

Abstracts and Biographies

Plenaries

John Miller (University of Sheffield)

John joined the University of Sheffield in 2012 to take up a lectureship in Nineteenth-Century Literature and was appointed Senior Lecturer in 2016. He is President of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (UK & Ireland); co-director of the Sheffield Animal Studies Research Centre and co-editor of Palgrave Studies in Animals and Literature. His research focuses on writing about animals, ecology and empire from the nineteenth century to the present, with particular emphasis on the late Victorian period. His first monograph *Empire and the Animal Body* (Anthem, 2012) explored the representation of exotic animals in Victorian and Edwardian adventure fiction. His second book was the co-authored volume *Walrus* for the Reaktion Animal series. He is currently near to completing a monograph titled *Victorians in Furs: Fiction, Fashion and Activism*. He has started work on his next project, *A Literary History of In Vitro Meat* which examines the origins of cultured flesh in the late nineteenth century and traces its development in imaginative literature through to the present. He is also contributing co-editor of *The Dictionary of Neoliberal Terms* and has recently edited a collection of stories about tattooing for the British Library.

Jonathan Saha (Durham University)

Jonathan's research focuses on the history of British imperialism in Myanmar (Burma) during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His first book, *Law, Disorder and the Colonial State*, looked at the history of corruption in the Ayeyarwady delta. He has also published on the history of imperial masculinity, crime, medicine, and colonial psychiatry---as well as an article on a murder that took place in London Zoo in the 1920s. His second book *Colonizing Animals: Interspecies Empire in Myanmar* came out with Cambridge University Press in 2021. It examines the animal history of British colonialism in Myanmar. Through an "interspecies lens" it tackles the topics of commoditization, imperial ideologies, and anticolonial thought. He has just finished an Independent Social Research Foundation mid-career fellowship on the topic of "Accumulation and Empire". The project explored the utility of the conception of accumulation for better interrogating the imperial past. He is a member of the editorial collective of the radical history journal, the *History Workshop Journal*, and also an editor for the Empire's Other Histories series published by Bloomsbury. He was a member of the Royal Historical Society's Race, Ethnicity and Equality Working Group from 2017 to 2022, and was a co-author of the Group's 2018 report. From 2019, he co-chaired the Group with Dr Sadiya Qureshi.

Eva Giraud (University of Sheffield)

Eva joined the Department of Sociological Studies in 2021. After completing her PhD in 2011 in the University of Nottingham's Centre of Critical Theory, she worked in the Department of Culture, Film and Media at Nottingham for three years, before gaining her first permanent post in Keele University's Media Department in 2014. Eva's research has two strands. In empirical terms, she is interested in the ways that activists negotiate frictions associated with the media platforms they use, particularly the challenges posed by social media. Eva also has a broad conceptual interest in some of the potentials and tensions associated with non-anthropocentric theoretical work. She has drawn these themes together in her books *What Comes After Entanglement?* (Duke University Press, 2019) and *Veganism: Politics, Practice and Theory* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2021). Eva is currently on the editorial team of the international journal *Cultural Politics* and associated book series 'a cultural politics book' (Duke University Press), and an associated editor of *Environmental Humanities*.

PANELISTS

Panel 1: New Paths

Madonna Kalousian (University of Cambridge): 'Gardens of Species: Catastrophe and Decomposing Ecotopias in Lebanese Literature'

Rawi Hage's literary oeuvre strategically obscures the development of the Lebanese Civil War by recentring his exploration of relevant events around more-than-human worlds, both inside and outside Beirut. The ventures of his characters between Beirut, Paris, and Montreal not only unravel geographical borders within the Anthropocene, but also explore mutating, mutual, and mutable processes of departure, return, and reorientation, all against the backdrop of redefined ecologies and undefined physical, metaphysical, and interspecies proximities within them.

This paper examines the literary manifestations of a changing Anthropocene in Rawi Hage's *Cockroach*, *Carnival*, and *Beirut Hellfire Society*. It does so by, first, exploring Hage's imaginaries of capitalist urban infrastructures, post-apocalyptic cross-species evolutions, and the politics which govern survival, fitness, natural selection, and the human lifespan in wartime and post-war Lebanon. I then explore Hage's mapping of new interspecies worlds which operate processes of evolutionary metamorphosis across a number of unmapped territories, including sewer systems and cemeteries as conceived of in his novels. Exploring these spaces, this paper concludes with a multi-sited, multi-species investigation of what political, economic, and social implications human-animal-plant relations, as reimagined by Hage, have for present-day Lebanon, several generations into the journeys his characters make out of, within, and back from exile to Beirut.

Dr Madonna Kalousian is a lecturer in modern Arabic Literature at the University of Cambridge. She has a PhD in English Literature, with a focus on the Lebanese Civil War, from the Department of English Literature and Creative Writing at Lancaster University. Her current work focuses on human-animal relations in early Arabic and Islamic philosophy, as well as on postcolonial animal studies, ecocriticism, and the Anthropocene in modern Arabic Literature, politics, and the visual arts. She is the author of multiple pieces on related questions and her work appears in a number of outlets, including *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, and *Journal of Middle Eastern Literatures*.

Dominic O'Key (University of Sheffield): 'Animal Studies in the Sixth Extinction'

The subject of this talk was inspired by a recent moment of unexpected realisation: teaching an MA-level seminar on J. M. Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*, I was suddenly struck by Coetzee's –and his protagonist's– complete silence on the topic of animal extinctions. Why hadn't I clocked this before? And what does it mean that this text is still widely positioned as the foundational work of literary animal studies when it was published before the emerging scientific consensus that we are living through a sixth mass extinction event? Investigating these questions, this paper suggests that animal studies is experiencing a conjunctural moment, one in which mass extinction is rising in concern, now closing in on the slaughterhouse as the field's implied and enduring object of critique. Thus far, however, it has been the environmental humanities that has devoted the most attention to extinction. Consequently, this paper sets out to theorize mass production and mass extinction together, to trace how they complement and complicate one another as well as animal studies as a method.

Dominic O'Key is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the University of Sheffield. His first book, *Creaturely Forms in Contemporary Literature: Narrating the War Against Animals* (Bloomsbury, 2022), theorizes how

literary forms can fracture the fictions of human supremacy. At Sheffield he is working on a new research project about postcolonial literature, mass extinction and global conservation.

Nancy J. Jacobs (Brown University): 'The Psittacine Plantationocene'

For four centuries, humans and grey parrots were transported on the same ships from Africa. African humans were enslaved for monocrop production to profit the master class. Confined to households, parrots were isolated from plantations. They performed emotional labor, a work of care directed towards the master. Plantations are integral to our age of human-driven planetary transformation. The Plantationocene concept emphasizes that “environmental problems cannot be decoupled from histories of colonialism, capitalism, and racism.” The concept also recognizes non-human plantation commodities as agents and laborers.

Plantations have now caught up with birds, including grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus* and *P. timneh*). In their native range in west and central Africa, plantation development has resulted in extensive habitat conversion. Wild parrots must learn to live with plantations. For other birds, the plantation now confines and exploits their bodies. Factory-farmed chickens are plantation laborers, producing their own bodies for others' profit, are the epitome of plantation-produced animals. The existence of grey parrots, who work in commercial aviaries in the US and South Africa producing young parrots for the pet trade, echoes that existence. This is the psittacine plantationocene.

Nancy Jacobs is a Professor in the History Department of Brown University. She is an environmental historian of Africa. Originally, she specialized in South Africa, but increasingly her scope has broadened across the continent and around the globe. She is author of three books. The first, *Environment, Power and Injustice: A South African History* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), examined environmental factors in the underdevelopment of the subsistence economy in the Kuruman district. Her second book was designed for classroom use. *African History through Sources: Colonial Contexts and Everyday Experiences, c. 1850–1946* (Cambridge University, 2014). It is a compilation of primary sources that presents the major trajectories in colonial Africa, with an emphasis on “ordinary people.” Her third book, *Birders of Africa: History of a Network* (Yale University, 2016; University of Cape Town, 2018) was an examination of the politics of knowing birds in colonial Africa. Her current book project, a work of animal history, is “The Global Grey Parrot,” under contract with the University of Washington Press). It puts a charismatic African animal (*Psittacus erithacus* and *P. timneh*) at the center of a world history with fraught interspecies politics. It begins in African forests before 1500 and then follows the species to other continents. Parrots can produce knowledge and culture, but when they are isolated in captivity, they cannot. Now, in the Anthropocene, they are bred in agro-industrial facilities, trafficked as commodities, and increasingly consigned to human spaces.

Panel 2: Disciplinary Questions

Nina Vieira, Catarina Simões and Carla Vieira (Universidade Nova de Lisboa): 'Animal Biographies: a Way Forward in Animal Studies and Environmental History'

A rhinoceros in a parade in Lisbon. Whales hunted in the South Atlantic. Monkeys and parrots in noble houses. Preserved manatees in natural history collections. These are just some of the non-humans that made the early modern history of Portugal and its empire. Notwithstanding, these are still largely invisible actors in Portuguese historiography and academia. The ANIMAL BIOGRAPHIES project aims to fulfill this gap by creating a pan-European research network dedicated to reflecting on the role of non-human animals in early modern empires through a comprehensive analysis of human-animal relationships of interdependence, coexistence and reciprocity in the long term. It will be developed through a cross-disciplinary approach that includes animal studies, environmental history, imperial history and postcolonial discourse.

Our paper will 1) briefly present a state of the art of animal studies and environmental history in Portugal, with a focus on the work that has been carried out at CHAM-Centre for the Humanities and in close collaboration with other Portuguese-speaking countries; 2) introduce the goals, methodologies and potential impact of such dedicated Animal-Environmental network; and 3) discuss satellite-projects focused on the place and places of animals in urban history, with a strong component of citizen science and public engagement, ecology and nature conservation.

Nina Vieira, Catarina Simões and Carla Vieira are the core-team of the project Animal Biographies - A network of agencies in the making of early modern empires.

Nina Vieira is a researcher and subdirector at CHAM, NOVA FCSH, where she is a team member of the ERC Synergy Grant "4-Oceans: A human history of marine life". She holds a training background in biology and marine ecology and a PhD in history. Her primary research interest is the study of the relationships between people and marine animals, with a strong focus on the history of whaling.

Catarina Simões is a research fellow at the National Museum of Natural History and Science of the University of Lisbon, where she works on Portuguese colonial science collections. Her research focuses on the circulation of non-European animals and the production of natural history knowledge in the context of early modern empires.

Carla Vieira is a senior researcher at the CHAM, NOVA FCSH, and Principal Investigator of the Western Sephardic Diaspora Roadmap project, funded by the Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe. Her research has focused on the Early Modern commercial networks, the Sephardic Atlantic, and the Portuguese and British Empires in the 18th century.

Pete Porter (University of Groningen / Eastern Washington University): 'What are the Prospects for Animal Film Studies?'

Since the turn of the 21st century, scholarship on movies with nonhuman animals has blossomed, but how much have things changed since Jonathan Burt accused film studies of "willful blindness" to animals in *Animals in Film* (2002, 17)? Undoubtedly, scholarship on nonhuman animals in film and media has grown, with multiple book-length studies, special journal editions, and edited collections (Mitman 1999, Bousé

2000, Lippit 2000, Burt 2002, Chris 2006, PMLA 2009, Pick 2011, Whitley 2012, McLean 2014, Weik von Mossner 2014, Screen 2015, Lawrence & McMahon 2015, Almiron et. al. 2016, George and Schatz 2016, Smail 2016, Weik von Mossner 2017, Merskin 2019, McMahon 2019, Stanton 2021), as well as numerous articles and essays. Among these works, approaches vary in how they attend to animals, reflecting the fitful emergence of more bioinclusive imaginings of animal lives. Contemporary film parallels this fitful emergence, with recent outstanding works, such as *Gunda* (2019) and *My Octopus Teacher* (2020), offering new visions for expressing animal beings and human-animal relationships.

Dr. Pete Porter is Professor of Film in the Department of Fine and Performing Arts, where he also serves as Chair, at Eastern Washington University. For 2022-23, Porter is a visiting research fellow at University of Groningen. His current project is *Moving Animals: from Marching Penguins to Octopus Teachers*, a book-length study of how recent films have invented aesthetic and ethical strategies that move toward more bioinclusive conceptions of nonhuman animals. Porter currently serves as Film Review Editor for *Society & Animals*, an international journal of Human-Animal Studies.

Jamie Arathoon (University of Edinburgh): 'Towards an Agenda for Animal and Disability Geographies (Studies)'

Animal and disability geographies (studies) have become recognized fields of inquiry gaining traction with academics of differing interests, approaches, and methods. To date, however, there has been limited engagement between the two fields themselves, despite healthy suggestions for such debate in the wider social sciences and humanities. This paper provides a series of provocations about the interconnections between animal and disability geographies (studies) to examine what they might add to each other, and why there is a need for (critical) work at this intersection. First, I suggest that animal and disability studies share interconnections that encompass: their shared ontological challenges towards deconstructing speciesism and ableism respectively, and a growing focus on intersectional work. Second, I explore spaces of speciesist and disabling violence, arguing that thinking through these spaces will enable researchers to problematize and challenge both ableism and speciesism. Third, I outline current engagement between the subfields, through the themes of space, place, and care. I argue that bringing the two together can build a stronger critical geography of justice by highlighting: i) ableism within animal studies, ii) speciesism within disability studies; and iii) the potential for constitutive relationships where both are brought to bear on issues and conceptual resources.

Jamie Arathoon is an ESRC Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. Working with the charity Dog A.I.D., their PhD research explores the geographies of care and training within assistance animal partnerships. Their wider interests include animal and disability geographies (and studies), ethnomethodology, and video. Jamie is also working on a project on the geographies of dog theft with Dr Daniel Allen (Keele University) and Dr Helen Selby-Fell (Open University).

Panel 3: Animal Places

Niall Ingham (Glasgow University): "'Grazing in Full Sight of Everyone": Present and Future Scope for Human-Animal Studies in the Context of Late-Modern Scottish Highlands and Islands'

This paper will explore the state of human-animal studies (HAS) in the context of my research into human-cattle interactions in the Scottish Gàidhealtachd c.1750-1960. Historical narratives around agricultural 'Improvement' and the Clearances in the Scottish Highlands and Islands foreground the shift from a predominantly cattle-based husbandry to industrial sheep farming. However, the importance of cattle to Gaelic-speaking communities beyond the end of the Clearances (c.1860) has been overlooked by the mainstream historiography. Despite this, Gaelic oral tradition and recent interdisciplinary scholarship indicates the persistent centrality of human-cattle interactions such as milking, herding and seasonal transhumance to people's lives in this region. This paper will explore how the employment of recent multi-disciplinary HAS scholarship around human-animal interaction, agency, and human-livestock relationships allows for fresh insights into human and nonhuman experiences in this critical period. Demonstrating the project's use of Scottish Gaelic oral tradition will also indicate how further engagement with indigenous knowledge systems and oral history might expand the scope of HAS. Furthermore, an 'animal sensitive' approach (Swart) to this period has the potential to shape current understandings of human-animal relations in the context of campaigns for sustainable and just community development in the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

Niall Ingham is a second-year SGSAAH-funded PhD researcher based at the University of Glasgow, under cross-institutional supervision from Dr Martin MacGregor (Glasgow) and Professor Erica Fudge (Strathclyde). His project assesses the impact of agricultural 'Improvement' and the Highland Clearances on human-cattle interactions such as milking, herding and seasonal transhumance in the Scottish Gàidhealtachd c.1750-1960.

Alexandra Tretakov and Nadine Menzel (Leipzig University/Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt): 'Animal Poetics in Slavic Literatures'

Since the so-called 'animal turn' (cf. Ritvo 2007) in the humanities at the turn of the millennium, literary studies have sought new ways to renegotiate and rethink the human-animal relationship. However, while Western literary studies have been devoted to the comparatively new research field of Cultural and Literary Animal Studies (CLAS) for several years already, there is an enormous research desideratum in Slavic literary studies. The questions with which one can approach Ukrainian, Russian, or Polish literature, for example, are likely to be very similar to those in German or English literary studies (e.g., peculiarities of "animal genres," strategies of giving animals a voice, possibilities of literature to overcome traditional dichotomies between "the" human and "the" animal). However, the huge corpus of Slavic literatures including textual animals in various representations, has so far only been marginally examined for these questions. With the growing interest in this field, theoretical approaches have also increased steadily over the last 10 years. However, these theories mainly originate in the "Western" hemisphere. Since the more-than-human-world is also a topic in Slavic scientific discourses, it can be assumed that the Eastern European history of ideas/philosophy also provides viable and suitable ideas for the investigation of these questions. Thus, theory building represents another important research focus of CLAS in Slavic Studies. Our presentation will outline the state of research on CLAS in Slavic studies and identify research gaps. We will discuss literary works from the 19th and 20th centuries (by Aleksandr Kuprin, Lev Tolstoy, Mikhail Bulgakov, Brother Strugatzki), and ideas of Eastern European theoretical approaches. We want to set a starting point for systematic research in order

to enrich Slavic studies with an important and promising field of research in times of discourse on the non-human environment.

Dr. Nadine Menzel is a postdoctoral researcher working on the human-animal-relationship in Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian literatures. Within the framework of her position as a research assistant (from January 2010 to December 2022) at the Chair for Slavonic Literatures at the Institute for Slavic Studies at the Leipzig University she taught Russian literary theory and history (19th-21st cent.), as well as Eastern Slavic cultural history (amongst others, Russian and Ukrainian fine arts of the 20th century (Avantgarde and Socialist realism)). She completed her doctorate on travel literature in December 2015 (*Nach Moskau und zurück*, Köln 2018). CV and list of publications: <https://uni-leipzig.academia.edu/NadineMenzel>

Dr. Alexandra Tretakov is a Research Assistant at the Chair of Modern German Literature at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. After her Master of Education in Russian and German Literature at the University of Trier, she received her PhD on the topic of poetry translation. Her monograph *Paul Celan in Russia. Reception – Translation – Influence* was published in 2022. Some of her research interests include Russian and German literature of the 20th and 21st centuries, Ecocriticism and Cultural Animal Studies as well as Didactics and Creativity. Complete CV and list of publications: <https://www.ku.de/slf/germanistik/ls-neuere-deutsche-literaturwissenschaft/team/dr-alexandra-tretakov>

Justyna Włodarczyk (University of Warsaw): ‘Animal Studies in Poland, 2013-2023: From Controversy to ... Harmony?’

The paper discusses the development of animal studies in Poland in the last decade. With the goal of laying out the ideological landscape that shapes Polish academia, the paper opens with an attempt to explain the controversy generated by one of the first international animal studies conferences that took place at the University of Warsaw in 2014. It then moves on to describe the gradual acceptance of animal studies in Polish academia and the emergence of research groups, centers, journals, and the establishment of the first BA program in anthropozoology at the University of Warsaw. The paper then discusses the greatest challenges faced by animal studies scholars in Poland, including the fact that the field is dominated by English-speaking scholars and the general perception of Central Europe as marginal within animal studies scholarship. Finally, the paper reflects on emerging trends in the posthumanities and postulates, using local examples, that animal studies as a field is slowly becoming incorporated by the broader field of environmental humanities.

Justyna Włodarczyk is a scholar of culture and literature and head of the Department of North American Cultures and Literatures at the Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland. She is the author of *Genealogy of Obedience: Reading North American Dog Training Literature, 1850s-2000s* (Brill, 2018). She is currently working on a project about figurations of interspecies harmony in North American Literature and Culture.

Panel 4: Activism

Mark E. Dunick (University of Wellington / Stirling University): 'Learning from the Liberation Leagues'

Animal rights issues and especially animal experimentation were the subject of public debate and controversy in early 1980s Britain. However, the animal rights groups who generated this attention have been largely neglected by historians. This paper examines the regional Liberation Leagues which organised mass raids on animal research laboratories to obtain evidence of cruelty, and rescue animals. These raids led to high profile media attention and attracted significant public support for the movement. Eventually, a series of major criminal trials resulted in dozens of activists being sent to prison for their part in these raids and investigations. These short-lived radical groups had a lasting impact on the animal rights movement and the wider public perception of animal research in Britain. A variety of animal rights newsletters, magazines and papers are preserved in archives and these sources are used to highlight the political and tactical debates that took place within the movement regarding the Liberation League raids and the responses to the prosecutions that followed them.

Mark Dunick has a PhD in History from Victoria University of Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand, and received a 2023 EARTH Fellowship from the Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities. He is currently based at the Centre for Environment, Heritage and Policy (CEHP) at the University of Stirling.

Lynda M. Korimboccus (University of East Anglia / West Lothian College): 'Vegan Sociology: Academic Activism from and for the Margins'

A brown-skinned, mixed-race, disabled, agnostic, vegan, working class and culturally Scottish daughter of a first-generation colonial immigrant, some might say, is as 'woke' as they come. Such marginalised voices should be (but are not always) welcomed, as they describe life worlds unrecognisable to many privileged individuals. Sociology exists to awaken us all to the multiplicities of reality, through academic activism. The hidden barrier of speciesism is a significant challenge to social change. Despite recent case law, vegan children often lack equitable treatment to peers within systems such as education and healthcare. Environments where animal use is normal can be distressing. Society must recognise that promoting fully inclusive, unbiased, ethical praxis across the life course requires levelling the playing field for everyone, removing divisive speciesist barriers along with glass, class, and other ceilings. It is our responsibility as scholars to engage with the numerous intersections of inequalities. Prejudice and discrimination continue despite efforts to foreground diversity and inclusion. Limitations remain for marginalised groups, obstacles often overlooked by those easily excelling in a stratified society. HAS paved the way for vegan sociology as an emerging social justice movement, challenging ingrained anthropocentrism that prevents necessary positive social change to a more compassionate culture.

An activist scholar, Lynda Korimboccus has been a committed ethical vegan and grassroots campaigner since 1999. She is a passionate advocate for equity and justice and her PhD research investigates the experiences of young vegan children in key Scottish social institutions such as education. Lynda graduated Exeter's MA Anthrozoology programme in 2019, and holds undergraduate Honours degrees in Philosophy, Politics, Social Psychology and Sociology. Writing independently in the field of critical animal studies, she is also Editor-in-Chief of the Student Journal of Vegan Sociology and has taught Sociology at West Lothian College, Scotland, for more than 16 years.