

Animals and Public Policy

ANST-UA 0500.001.S17

Thursday, 5:00-7:30 pm
Professor David J. Wolfson; djw9@nyu.edu
Office hours: by appointment

DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide an overview of public policy with respect to the somewhat contradictory treatment of animals by humans, with a focus on how public policy is created and how social change occurs. We will consider what public policy consists of and what actors and factors play a role in its creation; how society views animals; the capacities of animals; how ethics relates to animal treatment; how animals are currently utilized by our society; and political and other efforts to improve or alter the current treatment of animals, including the influence of science, government, business and non-governmental organizations in defining and influencing animal-related policies. We will focus on legislation, litigation, regulation, and ballot initiative and consumer campaigns and their effectiveness, as well as other strategies that relate to improving animal welfare. We will also discuss the meaning of “animal rights” and the success and impact of the modern animal protection movement.

READINGS:

Selection from a number of texts (the three books to be acquired are in bold), including:

An Introduction to the Policy Process (4th Edition), Thomas Birkland

The Animal Rights Movement in America, Lawrence Finsen and Susan Finsen

Eating Animals, Jonathan Safran Foer

The Animal Rights Debate, Abolition or Regulations?, Gary L. Francione and Robert Garner

Political Animals: Animal Protection Politics in Britain and the United States, Robert Garner

Compassion, By the Pound, The Economics of Farm Animal Welfare, F. Bailey Norwood and Jayson L. Lusk

The State of the Animals 2001, edited by Deborah J. Salem and Andrew N. Rowan

The State of the Animals II: 2003, edited by Deborah J. Salem and Andrew N. Rowan

The State of the Animals III: 2005, edited by Deborah J. Salem and Andrew N. Rowan

The State of the Animals IV: 2007, edited by Deborah J. Salem and Andrew N. Rowan

Ethics Into Action, Henry Spira and the Animal Rights Movement, Peter Singer

Animal Rights, Current Debates and New Directions, edited by Cass Sunstein and Martha Nussbaum

Students will also be required to have seen *The Rise of the Planet of the Apes* and *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* by 2/9 and *Blackfish* by 2/23.

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:

I. What Is Public Policy? Why Do Animals Matter? Which Animals? (1/26)

- A) "Man Won't Bite Dog," The New York Times (January 7, 2001).
- B) "Cow Parts," Discover (August 2001).
- C) HSUS: The Welfare of Animals (2006).
- D) Chapter 1 of An Introduction to the Policy Process, Thomas Birkland.

II. Public Policy (The Basics) (2/2)

Chapter 2 (pages 27-46 and 54-62), 5 and 6 (199-203 and 214-236) of An Introduction to the Policy Process.

III. Film Discussion (2/9)

Students will have seen *The Rise of the Planet of the Apes* and *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* by this class

IV. What We Think About Animals: Historical/Cultural Reasons For This Perspective (Interim Presentations) (2/16)

- A) Chapter 5 of Animal Liberation, Peter Singer.
- B) Chapter 2 of Compassion, By the Pound, F. Bailey Norwood and Jayson L. Lusk.

V. What Can Animals Do? (Interim Presentations) (2/23) Guest Lecturer: Nicolas Delon

- A) Consciousness: Essential, or Dispensable?, Allen and Beckoff.
- B) Animal Cognition, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Kristen Andrew.
- C) "Zoo Animals and Their Discontents", The New York Times (July 6, 2014).

Students will have seen *Blackfish* by this class.

VI. How Should We Treat Animals? (Interim Presentations) (3/2)

- A) "An Animal's Place," Michael Pollan.
- B) Chapter 1 of Animal Liberation, Peter Singer.
- C) Chapter 6 (pages 182 to 194) of Compassion, By the Pound, F. Bailey Norwood and Jayson L. Lusk.

VII. History of the Animal Protection Movement (3/9) Guest Lecturer: Bernard Unti, HSUS

- A) A Social History of Animal Protection, Bernard Unti and Andrew M. Rowan, The State of Animals.
- B) The Development of the Anti-Cruelty Laws During the 1800's, David Favre and Viven Tsang.

VIII. Analysis of Certain Animal Protection Campaigns Part 1 (Captive Chimps/Deep Sea Trawling) (3/23) Guest Lecturers: Ann Frostic, HSUS/Jennifer Jacquet, NYU

- A) Chapter 6 (pages (bottom part of) 124-147 of An Introduction to the Policy Process.
- B) Split-Listing Petition
- C) "Will Aging Chimps Get to Retire?" NY Times
- D) IOM Committee Letter
- E) Assessing the Necessity Report
- F) Federal Register on Split-Listing
- G) "Changing Perspectives", NYTimes
- H) "Deep Sea, Plunder and Ruin," NYTimes, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/03/opinion/deep-sea-plunder-and-ruin.html?_r=0

- I) “Take 5 minutes and sign this,” <http://www.penelope-jolicoeur.com/2013/11/take-5-minutes-and-sign-this.html>
- J) World View, A Personal Take on Events, Les Watling, Nature.

IX. Analysis of Certain Animal Protection Campaigns Part 2 (No-Kill Movement/Cosmetic Testing) (3/30) Guest Lecturer: Jane Hoffman, Executive Director Mayor’s Alliance

- A) Chapter 4 (pages 107-118, and (bottom part of) 120) of An Introduction to the Policy Process.
- B) Ethics Into Action, Henry Spira and the Animal Rights Movement, Peter Singer, pages 46-139.
- C) From Pets to Companion Animals, The State of Animals
- D) Great Expectations, Best Friends Magazine, July/August 2004

X. Public Policy, Economics And Animals (4/6) Guest Lecturer: Jennifer Fearing HSUS

- A) The Role of Economics in Achieving Welfare Gains for Animals, Jennifer Fearing and Gaverick Matheny (in The State of Animals IV).
- B) Fiscal and Economic Effects of Proposition 2 by Matthew Newman, Tim Gage and Trisha McMahan.

XI. Eating Animals: Welfare, Human Health, the Environment and Climate Change (4/13)

- A) Eating Animals, Jonathan Safran Foer.
- B) Chapter 5 (pages 156 to 166) of Compassion By the Pound, F. Bailey Norwood and Jayson L. Lusk.

XII. Farmed Animal Reform In The United States: A Personal Case Study (4/20)

- A) Chapter 7 of Political Animals: Animal Protection Politics in Britain and the United States, Robert Garner.
- B) Chapter 9 of Animal Rights, Current Debates and New Directions, David J. Wolfson and Mariann Sullivan.
- C) Chapter 3 of Compassion By the Pound, F. Bailey Norwood and Jayson L. Lusk.
- D) California Proposition 2 Ballot Language.

XIII. Future Campaigns? (Final Presentations) (4/27)

- A) The Animal Rights Debate – Abolition or Regulation? Francione and Garner (Part I).

XIV. Future Campaigns? (Final Presentations) (5/4)

- A) The Animal Rights Debate – Abolition or Regulation (Part II and Part III from pages 199-269).

METHODS:

In this course we will analyze applied interdisciplinary subject matter through a public policy lens, focusing on how political and social change occurs. *All reading material need to be analyzed critically.* Every author has an agenda or bias that should be questioned.

CENTRAL QUESTIONS:

What is public policy? How is it created? Who participates? What factors are important?

Why should we care about animals? All animals?

How are animals treated in our society? How should animals be treated?

What are “rights”? Should (all) animals have “rights”?

How are laws created, what do laws do, and what is animal law?

How does social and political change occur? What are the tools to change public policy? How do we balance competing interests? How much should change “cost”?

What is the most effective way to improve the treatment of animals in our society?

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING:

This topics course is designed to foster close reading and conceptual analysis of complex, interdisciplinary subjects. The list of “central questions” above is designed to foster this analysis. Active class conversation is required in order to develop and unpack the assumptions, arguments and implications of the topics we discuss. Since the success of the course depends heavily upon class participation, you are expected to attend all sessions and participate actively. Attendance will be taken for each class. Please note that missing more than one class without permission will negatively impact your grade. If you cannot make a class, please email me in advance and get notes from your colleagues. I will not be able to re-teach the material.

Participation – 30%

Your active participation in class discussion is required. Students are expected to have read the materials, reviewed notes from the previous class, and be ready and willing to discuss the readings and contribute to class debates. Grading for class participation will focus on comprehension, clarity of presentation, coherence, and starting a productive conversation.

Reading Commentaries – 10%

During the first class, each student will be assigned to closely analyze one week’s readings, and email a one-page outline and three questions to the class (via Blackboard) two days prior to the class in which the reading is assigned.

Initial Presentations – 10% (2/16, 2/23 and 3/2)

Teams of two students will each be responsible for a ten minute presentation in the third, fourth or fifth class. Topics will be assigned in the first week. Students will need to address the relationship between the current use and treatment of animals, the ethical implications of such use and existing public policy or lack thereof.

Midterms – 15% (distributed 3/23, due Mon 3/27 at 2 pm)

Essay questions will be distributed in class on Thursday, 3/23 and will be due on Monday, 3/27 at 2 pm. Students will be asked to choose two essay questions from among three topics addressing and comparing the main themes of the course, constructing analyses that incorporate the reading and class material examined throughout the course of the semester.

Final Presentations – 20% (4/27 and 5/4)

Students will work on collaborative projects, which will be assigned in the first part of the semester. The project needs to be critically analyzed and thoroughly sourced. Collaboration among the group is an essential element of the project. Each group will be asked to present on an issue in the following area:

Create a future animal protection campaign on a particular issue, with a focus on the public policy goal of the campaign and the public policy actors and tools to be impacted or utilized, specifics of the campaign, problem-areas, and reasons for why the campaign is worth investing time and money, i.e., the reasons you think it would be successful, and what you think “success” means. One key aspect of this analysis will be a discussion of what you imported (and chose to not import) from other campaigns and why.

Deliverables:

1. A proposal as discussed above,
2. A 20-25-minute presentation to class,
3. A PPT, video, or written report on the historical analysis/proposal, including references (**~30 pages long or equivalent**)
4. One paragraph on your individual contribution to the collaborative process.

Additional details on these collaborative projects will be provided in the first part of the semester.

Final – 15% (due 5/8 at 2 pm)

Essay questions will be distributed on Thursday, 5/4 and will be due on Monday, 5/8 at 2 pm. Students will be asked to choose two essay questions from among three topics addressing and comparing the main themes of the course, constructing analyses that incorporate the reading and class material examined throughout the course of the semester.

POLICIES:***Laptops/Cell Phones:***

No laptops are allowed. Cell phones must be turned off.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism results in failure in the class. It includes: copying sentences or fragments from any source without quotes or references; not citing every source used in your papers; citing internet information without proper citation; presenting someone else’s work as your own; or inadvertently copying verbatim from any source.

Extensions/Incompletes:

In the interest of fairness to other students, extensions and incompletes are only given in exceptional circumstances. Please discuss a request with me well before the due date.

Disability Disclosure Statement:

Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980. NYU’s Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor New York, NY 10003-6675 Telephone: 212-998- 4980 Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995- 4114 Web site: <http://www.nyu.edu/csd>.