to J. Monod's language (at 80) and Lyman Abbott's word choice (at 67).

Also, Handout #3 (examples of language from economics, law, and media).

During this class, Handout #4 (short articles by Paul Waldau on Hindu and Buddhist views of nonhuman animals) will be distributed.

**Assignment for next week:** Write a Reflection Paper on this topic: what does the use of animals in religious sacrifice say about those or other animals?

#### **WEEK 4—Indian Subcontinent Views, especially the early Buddhist tradition.**

We begin with views characteristic of the traditions from the Indian subcontinent, and then turn to the issue of sacrifice of live animals, a practice protested by the Jains and Buddhists. We will then discuss various student Reflection Papers.

We turn next to the case of the Jātaka tales, a Buddhist version of traditional animal tales. We will ask in what ways these stories are educational about other animals, and this will lead to a discussion of "myth" in religious traditions generally. We conclude with consideration of the relevance of the actual treatment of nonhuman animals, and turn to the case of elephants in early Buddhist scriptures. We will also try to identify other Indian subcontinent materials that suggest views regarding animals (such as pre-scientific and early scientific materials from the materia medica traditions).

**Reading:** Callicott 1997, Chapters 3 and 5 (pages 44-66, and 87-108); and Kinsley 1996, Chapters 5 and 7 (pages 54-67, and 84-98).

Handout #4: short articles by Paul Waldau on Hindu and Buddhist views of nonhuman animals.

Recommended: Barbour's and Shepard's comments on Hinduism and Buddhism, and Shepard's comments on Jainism (see respective indices).

**Assignment for next week:** Write a Reflection Paper on this topic: what is the Christian view of animals?

#### **WEEK 5—The Semitic Traditions**

We begin a three-week sojourn with the Semitic traditions. The Genesis creation stories are our initial focus, particularly as these are, in the European-American circles that dominate North American culture currently, the dominant paradigm for human/nonhuman animal relationships. We will focus on some issues arising out of the King James Version translation, and use this as an example of the great caution necessary when relying on views that purport to be "traditional" views.

We turn next to the breadth of the early Hebrews' vision of relationships to other animals, and conclude with a general assessment of the views and generalizations regarding other animals characteristic of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament.

**Readings** (note that these readings are for **Weeks 5 and 6**): Kinsley 1995, Chapters 8 and 9 (pages 103-124); Callicott 1997, Chapter 2 (pages 14-43); Shepard 1996, Chapter 17 (pages 222-242).

#### **WEEK 6—The Semitic Traditions Continued**

We examine the ways in which the earliest post-biblical theologians talked about other animals, and then discuss how these early emphases within the developing tradition have become important ingredients in contemporary views. We will also discuss the relevance of the Hellenistic milieu and influences, and the narrowing of traditional Hebrew concerns which occurred in the early Christian tradition.

We will also spend time discussing developments within the Christian tradition, including the role of Augustine in ending the ancient Greek debates over the abilities of other animals. We will briefly discuss the lively debate in classical and post-classical Greek culture regarding the abilities of nonhuman animals, and how that debate appeared among the early Christian intellectuals. We will consider the nature of "authority" within the Christian tradition on the issue of what other animals are like in their actual lives. We will ask, To what extent were the views based on empirical inquiry, and to what extent were factors completely at odds with empirical inquiry at work?

We will conclude with a discussion of the emergence of a paradigm within Christian cultures. Along the way, we will address medieval views, the dominance of Platonist and Aristotelian conceptions, the role played by the Reformation in the development of the biological concept of "species," post-sixteenth century developments in the Christian cultural sphere (including some contemporary theologians and their engagement with science, such as the work of Pannenberg and some liberation theologians), and the role and nature of the dominant anthropocentrism and alternative claims of "theocentrism." We will also introduce the issue of ecological sensibilities in the Christian tradition, as a prelude our later discussion of this topic.

Through these class sessions on Christianity, we will try to remain aware of the kinds of influences which were shaping views of animals outside the human species, and how those factors can be understood in light of the critical realism that many (such as Barbour) advocate.

During this class, Handouts #5 (Waldau article on Islamic views of nonhuman animals) and #6 (Thomas Berry article) will be distributed.

### **WEEK 7—The Islamic Tradition**

In addressing Islamic views of nonhuman animals, we will discuss this tradition's remarkable contributions to science, Islam's role in preserving, developing, and transmitting Greek philosophy, and Muslim variations on the views of other animals that dominate the Christian tradition. This will assist us in developing views regarding the importance and peculiarities of cultural transmission. In particular, we will focus on the ways in which transmission can lead to a perpetuation of dominant concepts, such that cultural customs and views begin to be perceived as the order of nature.

**Reading:** Callicott 1997, 30-36; Handout #5 (Waldau article on Islamic views of nonhuman animals) and Handout #6 (Thomas Berry article).

In the final 30 minutes, we will address alternative views within the Semitic traditions. There are many alternatives to the dominant view found in each of the Semitic traditions, all of which have significant contributions to make to the ecological sensibilities found throughout these traditions.

**Assignment for next week:** Write a Reflection Paper on alternative views with the Semitic traditions.

During this class, Handout #7 (comments by various scientists) will be distributed.

### **WEEK 8—Part Two. Contemporary Views in “Science.”**

We begin with an overview and a broad discussion of the concepts and language now being employed by the scientific community regarding nonhuman animals. We will consider the language employed by a wide range of researchers, including ethologists, directors of large research laboratories, and ecologists. We will also discuss the relation of the practice of science to the theories of the nature of the scientific enterprise, and the role and nature of technology in the science establishment and industrialized nations and cultures more generally.

**Reading:** Barbour 1997, Chapters 9 and 10 (pages 221-280); Handout #7 (comments by various scientists). Also, review Chapter 3 of Barbour.

**Assignment for next week:** Write a Reflection Paper on this topic: do you think science is or should be value free?

## **WEEK 9—The Issue of Method**

We begin by asking, In what sense is “science” value free? This is a central question regarding the nature of modern sciences, and again consider the relationship between the practice of science and the underlying theory. We will consider two distinguishable issues. First, in what way is all scientific or other empirical investigation theory-laden, paradigm-laden, and/or culture-laden (see quote from Barbour 144 with this trio of terms). Second, in what way is the practice of science in specific contexts affected by biases and specific ways of seeing the world? We will examine experiments on chimpanzees as a specific factual situation in which these questions can be asked.

We will return to the question, "Whose domain is the empirical?" We will compare the breadth and factual accuracy of early twentieth century biological sciences to the “knowledge” of natural phenomena found in the observations of certain indigenous peoples and their religious traditions.

This class session will also concentrate on the recurring issue of how ways of speaking (what we will have been calling "traditions of discourse") affect the way in which a subject is seen by its practitioners.

**Reading:** Barbour 1997, Chapter 6 (pages 136-161).

During this class, Handout #8 (various quotes) will be distributed.

## **WEEK 10—Religion and Which Sciences? Science and Which Community?**

We consider first the common notion that science is monolithic. We will briefly consider a list of contemporary sciences, and in particular we will concentrate on the proliferation of life sciences in the modern era. This will lead us to questions comparing (1) the contemporary engagement of theology and physics, with (2) the contemporary engagement of religion and certain biological sciences (we will discuss specifically why there has been, relatively speaking, a lack of engagement with ethology, primatology, marine mammalogy, and elephant studies).

We turn next to considerations of science as a community enterprise: who are the members of the community? We assess here various visions and their implicit concepts of community that underlie much scientific practice regarding humans and other animals. There is no single answer to the question "Who are members of our community?" This will be made obvious by our discussion of contemporary ecological visions in both science and religious traditions. Across time and place, the community of protected individuals has differed dramatically. Some religious traditions readily include nonhuman life, others do not.

Does "science" have a "voice" of relevance in this matter? Or are scientific findings irrelevant to the issue of who/what should be included within the community of life which the compassionate human wants to protect? Does "science" generally, or individual "sciences", by the methods and choices of their practitioners, ever promote one religious view over others? Do the differing kinds of reductionism associated at times with science (see Barbour 1997, 230ff., on methodological, epistemological, and metaphysical reductionism) subtly or overtly promote or eliminate certain notions of community?

**Reading:** Handout #8 (various quotes); Kinsley 1995, Chapters 12 through 17 (pages 164-226).

**Assignment for next week:** Write a Reflection Paper on this topic: Can the terms "culture" and "person" be used only for humans?

During this class, Handout #9 (various quotes regarding culture, information on specific experimental findings, and relevant Catholic Catechism passages) will be distributed.

## **WEEK 11—Part Three. Raising Our Self-Consciousness: Methods and Assumptions.**

We begin with "epistemology," and ask what it means for us to consider any tradition's views, whether religious or scientific, of animals outside the human species. We will use specific examples (included in Handout #9) from post-1960 findings in ethology. We will ask how these examples might be handled in terms of claims characteristic of religious ethics (the example of the 1994 Catholic Catechism's position in Paragraphs 2416-18 and 2457 will be included in Handout #9).

We turn next to science and religion as community enterprises, and ask why this feature of these enterprises suggests the need for careful talk about animals and species. Both scientists and theologians have made claims about possibilities and limits in humans' abilities to understand nonhuman animals. The point of this inquiry is to be self-conscious about our own points of view and how the inherent limits of any view affect inquiry and suggest a need for humility.

We turn also to the ways in which scholarship has affected views of other animals. We consider how important biases are passed along by scholars who purport to be objective. Our discussion of the problem of resolving inherited biases by vigilant, humble use of an ethics of inquiry will close our discussion of religion, science and other animals.

In group discussions, we will return to the importance of being self-conscious about use of the options we have inherited for speaking about ourselves and other animals, and the need to make careful language choices. For example, we will discuss the image of the religious and scientific communities as "at war" with one another (relevant to this will be Barbour's discussion of four options for understanding the relationship between science and theology—see, for example, Chapter 4 generally).

**Reading:** Handout #9 (regarding culture and various experiments, including Kanzi and dolphins in Hawaii, and the Catholic Catechism paragraphs associated with Paragraph 2415).

## **WEEK 12—Raising Our Self-Consciousness: Environmental Justice, Interlocking Oppressions**

We conclude by considering the important role of challenges invoking "environmental justice" considerations. This term, like many prominent terms used in contemporary circles engaging problems of social justice and the expansion of ethical discourse beyond the human realm, is a term that has been used in a number of different, and sometimes contrary, ways. We will identify the range of uses, and then discuss alternatives for terminology and concepts conveying this important set of concerns. We then will relate this group of concerns as a whole to the concerns at the center of the study of religion and nonhuman animals. Examples from within and without religious traditions will be used to show that, across the history of ethical discussion, there not infrequently has been an identifiable conservatism that has limited many advocates of social and environmental justice concerns to a surprisingly minimal expansion of the moral circle.

We will discuss two relevant points. First, some very prominent environmental justice advocates reflect this kind of conservatism, and thus fail to notice and take seriously issues that are illuminating for their own work. Second, at the same time, other advocates of environmental justice advocate a much broader, more holistic set of concerns also commonly called "environmental justice" but in fact qualitatively different than the concerns of the first set of "environmental justice" advocates. In our discussion, we will address ecofeminism, environmental ethics, and religion and ecology generally, as well as other holistic visions. We will consider the status of individuals versus species-level concerns. We conclude by reflecting on sociological studies pointing out the interlocking nature of oppressions affecting disempowered individuals, marginalized groups, and nonhuman species generally in the "developed" world. This discussion will bring us to the issue of the centrality of ethics to religion, the place of ecological awareness within traditions, and contemporary attempts by scholars and religious leaders to foreground the ecological dimensions of religious claims. Of particular importance here will be a discussion of the relevance of contemporary sciences to this important movement within interfaith dialogue.

**Reading:** Kinsley, Chapter 16 (pages 203-209); Handout #10 (Paul Waldau essay for publication in Harvard "Religion and Animals" conference book).