

HUMAN AND NONHUMAN ANIMALS: LIBERATION, HISTORY AND CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES

International conference

6 and 7 October 2015, [Instituto de História Contemporânea](#), [New University of Lisbon](#)

Organization: Will Boisseau (Loughborough University), Diogo Duarte (New University of Lisbon)

Keynote Speakers:

Erika Cudworth (University of East London)

Rhoda Wilkie (University of Aberdeen)

Richard Twine (Edge Hill University)

Call for papers:

Until recently animals have been practically invisible in the social and human sciences. However, animals have evoked a growing interest to the point that today it is almost impossible to ignore their presence in many disciplinary fields. The rise in such scholarship over the last two decades has made it possible to talk about an “animal turn” which has brought about the consolidation of interdisciplinary fields such as “animal studies”, with a production that has been growing in quantity, quality and visibility. Many of these works not only show the difficulty in continuing to look at nonhuman animals in isolation, as objects deprived of autonomy or as strange beings alien to our condition, but also demonstrate that the understanding of human animals themselves – in their cultural and social relations, in their ideas, in their forms of organization and thought – is severely impoverished if we persist in ignoring the relationship to other species and their presence throughout history.

Studying the relationship between human and nonhuman animals has enabled scholars to view, in a new light, many of the underlying logics to the forms of discrimination between humans that prevailed throughout history and persist in the present. Such scholarship has led to an understanding of the establishment and development of certain mechanisms of power and authority; as well as allowing for a reassessment of the great cultural and social transformations seen in the last centuries. The “animal turn” has facilitated a reassessment of our understanding of the role that animals played in processes of social and cultural transformations, either by the way in which they conditioned those processes, or by their direct intervention. Ultimately, these works brought about recognition of animals as social and historic agents, leading us to re-evaluate the way in which they have been - and still are - treated, exploited and used by humans.

The Institute for Contemporary History (Instituto de História Contemporânea), New University of Lisbon, will be holding a conference between 6 and 7 of October 2015 to explore the recent developments in studies that reflect the intersection between human and nonhuman animals. The conference has three broad and intersecting themes – liberation, history and critical animal studies – and welcomes proposals dealing with any aspect of these thematic strands. We intend for one of the conductive axis of the works

to be history and we aim to adopt the emancipatory approach of scholar activists working in the field of critical animal studies.

The conference aims to critically explore developments in the history of the animal condition, including the agency of nonhuman animals and the relationship between the exploitation of nonhuman animals and the oppression and marginalization of certain humans on the basis of categories *such as* class, race or gender. We are interested in scrutinizing activist assertions that ‘animal liberation is human liberation’ and examining slogans such as ‘one struggle, one fight: human freedom, animal rights’.

We encourage not only papers that continue the analysis and discussion about nonhuman animals in history and about their relationship with humans, but also papers that reflect upon the contributions and impact of “animal studies” for historiography and social theory. Papers that intend to explore or take stock of animal studies, in particular those that emerged in social and human sciences in the last decades, are also welcome.

We welcome proposals from a variety of scholars and disciplines, including radical academics, independent researchers, students and community activists. Papers may focus on any aspect of the three stands, including but not limited to the following themes:

Anarchism and animal liberation

Marxism and animals

Social Justice and animals

Animals and social theory

Animals and agency

Animals and social classes

Animals and colonialism

Feminism and animals

History of animal liberation movements

History of vegetarianism/ veganism

Prison industrial complex and animals

Veganism as a social movement

The meaning of ‘liberation’

Please note that there will be a 30€ registration fee for the conference.

Prospective speakers are invited to submit abstracts of 500 words, and a brief biography including name, affiliation and contact details to: rduarte@fcsh.unl.pt and W.J.Boisseau@lboro.ac.uk

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 18th April 2015

Decisions on abstracts: 4th May 2015

For more information about the conference, or to submit an abstract, please email the organising committee: rduarte@fcsh.unl.pt or W.J.Boisseau@lboro.ac.uk