Between Apes and Angels: Human and Animal in the Early Modern World
An Interdisciplinary Conference held at the University of Edinburgh

4-6 December 2014

Conference Programme

Supported by

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Thursday 4 December
0900-1045, McMillan Room
Registration

1045-1100, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Welcome

1100-1230, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Horses and Riders
Chair: Alison Acton, Independent Scholar
(Sociology/Ethnography)

Equine Empathies: Giving Voice to Horses in Early Modern Germany
   Pia F. Cuneo, Art History, University of Arizona

The Tale of a Horse: the Levinz Colt 1721-29
   Peter Edwards, History, University of Roehampton

The Female Art of Riding: Early Modern Noblewomen on Horseback
   Magdalena Bayreuther, History, Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

1230-1330, McMillan Room
Lunch

1330-1500, Teviot Lecture Theatre
More than the sum of their parts? Monsters, Humans, and Animals
Chair: Pauline Phemister, Philosophy, University of Edinburgh

Monstrous Inspirations: Animal/Human Relations and the Rhetoric of Images in Early Modern Natural History Treatises
   Frances Gage, Fine Arts, SUNY Buffalo

The Beginnings of Comparative Anatomy and Renaissance Attitudes to Animals
   Benjamin Arbel, History, Tel Aviv University

Like Clockwork? The temporality of Cartesian animals
   Susan Wiseman, English, University of London, Birkbeck

1500-1530, McMillan Room
Break

1530-1700, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Feelings
Chair: Emily Brady, GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh

The Ottoman Carnival of Animals - Learning about Emotions toward Animals from the Surname Literature (1500-1800)
   Ido Ben Ami, History, Tel Aviv University

A cat in a sleeve: wellbeing and companion animals at the Italian Renaissance Court
   Sarah Cockram, History, University of Glasgow
Adventures of a Baillie's Dog
Laura Paterson, History, University of Strathclyde

1730-1900, Playfair Library
Plenary Address
The World as Zoo
Harriet Ritvo, History, MIT
chaired by Diana Donald, History of Art (Emerita), Manchester Metropolitan University

1900-2100, Playfair Library
Reception

Friday 5 December

0900-1030, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Simians and Similitude: Apes, Race, and Art
Chair: Andrew Wells, Graduate School of the Humanities (History), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

Ars simia naturae: The Animal as Mediator and Alter Ego of the Artist
Simona Cohen, Art History, Tel Aviv University

‘A very lively animal’: Primates as Ambiguous Commodities in Early Modern Europe
Alan S. Ross, History, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

1030-1100, McMillan Room
Break

1100-1230, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Making Peoples and Animals: Breeds, Breeding and Nationhood
Chair: Harriet Ritvo, History, MIT

The creation of the Museum of Agriculture’s livestock portraits at the University of Edinburgh (1832-44): Classification, Breeding, and Nationhood
Fiona Salvesen Murrell, Independent Scholar (History of Art)

Imagining Bestiality: Breeding, Boundaries, and the Making of Humanity
Andrew Wells, Graduate School of the Humanities (History), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

Fifty shades of grey and the rise of nations: cattle and identity
László Bartosiewicz, Archaeology, University of Edinburgh

1230-1330, McMillan Room
Lunch
1330-1530, Teviot Lecture Theatre

**Hunting and the Hunted**

Chair: Sarah Cockram, History, University of Glasgow

Slaughtered Deer, Lawed Dogs: The fabrication of animals under Forest law, 1450-1520

*Tom Johnson, History, University of London, Birkbeck*

Venator, Auceps and their Quarry: Perspectives of Identity, Empathy and Respect

*Richard Almond, Independent Scholar (History/Art History)*

‘To Breed a Familiar League of Friendship, Love and Unity’: An object-based approach toward understanding human-avian relationships in early modern falconry

*Emily Aleev-Snow, History of Design, V&A Museum/Royal College of Art*

The Rat-Catcher’s Prank: Becoming Cunning and Killing Rats in Early Victorian London

*Neil Pemberton, History of Science and Medicine, University of Manchester*

1530-1600, McMillan Room

**Break**

1600-1700, Teviot Lecture Theatre

“Dominion over ... every living thing”: Religion and Animals

Chair: Stephen Bowd, History, University of Edinburgh

Natural-Born Souls

*Miranda Anderson, English, University of Edinburgh*

Roaring ‘as gently as any sucking dove’: The Animals of Toleration

*Karen L. Edwards, English, University of Exeter*

1730-1900, Anatomy Lecture Theatre

**Plenary Address**

Animals, Astrology and Almanacs: Early Modern Veterinary Medicine in the Popular Press

*Louise Hill Curth, Medical History, University of Winchester*

chaired by Andrew Gardiner, Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Edinburgh

2030-2230, Howie’s Restaurant, Victoria St, Edinburgh

**Conference Dinner**
Saturday 6 December

0930-1100, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Creatures, “small, scuttling, and slithering”
Chair: Neil Pemberton, History of Science and Medicine, University of Manchester

The Monster's Mouth...: Animal Protagonists and the European Settlement of Australia
   Krista Maglen, History, Indiana University

Johann Christian Fabricius, insects and the development of 18th century entomology
   Dominik Hünniger, Lichtenberg Kolleg (History), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

The Moral Authority of Insects: Insect Lessons for Women in Eighteenth-Century France
   Elisabeth Wallmann, Modern Languages, University of Warwick

1100-1130, McMillan Room
Break

1130-1300, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Display and Performance
Chair: Jill Burke, History of Art, University of Edinburgh

The Medici menageries as sites for collecting, display and performance
   Angelica Groom, Independent Scholar (Art History)

Performing Meat
   Karen Raber, English, University of Mississippi

‘A Disgusting Exhibition of Brutality’: Animals, the Law and the Warwick Lion Fight of 1825
   Helen Cowie, History, University of York

1300-1330, Teviot Lecture Theatre
Concluding Discussion
Comments by the conference organisers followed by open floor discussion.

1330
End of Conference

Following the formal conclusion of the conference, a trip to the National Museum of Scotland will take place from 1400-1600. At 1630, all participants of the conference are cordially invited to partake in a farewell mug of Glühwein at the Edinburgh Christmas Market.
Humans and birds of prey have partnered in the practice of falconry for at least six thousand years; thought to have arisen in Central Asia, the practice spread by waves of migration, trade, conflict and conquest throughout Afro-Eurasia and perhaps truly globally. Beyond providing sustenance to both humans and birds, until nearly the end of the early modern period falconry played a vital role as a motivator and mediator of trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange, as well as providing crucial theoretical foundations for notions of nobility and gentility, the class structures of human society, religious and spiritual debates, and studies of the natural world. The widespread and deeply ingrained material and intellectual importance that has accrued to the practice of falconry (and to birds of prey) across geographies and time would be impossible without - and is fundamentally predicated upon - the relationship(s) built between humans and bird of prey. Through an investigation of the material culture of early modern falconry - particularly the designs and usages of leather hoods and how these may have constructed or reflected the perceptions and trajectories of these geographically- and temporally-contingent relationships - this paper intends to explore how an object-based approach can valuably contribute to our current understanding of these particular human-avian relationships, as well as discussing more broadly how this approach might fit within a layered set of interdisciplinary methodologies for examining human-animal relations within an historical context.

Venator, Auceps and their Quarry: Perspectives of Identity, Empathy and Respect
Richard Almond Independent Scholar (History/Art History)

Hunters have always experienced recurrent difficulties of finding, pursuing and taking their prey. An enduring reaction has been the invocation of assistance from divine beings, essentially personifications of the hunt, such as Artemis, Diana, St. Eustace and St. Hubert. However, hunters have also identified themselves with their quarry in anthropomorphic ways through existing social hierarchies. Aristocratic veneurs identified with big game, particularly the red deer stag or ‘hart’, the fallow buck and
the wild boar, classified in contemporary texts as ‘noble’ beasts with ‘warrior’ characteristics. ‘Non-noble’ quarry, including foxes, classified as ‘rascals’ or ‘vermin’ were not worthy of gentlemanly pursuit. Trained raptors were seen as avian extensions of their owners. The Boke of St. Albans famously contains a hierarchical list of hawks and falcons set against their human social equivalents.

Good hunters empathise with their prey and the medieval texts stress that knowledge of habits and habitats of the prey is part of being ‘lerned’, thus enabling success. Gender also plays its part although not always clearly. Noblemen naturally identified with the males of big game but all hares were called ‘she’. Falconers referred to their hunting birds in the masculine yet the heavier, fiercer falcon is female.

The notion of ‘sportsmanship’ and respect for the quarry first appears in Xenophon’s and Arrian’s writings. This ideal manifests itself in the Middle Ages not only in hunting seasons assigned to individual species but also in formalised rituals after death placating the spirits of the slain quarry.

The Ottoman Carnival of Animals - Learning about Emotions toward Animals from the Surname Literature (1500-1800)
Ido Ben Ami History, Tel Aviv University

From time immemorial humans have formed an emotional relationship toward animals. For instance, some animals provoke fear or disgust while others cause us joy and happiness. The objective of this proposed lecture is to ask how emotions can contribute to our understanding of human-animal relations. In order to answer this question, I will examine how various people of the Ottoman elite described their feelings toward animals in books called Surname (“The Book of Festival”).

The Surname describes the celebrations of imperial festivals celebrated in the Ottoman Empire during the early modern period. These Ottoman Turkish manuscripts were made at the sultan’s request in order to perpetuate the power and the prestige of the ruling elite. During these celebrations many talented artists and artisans used animals in their acts. Some animals displayed the craftsmen’s work and others entertained or scared the audience during acts of acrobatics and magic.

The study of human feelings toward animals emphasizes how our relationship with the animal kingdom is a complex cultural phenomenon. The growing discourse on the History of Emotions offers different aspects of analysis of feelings in a historical perspective. One way is to examine how emotions were expressed within the cultural products of a defined community. Using this approach, I will discuss various written and illustrated scenes from the Surname which depict interaction with animals and
thereby demonstrate how a non-western case study can enrich our understanding of human-animal relations.

Natural-Born Souls
Miranda Anderson English, University of Edinburgh

In the early modern period human nature was understood as extended, in terms of its material properties (which linked it to the properties of all of sublunary creation), and in terms of the wide-ranging soul, which connected man with God and with the souls of all levels of created life. The humours, the passions, the spirits and the faculties of the soul were believed not only to enable considerable sharing between different life forms, but also to create phenomenological differences. Such constitutional and cognitive differences between life forms were one of the motivations towards scepticism during this period. This paper will explore expressions of these notions in various early modern theological, philosophical, scientific and literary works, including those by John Donne, Walter Raleigh, Michel de Montaigne, Francis Bacon, Helkiah Crooke and Pierre Coeffeteau.

The Beginnings of Comparative Anatomy and Renaissance Attitudes to Animals
Benjamin Arbel History, Tel Aviv University

This paper is part of a larger research project on Renaissance Attitudes to Animals. Its aim is to enquire to what extent the early stages of studies in comparative anatomy that took place during the Renaissance influenced or were influenced by ideas concerning the nature and capacities of animals, compared to those of human beings. Focusing on the writings of Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea Vesalius, Pierre Belon and Girolamo Fabrici, the insights which these central figures in this field derived from their dissections of animal bodies will be considered against the background of changing sensitivities with regard to animals expressed in other writings of the same period, particularly literary ones. Rather than going into a detailed comparison of anatomical findings, the presentation will focus on perceptions that transcended the strictly anatomical knowledge of these figures, particularly on their reflections concerning animal soul, animal intelligence and animal language.

Fifty shades of grey and the rise of nations: cattle and identity
László Bartosiewicz Archaeology, University of Edinburgh

Cattle have been important sources of beef and numerous renewable ‘secondary’ products such as milk, traction and manure throughout history. Their bones tend to dominate archaeological assemblages across Europe. Although it is tempting to equate medieval domesticates with modern breeds, the familiar looks of established
breeds only developed well into the Early Modern Age. Herd books were established to standardize trademark appearances in response to increasing market competition. Folk taxonomies distinguishing between regional forms gave way to a systematic inventory of traits to be reinforced through targeted selective breeding.

This trend was in concordance with the Enlightenment and the emergence of mass production during the Industrial Revolution. Rationality, however, was influenced by fashions and tastes through the human quest for self-representation. Cattle became a commercial mass medium for conveying messages of national identity. Traded long distance and on a large scale at the time, it differed from purebred horses or dogs, species whose use was typically limited to the elites. Cattle types gradually became associated with particular population groups, adding cognitive significance to the high utilitarian value of the animal.

This tendency gained in emphasis along the margins of Europe where peoples aspired to form nation states in the face of their dominant neighbours. The consolidation of physical traits in Hungarian Grey and Scottish Highland cattle reveals parallels and differences related to the particular contexts with which these breeds evolved during the 18th–20th centuries. Production traits were highlighted by horn conformation and coat colour, also fuelled by a romantic demand for exotic “otherness” in economically advantaged urban areas. This feedback effect has made both breeds important motifs in constructed histories.

**The Female Art of Riding: Early Modern Noblewomen on Horseback**

Magdalena Bayreuther History, Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

Today, we tend to regard the relationship between girls or women and their horses as primarily emotionally based. As partners in leisure activities as well as in serious competition, horses are carefully tended and even spoiled by their dedicated owners. Empress Elisabeth of Austria, who had several favourite, lavishly cared for horses that she used for everyday riding, provides a famous nineteenth-century example of this kind of relationship. But what about earlier, less well-known examples? What kind of relationships did early modern noblewomen have with horses, and what kind of attitudes did they have about riding? Were those relationships based primarily on a personal bond, on physical and performative aspects, or on representational use? And did society even sanction the activities of female riders? Our modern view of early modern female riders is mostly informed by an imaginative vision of a woman, perpetually perched on a side-saddle, accompanied by at least one man, and beautifully dressed. In my paper I demonstrate the inaccuracy of such a vision. I consider a number of early modern noblewomen riders, ranging from well-known figures such as Marie Antoinette of France, Catherine the Great of Russia, and Maria
Theresia of Austria, to local women such as Wilhelmine of Brandenburg-Bayreuth and Madame de Saint-Baslemont de Neuville. I investigate the evidence provided in quotations from some of these women, in equestrian portraits, in hippological tracts on the art of riding, and in tack and accoutrement for the equestrienne in order to show how early modern European noblewomen thought about and practiced the art of riding.

A cat in a sleeve: wellbeing and companion animals at the Italian Renaissance Court
Sarah Cockram History, University of Glasgow

In 1512 Isabella d’Este, marchesa of Mantua, was given a tiny exotic cat, ‘the most beautiful and most delicate little cat that has ever come from Calicut’. This rare animalino (little animal) could be carried in one’s sleeve. Isabella’s formidable reputation for singularity was based on the possession of such marvels but there was a further dimension to her ownership. Isabella treasured the animalino and cared for him personally, stroking him, carrying him, feeding him and speaking to him in baby-talk. This paper looks at affective connections with cats and also dogs, big and small. It examines examples of closeness in life, anxiety in illness, and grief and memorialisation in death. When considering the feelings and interests of human and animal, methodological issues are raised. We know creatures such as the animalino were well cared for, but how can we measure wellbeing? How can we know how animals or people feel or felt? In addition to archival documents, literary works, and visual sources, what other kinds of evidence and methods can strengthen our findings? For instance, if recent research demonstrates therapeutic benefits of pet-keeping, can we usefully refer to this - or other studies from the sciences, veterinary and human medicine, or social sciences - when we think about relations with companion animals in history? What can this add to our understanding of human-animal bonds, in all species concerned, both in the past and today?

Ars simia naturae: The Animal as Mediator and Alter Ego of the Artist
Simona Cohen Art History, Tel Aviv University

Participants in Renaissance narrative or religious paintings are generally conceived to be unaware of the spectator. They interact in a world to which the spectator has no access. Yet, from the late fifteenth century, and particularly in the following centuries, we are faced with a single participant who looks directly at us.

The figure looking out of a group painting (as opposed to a portrait) may be human or animal. The case of the animal, as the only participant to show awareness of the spectator, is of particular interest and raises questions regarding animal symbolism, conceptions of animal intuition, intelligence and communication, and human
identification with animals. Salient examples are the dogs and monkeys in Venetian Cinquecento art that regard us with enigmatic gazes. Carpaccio depicted such alert dogs in *Two Venetian Ladies* and *The Knight*, and painted a curious jester monkey who peers at us from the *Return of the Ambassadors*.

In an engraving of the *Madonna and Child* by Dürer, a monkey, chained in the foreground, is confronting the viewer; he reappears in Dürer’s *Christ Among the Doctors*, where the artist’s little dog peers at us from behind. Although the fettered beast generally represents the devil in northern art of this period, it assumed a personal meaning for Dürer. It would take an eccentric artist, like Rosso Fiorentino, to introduce an ominous animal head in a sacred setting. As a participant in the *Deposition of Christ*, Rosso’s beloved but mischievous ape peers at us from the shadows with morbid humor.

The ape was a notorious imitator and became the metaphoric alter-ego of the artist himself, representing the motto *ars simia naturae* in satiric guise. Apes depicted in the aforementioned paintings are among the earliest, albeit allusive, examples of this association. In secular northern art from the late 16th century the iconographic expressions of *ars simia naturae* became explicit and increasingly satiric as the artist-ape demonstrated the critic of art as mere imitation.

‘A Disgusting Exhibition of Brutality’: Animals, the Law and the Warwick Lion Fight of 1825
Helen Cowie *History, University of York*

On 26 July 1825, the quiet market town of Warwick was host to an extraordinary spectacle: a fight between a lion and six bulldogs. The event was organised by the showman George Wombwell, owner of a popular travelling menagerie. The lion was a handsome beast called Nero, born in captivity and widely esteemed ‘a beautiful and majestic animal’; the dogs were veteran fighters, known for their strength and ferocity. Around 500 people congregated to watch the combat, which, against expectations, ended in victory for the dogs.

This paper offers a detailed study of the Warwick lion fight, its reception and consequences. Noteworthy in itself for its drama and novelty, the lion bait was particularly significant on account of its timing, falling during an important decade for human-animal relations. When Wombwell first announced the contest, the rights of animals were becoming a matter for discussion. The House of Commons was debating a bill to ban popular blood sports, including bull and bear baiting; magistrates across Britain were grappling with the interpretation of existing laws on animal cruelty; and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was
campaigning to stop a variety of abuses, from the whipping to death of pigs to the boiling alive of lobsters. In this climate, the lion fight assumed new importance, generating much debate in newspapers and periodicals. I use this material to explore contemporary attitudes towards animals in a period when their treatment was closely connected with issues of class, public decency and national identity.

**Equine Empathies: Giving Voice to Horses in Early Modern Germany**
Pia F. Cuneo *Art History, University of Arizona*

Many early modern documents (archival as well as cultural) clearly reveal the myriad ways in which humans used horses to the former’s advantage: in transport, agriculture, production, warfare, and leisure. Attitudes towards the animals attendant upon (and foundational to) such uses are often harder to ascertain as they remain largely unarticulated. Indeed the laconic character of documents in this regard may lead the historian to assume that the dominant view of horses (and of other animals) was a fairly callous, instrumentalist one, based perhaps in part on a combination of scriptural hermeneutics and early modern practicalities. My paper addresses three highly unusual texts—a poem by Hans Sachs (c.1570), an illustrated title-page of a horsemanship manual (1616), and a pamphlet featuring a dialog between horses and riders (1623)—in which the authors empathetically endeavor to see the world through the horse’s eyes and give voice to what the horse experiences. This is not to say that in all three cases empathy was the author’s sole motivator; quests for novelty and profitability, social critique, even regional chauvinism had their roles to play. Nonetheless, I argue that the efforts of these authors to construct and explore an equine viewpoint provide striking evidence of attempted empathy. These texts thus constitute part of the dynamic and complex spectrum of relationships negotiated between humans and animals in the early modern world.

**Roaring ‘as gently as any sucking dove’: The Animals of Toleration**
Karen Edwards *English, University of Exeter*

Over the course of the sixteenth century and through the middle decades of the seventeenth century, conforming and non-conforming Protestant controversialists regularly called each other greedy cormorants, vipers of sedition, and, most frequently and passionately, wolves in sheep’s clothing. Ostensibly aimed at persuading their opponents of the error of their views, these exchanges drew upon a decorum of vituperation that had been forged from the pastoral language of the Bible. This fact gave the practice of using animal epithets in polemical writing an apparently unimpeachable cultural authority. Christ himself warned that ‘grievous wolves’ would come amongst his disciples; surely then it was doing God’s work to identify those wolves? Religious polemicists zealously carried out the work of
identifying spiritual wolves for well over a century. However, in the 1640s and 50s, those who advocated toleration began to point out that ‘erroneous’ views were not changed by employing vituperative animal metaphors, but that, on the contrary, the practice caused views to become ever more entrenched, thus deepening rather than healing divisions in the realm. Tolerationists were faced with a serious rhetorical problem. How, in an era that granted supreme cultural value to the Bible, could they devise a language for controversial prose that drew upon the Bible’s authority with its pervasive pastoralism – which inevitably evoked flocks and their enemies – and yet avoid the conventional animal labels? Indeed, how could they refrain from flinging such labels back at bitter, railing opponents like Thomas Edwards and William Prynne? Was it necessary to reform the very genre of polemical prose, and how could that be done? Attempting to answer such questions, my paper will consider the rhetorical dilemma posed by the metaphorical wolf for writers like Roger Williams, John Goodwin, and John Milton, who praised toleration in an era that privileged vituperation.

The Tale of a Horse: the Levinz Colt 1721-29
Peter Edwards History, University of Roehampton

In pre-mechanized society horses possessed iconic appeal as well as functional capabilities and were therefore highly prized by the landed élite. Good horsemanship virtually defined a gentleman, the mastery of such powerful noble creatures indicating their fitness to rule. Horses, notably favourite saddle mounts, enjoyed a special relationship with their owners, were given names and treated as individuals. We can even identify specific horses in the records and, occasionally, piece together life-histories. Thus, on 4 April 1723 Isaac Hobart, Lord Edward Harley’s land agent at Welbeck Abbey [Notts.], informed his master, ‘We have this morning a large colt foal from the whitefoot or Levinz mare.’ He described him as dark chestnut in colour, with four white legs and a half star. Further correspondence enables us to follow the progress of the foal, culminating in a letter of 17 March 1728/9 in which Hobart recommended the grey horse to Harley (then 2nd. earl of Oxford) as his personal mount. From these two entries we have learnt the horse’s parentage, his strength (Harley was growing portly) and temperament, the networks that facilitated the process and the fact that his coat-colour changed over time. Other references fill out the picture: we discover when he was broken-in, the treatment he received for his ailments, his designated roles and monetary worth and how Harley, his staff and other breeders viewed him. Put in context, this paper will shed a good deal of light on the vital relationship between horse and man in early modern England.
Monstrous Inspirations: Animal/Human Relations and the Rhetoric of Images in Early Modern Natural History Treatises
Frances Gage Fine Arts, SUNY Buffalo

The conception of the monstrous, overwhelmingly associated with the animal-human hybrids tirelessly described by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century natural historians, is now an important area of investigation in early modern studies. These studies point to the degree to which the monstrous simultaneously fascinated early modern readers and betrayed cultural anxiety over the porous boundaries between human and animal. What has received less attention, however, is the rhetoric of the illustrations in early modern treatises on the monstrous, including Ambroise Paré’s *Des monstres et prodigies* (1573) and Ulisse Aldrovandi’s *Monstrorum historia* (1642). Although Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park convincingly argue that the illustrations assert the truth claims of the corresponding narratives, much more remains to be said about these images, particularly when examined within art historical contexts—a line of investigation yet to receive adequate attention. Visual analysis of several illustrations demonstrates that authors and illustrators recycled source images or made calculated references (sometimes ironical) to canonical examples of high art in order to underscore the intersections and tensions between animal and human. The illustrations do significant work in situating discourses on animal/human relations within broader debates concerning the nature of the human, the antagonism between nature and culture and the vulnerability of culture and tradition.

The Medici menageries as sites for collecting, display and performance
Angelica Groom Independent Scholar (History of Art)

The Medici rulers, during their reign, first as Dukes of Florence (1531-1569) and subsequently as Grand Dukes of Tuscany (1569-1737), established two menageries: the *Serraglio delle fiere* (zoo for ferocious beasts) and the *Serraglio degli animali rari* (zoo for rare animals). These two very different zoological spaces will provide the focus of my paper, in order to examine how the locations, the architectural character of the buildings, and their intended functions invited different forms of spectatorship, which, in turn, contributed diversely to the self-imaging of the Medici Court.

The *Serraglio delle fiere*, located in the district of San Marco, was used to accommodate the larger and more powerful zoological specimens in the Medici’s zoological collections. Both the urban setting and the design of the building ensured that the captive beasts within were both visible and audible to the local inhabitants. Within the space itself, an amphitheatre for the staging of brutal and bloody animal combats (*caccia*), provided entertainment for the Medici family and invited guests. I
will argue that this semi-public zoo can thus be interpreted as a potent symbol of the Medici’s absolutist rule of the former Republic.

The *Serraglio degli animali rari* was built within the private and princely setting of the Boboli Gardens and was used to house the rarer and more precious fauna. Contemporary written sources describe the building as an ornate edifice, decorated with many sculptural works. Both the ambiance and the setting, as well as the valuable zoological exhibits suggest a space in which art and nature merged to impress upon a more refined and contemplative audience the magnificence and splendour of the Medici court.

**Johann Christian Fabricius, insects and the development of 18th century entomology**
Dominik Hünniger *Lichtenberg Kolleg (History), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen*

Whilst the development of botany as an academic discipline in the context of the “scientific revolution” and European exploration, expansion and colonialism has gained widespread attention in recent years, the corresponding developments in 18th century zoology have not yet received their due attention. In general, studies on the history of biology/natural history only rarely reflect on the relation of human and animal in the history of the discipline(s).

In my paper, I will focus on the life and letters of the Danish entomologist Johann Christian Fabricius (1745-1808), in order to study the epistemic status of animals – specifically insects – in early entomology.

The proposed paper will show how Fabricius produced knowledge on insects by taking his lead first from Linnean natural history systematics and second by travelling Europe in order to view as many insect cabinets as possible. Here, the epistemic status of the animals as well as human interaction with non-human animals in the practices of collecting, displaying and exchange will be examined closely.

Fabricius especially struggled with the main obstacle in insect studies, namely the small sizes of the “objects” of scrutiny that compelled the human observer to make use of a wide variety of instruments and technologies. Consequently, human observer as well as animal “object” became enhanced beings. Fabricius reflected on this process in a very interesting manner that sheds light on the contemporary debate of the interplay between nature, culture and technology.

This interplay also influenced Fabricius’ reflections on the role of pictorial representation versus textual description in natural history and in the development of
an academic discipline yet to be established. Fabricius’ ambivalent stance on the usefulness of images will also be examined.

Finally, as Fabricius held a chair in economics at the Danish university of Kiel in today’s northern Germany, his attempts to systematize and classify the insect world on a global scale were also informed by the enlightenment’s zeal for economic improvement. Thus the paper will add to the growing discussion on the rather diverse attitudes of 18th natural history in relation to “oeconomia naturae.”

**Slaughtered Deer, Lawed Dogs: The fabrication of animals under Forest law, 1450-1520**  
Tom Johnson *History, University of London (Birkbeck)*

The late-medieval Forest was governed by a distinct set of laws, with the aim of preserving the king’s deer for hunting. These deer were almost exclusively referred to as ‘feras’ – ‘wild beasts’ – in the records of Forest courts. If Forest law thus presents the rather contradictory picture of a ‘regulated wilderness’, then it also helps us think through the legal construction of animals in late-medieval England, and how this may have impacted wider ideas about law and sovereignty.

In attempting to prevent poaching, for example, Forest law created an elaborate hierarchy of deer, according to species, age, and sex; other hunted animals, such as hares, rabbits, foxes, game birds and fish, were fitted into a wider schematization and regulated accordingly. The wildness of game was thus a protected characteristic of its animality. At the same time, however, dogs belonging to people within the Forest had to be ‘lawed’ (their front claws clipped) in order to prevent them running at the deer – their wildness was a legal liability. The Forest law was thus centrally concerned with fabricating the bodies of animals, both ideologically and materially, with regard to conceptions of wildness.

Theoretically, the Forest was a jurisdiction subject solely to royal will and prerogative (as opposed to common law, the sum of custom and decisions). Understanding the Forest law’s concern with delineating animals shows how the royal prerogative, more widely, was connected with the control of ‘nature’. This may have interesting repercussions for how we perceive late-medieval conceptions of sovereignty.
The hazards of Australian fauna have long been cited as contributing to the perfect natural prison of hostile bushland and shark infested seas that surrounded the early penal and free colonies. Yet this narrative has been largely assumed rather than examined. This paper situates Europeans in Australia within a landscape of creatures that helped to set the spatial boundaries of settlement but did not always respect the creation of ‘civilised’ domains. Most of the scholarship that explores imperial human-animal interactions has focused on large carnivores, such as lions, wolves or crocodiles. But in this paper I examine the small, scuttling and slithering creatures that hid in the woodpiles and under the floors of European homes and workplaces. These animals were not celebrated in representations of colonial exploits, nor did they become symbols of European dominance over the environment. They did not seem tangible or ‘knowable,’ inviting attempts at understanding or anthromorphization. And yet, they were more numerous, ubiquitous, and often in closer proximity to colonists as they built the homes and towns that helped consolidate claims to land throughout the world. Insects and reptiles were anonymous and non-specific, disappearing back into the dark holes from which they emerged, and yet they were often agents of great change in the human lives they encountered. This paper interrogates not only the responses of Europeans to these animals but also considers how these creatures disrupted and contravened colonial endeavours to tame and clear the landscape, continuing to inhabit the new environments that were being created. The paper asks whether historical agency and intent can be found in these less sympathetic and less ‘knowable’ creatures, and how this might contribute to our understanding of the past.

The creation of the Museum of Agriculture’s livestock portraits at the University of Edinburgh (1832-44): Classification, Breeding, and Nationhood

Fiona Salvesen Murrell Independent Scholar (Art History)

This paper will address a number of issues surrounding the formation of just over 100 life-size and half-life-size scientifically accurate portraits of British and foreign livestock painted by William Shiels R.S.A (1783-1857). Commissioned from 1832 by the University of Edinburgh’s Professor of Agriculture, David Low (1786-1859), for his privately and publically funded Museum of Agriculture, these portraits became highly important records of breeds then in existence. Fifty-six were reproduced as hand-painted lithographs in Low’s publication: The Breeds of the Domestic Animals of the British Islands (1840-42). Certain breeds were valued more highly by agriculturalists of
the day and the range depicted, including foreign breeds will be discussed in this paper.

Around the same time as the University collection was being formed, two other agricultural museums in Edinburgh were also formed – one a private commercial venture became linked and then joined that of the Highland and Agricultural Society. I will analyse how these competing institutions fought over several years to outshine the other – this included several attempts to poach the artist William Shiels for a similar illustrative commission. The competing visions of institutional ethos and public accessibility will also be discussed, alongside the individual perceptions of the museums’ national and European importance.

**Adventures of a Baillie’s Dog**
Laura Paterson *History, University of Strathclyde*

When Baillie Hay discovered Walter Dalgleish selling the skin of his dog at Peebles market in March 1686, he took up a grievance with the burgh council. Hay produced two witnesses who testified that the skin in question had once belonged to his dog, and an investigation followed during which Dalgleish confessed to killing and skinning the dog. The story began with the dog as a piece of lost property that had been missing for eight days. When the remains of the dog were discovered by Baillie Hay the dog had been transformed into a commodity to be sold at the market. In between these times Dalgleish treated the dog first as a potentially useful piece of property capable of labouring for its human owner, and secondly, after it transpired that the dog could not herd sheep, as a useless animal that had become a pest. Finally, by killing and skinning the dog Dalgleish literally transformed a ‘useless’ animal into a valuable commodity.

The dog in this account was transformed from an objectified animal to an animal object, but remained the property, or rather lost property, of Baillie Hay throughout. This individual animal was regarded in vastly different lights by its owner, Baillie Hay; Dalgleish, the man responsible for killing and skinning it; representatives from the burgh council; and by wider society as a whole. By tracing the diverse roles occupied by Baillie Hay’s dog, this paper proposes to examine the role of animals more widely within Scottish culture as economically valuable pieces of human property, working animals, companions, and ultimately as sentient beings with their own agency. Specifically this paper will focus on stressing the ways in which the status and use of one individual animal could be considered in many ways by many individuals simultaneously.
The funniest thing that ever happened in a West London pub involved two rat catchers, eleven scruffy rats and a clever prank, at least according to the rat-catcher who initiated the entire incident. Jack Black – the self-appointed rat-catcher to Queen Victoria – retold the whole episode in an interview with the famed nineteenth-century social investigator Henry Mayhew.

Focusing on the practices of and rhetorics surrounding a much overlooked profession, this paper will examine the relationship between population control, the practices of killing rats and categories of vermin in the early Victorian period with a special emphasis on London’s foremost rat-catcher Jack Black and the fate of eleven rats.

I will achieve this by inspecting the labour of the rat-catcher but also the practitioners of Ratting (the urban and spectator sport of killing rats with terrier dogs), in order to reveal the different ways in which rats have been brought into the open, under the label of vermin; and killed. I focus on the place of ‘everyday’ knowledge and practices of rat-catching and ‘rattiness’, but also to follow the movements of the rats themselves – not simply their representation or their evocation – in the cityscape of London through its ‘underworlds’, from sewers to drain-pipes, and ‘overworlds’, including Londoner’s homes and fields. I will argue that the rat and rat-catcher were interlinked figures co-constructed through a discourse of cunningness and countercunningness. To catch London's cunning, furry marauders the rat-catcher needed to become ‘more-than-human’. He had to be cunning like a rat. It is, as I will argue, this process of “becoming with” (Donna Harraway) which intriguingly underpinned the aforementioned funny episode involving two rat-catchers, a prank, eleven rats and a West London pub.

Performing Meat
Karen Raber English, University of Mississippi

Europeans of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance staged elaborate banquets in which dead animals figured prominently, not only as dishes on the table, but as part of guests’ entertainment. At the same time, the very definition of the term “meat” was changing, to refer not simply to all food, but specifically to the cooked flesh of animals, the definition it holds today, and one that underwrites the widespread exploitation of certain species. This essay investigates the connection between animals’ varied performances at the early modern banquet table, in recipe books, and in dietaries of the period, and their gradual transformation into the principal
protagonist of the dinner table. I argue that by mobilizing dead animals as theatrical performers, by confusing species categories in dishes meant to represent animals through the blending or layering of types of flesh, and by creating ambiguously “live” dishes (like the infamous pies manufactured to release actual flying birds when cut open), early moderns were staging spectacles of godlike human power, while celebrating animal flesh as a sign of prosperity, status and culture. The process of turning animals into edible objects through their staged demise, dismemberment, and reconstitution, however, was also importantly fraught with danger for arguments about human (and animal) identity and agency, let alone human exceptionalism and triumphalism.

‘A very lively animal’: Primates as Ambiguous Commodities in Early Modern Europe
Alan S. Ross History, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

Contact between early modern Europeans and primates was infused with meanings which, often ambiguous, very much depended on the context as well as the audience of the encounter. Recent work on the material culture of international trade has drawn attention to the transformations of significance that commodities underwent as they changed hands between their domestic markets and those of their destination. This paper focuses on small monkeys (summarily called ‘meerkats’ in the sources) imported to Europe from West Africa from the late fifteenth century onwards. On the basis of archival material from German trading companies and Southern German courts from the sixteenth century, this paper analyses the meanings attached to the exchange of ‘meerkats’ in settings of commerce and patronage. Issues raised will be European attitudes to primates as food, descriptions of their anatomy as well as their later ‘uses’ as gifts among the European elite. Finally, the continuing transformations primates underwent after their deaths as parts of their bodies passed through collections of natural curiosities will be touched upon to give an indication of further developments in European attitudes to primates in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Laboring Apes: Race and Class in Eighteenth-Century Writing on Apes
Ingrid Tague History, University of Denver

With the expansion of exploration and conquest in the eighteenth century, the British came into increasing contact with a variety of apes and monkeys, animals that were fascinating as well as problematic because of their similarity to humans in both anatomy and behavior. As scholars have often noted, one way in which this interest manifested itself was through a concern with the possibility of sexual relations between apes and humans. Stories of African women being abducted by apes addressed the possibility of a permeable boundary between humans and animals.
while also containing that possibility within the reassuring confines of an exotic continent and race. Yet also implicit in these narratives and other discussions of apes was an awareness of the relationships between the British and the people who inhabited these “exotic” lands—relationships which were constructed in terms of domination and subordination, and in which slavery played an increasingly prominent economic and political role. If discussions of ape-native relations centered on the possibility of familial and sexual intimacy, eighteenth-century British writers used a much different model to conceptualize relations between themselves and apes: that of (potential) master and servant. This paper will examine the multiple ways in which naturalists employed the idea of ape servitude—and resistance to servitude—to explore ideas about race and class. Because the British usually conceived of animals in terms of their utility to humans, the idea of employing apes, with their anatomical similarities to people, as servants seemed to be a natural one. But apes’ resistance to domestication complicated such assumptions and encouraged both comparisons and contrasts with their human counterparts. Did the failure to accept subjugation indicate intractable stupidity or noble resistance? And what were the implications for relations with human servants and slaves?

The Moral Authority of Insects: Insect Lessons for Women in Eighteenth-Century France
Elisabeth Wallmann Modern Languages, University of Warwick

At least since Solomon’s injunction “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise” (Prov. 6. 6-8), insects have been used to teach humans how to behave virtuously. In the French eighteenth century, as a host of natural historians focused their attention on the behaviours, reproductive modes and structures of insects, their association with pedagogy took a particular turn. Now, it was above all women and children who were thought to benefit from the lessons offered by the micro-world.

My paper proposes an analysis of the ways in which ideals of female behaviour were formed by and taught through insects, tracing the striking recurrence of motifs such as the caring spider mother or the diligent silkworm in very different genres. Pedagogical texts of the period are often, explicitly or implicitly, targeted not only at children, but also at a female audience. I will analyse the lessons held in store specifically for women by both popular natural history texts and fables, thus crossing the line between texts based on research of supposedly ‘real’ insects on the one hand and a genre whose insect characters are manifestly imaginary on the other. By doing so, I seek to explore not only the moral authority held by “nature” as an abstract concept, but also how this authority could become embodied in creatures apparently as lowly as insects. Ultimately, my paper seeks to disentangle the web spun by
Enlightenment writers between human and non-human nature, between women and animals.

**Imagining Bestiality: Breeding, Boundaries, and the Making of Humanity**

Andrew Wells *Graduate School of the Humanities (History), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen*

Over the course of the long eighteenth century, a wide array of scholars, scientists, and other authors attempted to understand the place of humanity within nature. Linnaeus’s radical inclusion of *Homo* within his system of nature posed uncomfortable questions for a European society that was attempting to reconcile the challenges of reason and empirical science (i.e. the Enlightenment) with a fundamentally religious world view. Most difficult of all were questions of where humanity ended and the animal kingdom began. A wide array of liminal beings, some of which we would today see as clearly animal and others as clearly human, seemed to threaten the exalted place in nature that God had given to humankind. As a means of drawing solid boundaries, many naturalists and commentators imagined a sexual experiment: fertile offspring between a human and one of these liminal beings would unequivocally confirm the latter as human. But what if their offspring was sterile or non-existent? Then not merely would these beings be just as unequivocally animal, but the experiment itself – and its participants – would have been guilty of bestiality. This paper examines these issues with reference to the writings that discussed such experiments and actual cases of bestiality in Scotland, in order to explain how reproduction came to be a vital tool in establishing boundaries, not just between but also within species. Modern concepts of racial and sexual difference, among others, owe part of their existence to these early modern thought experiments and their intellectual causes and consequences.

**Like Clockwork? The temporality of Cartesian animals**

Susan Wiseman *English, University of London (Birkbeck)*

Revisiting Descartes’ radical revision of the status of the animal the proposed paper examines once again the question of the animal and modernity. Descartes’ intervention banishing animal reason and the sensitive soul is important for the study of early modern animals, but also for philosophers and sociologists writing about modernity. As Peter Harrison summarizes the accepted position, ‘[o]ver the course of the seventeenth century the behaviors of brutes ceased to be “signs” which bore specific meanings for human observers’ (‘Virtues,’ 483-4), but came to be understood as ‘effects of particular internal operations’. Revisiting this question, the paper will examine ‘popular’ as well as some ‘specialist’ English reception and response to Montaigne and Descartes’ texts on animals (Kenelm Digby, Duke of Newcastle) as
well as later seventeenth-century material (John Ray, Legrande’s edition of Descartes, Bernard Connor, Susanna Centlivre) to argue for a more complex and differentiated understanding of responses to Descartes. It will put these alongside the temporalities of modernity suggested by Jacques Derrida in Animal (2006) and Jan Golinski (Making Natural (2005)) and in the light of this ask again about the role of Descartes, Enlightenment and the prolonged institution of the disciplines in the institution of the Cartesian human. Finally, it will revisit the temporality of ‘acceptance’ of Cartesian rupture between human and animal in non-specialist seventeenth-century texts engaging with Descartes.
Between Apes and Angels: Human and Animal in the Early Modern World

Maps and Plans
Key Conference Locations

1. Teviot Lecture Theatre, access via Doorway 5, Teviot Place.
2. School of History, Classics and Archaeology, access via Doorway 4, Teviot Place. McMillan Room is on First Floor.
3. Anatomy Lecture Theatre, access via Doorway 2, Teviot Place.
4. Old College and Playfair Library.
5. Howie’s Restaurant, Victoria Street.