

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS NEWSLETTER



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MINDING ANIMALS WRAP-UP
Conference Report
Dale Jamieson Interview
MAI Study Circles

ENVIRONMENTAL POETRY
Of Nature and Latent Art
by Paul Dixon

IN MEMORIAM
Barry Commoner
Paul Pojman

BOOK & MOVIE REVIEWS
Original Content and Perspectives from ISEE members

NEW & NOTEWORTHY RESEARCH



ADVANCING THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL
ETHICS AND PHILOSOPHY SINCE 1990

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IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the Editor..... 3

General Announcements

New Web Address..... 4
The Federation of Philosophical Societies..... 4
New Officers..... 4
Website Team/Listserve Changes..... 5
New Regional Representative..... 5
ISIS Centre for Nature and Society..... 6
Sessions at the Central APA..... 7

In Memoriam

Paul Pojman..... 8
Barry Commoner..... 9

News, Activities, Art

Member News..... 10
Featured Art..... 12

Book & Movie Reviews

Patrick Curry's *Ecological Ethics*
Reviewed by Keith R. Peterson..... 16
Leslie Paul Thiele's *Indra's Net and the Midas Touch*
Reviewed by Todd LeVasseur..... 18
Holmes Rolston's *A New Environmental Ethics*
Reviewed by Nathan Kowalsky..... 20
Movie Review: *Living Downstream*
Reviewed by Chris Magoc, Daniel McFee, & Brit-
tany Proshak..... 22

MAI Wrap Up

Report from Utrecht..... 24
Dale Jamieson Interview..... 26
Reports from Study Circles..... 32

Research

New & Noteworthy..... 43
Environmental Philosophy Books..... 44
Environmental Philosophy Journals..... 52
Other Works in Environmental Philosophy..... 59
Ecotheology, Green Religion, Spirituality..... 65
Other Works of Interest..... 67
Multimedia..... 76

Business..... 77

Cover Photo: "Polar Summer," author unknown



Minding Animals with Dale Jamieson

an Interview by Joel MacClellan

DJ: Yeah, right. Exactly. I think the problem of course with anything this interdisciplinary, anything with this many different pieces, is trying to hold all of these moving pieces together so that they don't just fly apart. That's an ongoing struggle, but so far so good.

JM: Do you think that MAI is having an impact on animal studies?

DJ: I think so. Here at NYU we have an animal studies initiative, and there are these people at the New School, which is just ten blocks away, basically in our neighborhood. There are people who do animal studies there and we are working with them to do an animal studies conference here in the fall. We are branding it as a Minding Animals pre-conference. So, I think the Minding Animals brand is a good one for this kind of conference and activity.

JM: One more question on Utrecht in general. Did you learn anything new there? Any noteworthy talks that you found there, or is this all old hat for you at this point?

DJ: It's certainly not old hat. I wandered around and definitely heard new things. I'll tell you about a talk that in some ways was most memorable, which is going to sound quite strange because I heard a lot of talks and many I'm sure made an impression. One of the issues I'm interested in here in New York is that ever since Captain Sully and the miracle on the Hudson [US Airways Flight 1549], there has been an issue about geese and geese management around the airports of New York. It is an issue that it is hard to have reasonable conversations about because there tends to be a lot of sympathy for the geese, but then all you do is say "miracle on the Hudson" and it is kind of like killing any number of geese doesn't become an issue anymore for people. It's the same issue in the Netherlands because they have a huge airport, a lot of water, a lot of geese, and so on. I went to a talk on humanely killing geese,¹ and for me that was really important because the issue of humane killing has not been an issue in this discussion. It's just been "kill the geese" or "don't kill the geese," and actually, they've been

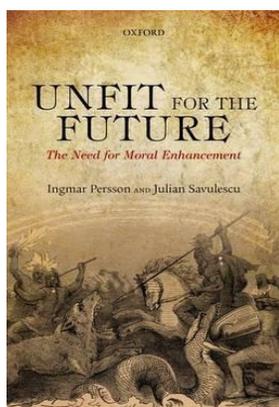
1. "Killing Wild Geese with CO₂ and Argon" by Marien Gerritzen, Wageningen UR Livestock Research, The Netherlands.

Joel MacClellan (JM): How long have you been involved with Minding Animals International?

Dale Jamieson (DJ): I got involved with Minding Animals International when they invited me to be a keynoter at their first conference in Newcastle [New South Wales, Australia]. I was really stunned when I showed up in Newcastle and there were almost 500 people from all over the world that had come to talk about animals. That's when I think I really realized for the first time that this idea of animal studies as an interdisciplinary field had the possibility of really taking off. It was also the first time that I saw that it is in many ways stronger outside the United States. I felt the conference in Utrecht was in some respects a step forward in the sense that there were more people. I think there were about 700 people in Utrecht. I think it had a different tonality to it, which has to do with the different sponsorship. The Utrecht Conference was sponsored by an institute for ethics and a veterinary school, so there was, I suppose, more philosophy and more applied animal welfare than there was in the last conference, and maybe less cultural studies, but there was still a lot of cultural studies. The third Minding Animals Conference will be in India and it will be organized by an animal welfare organization, so I'm sure it will have another tonality. I think all that is really great.

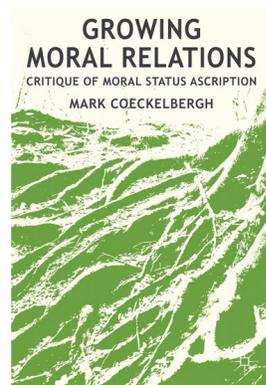
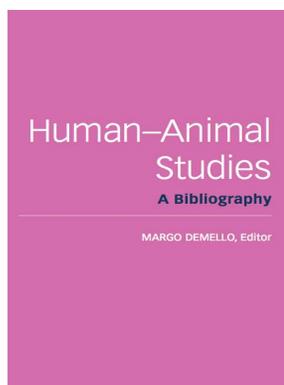
JM: It's like what happened to you at the first Minding Animals Conference is what happened to me at the second conference. I'd never seen so many people interested in animals at one time, and from such a wide variety of disciplines too. It seems like it is something that is pretty unique. There's the science side and animal welfare, then you have a good contingent of folks from philosophy, and the animal studies part is truly interdisciplinary, from art to literature. It all kind of blew my mind a bit.

One of the many benefits of compiling a bibliography for each newsletter is the bird's-eye view one gains of the state of research in environmental ethics and philosophy. New and emerging themes, declining areas of interest, and points of intersection all become evident from such a perspective. This last bibliography of 2012 is a case in point: new trends and enduring areas of interest comprise the bulk of the latest research.



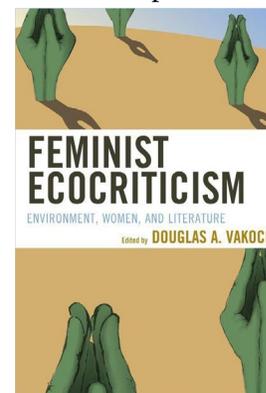
To begin with, many people remain skeptical about technology's role in creating a better world and solving environmental problems. Such techno-skepticism, an attitude that has persisted since at least the birth of the modern environmental movement, is on full display with regard to both bioengineering (and calls for a robust bioethics) and geoengineering (and calls for a new geoethics). Regarding the former, this issue of the newsletter sees the publication of 7 books and 4 articles on bioethics and emerging technologies. Interested readers should take a look at Marcus Duwell's philosophically oriented introduction to bioethics (p. 45), as well as Ingmar Persson and Julian Savulescu's *Unfit for the Future* (p. 50) which argues that the survival of the human species depends on employing new technologies to change the human motivational faculties. As to concerns about geoengineering, the latest issue of *Ethics, Policy, and the Environment* (vol. 15, no 2, July 2012) is devoted entirely to the ethics of geoengineering (p. 54).

Also deserving mention is the rapidly growing field of animal studies and the question of the rights of other-than-human animals. Margo DeMello has just published a bibliography on human-animal studies (p. 68). In addition to books & articles, the bibliography includes a listing of films, conferences, college programs, and organizations.



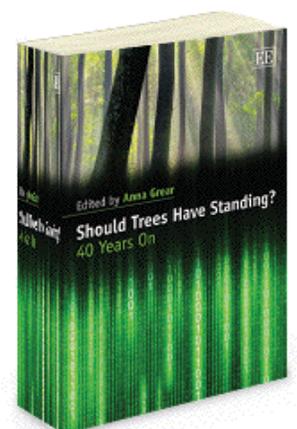
In *Growing Moral Relations* (p. 44), Mark Coeckelbergh argues that the entire enterprise of moral status ascription is parasitic on the very socio-cultural worldview it seeks to criticize. Finally, Elisabeth de Fontenay's *Without Offending Humans* (p. 48) provides a stinging post-modernist critique of the animal rights movement as articulated by Peter Singer and Paola Cavalieri.

Feminist scholarship, especially outside of philosophy departments, remains strong. In addition to research covered in previous issues of the newsletter, a number of



feminist and ecofeminist works have recently been published including Gülay Caglar, Maria do Mar Castro Varela, and Helen Schwenken's anthology *Geschlecht - Macht - Klima [Gender - Power - Climate]* (p. 67), Erin McKenna's critique of Paul Thompson's *The Agrarian Vision* (p. 55), and Douglas Vakoch's *Feminist Ecocriticism* (p. 76).

In addition to Nathan Kowalsky's review (pp. 20-21) of Holmes Rolston's *A New Environmental Ethics*, Chris Deihm (p. 59) edits an academic roundtable discussion on the textbook. Two books on the history of the environmental movement have also just come out: Anna Grear's anthology *Should Trees Have Standing?* on Christopher Stone's landmark article (p. 49) and William Souder's new biography on Rachel Carson (p. 75).



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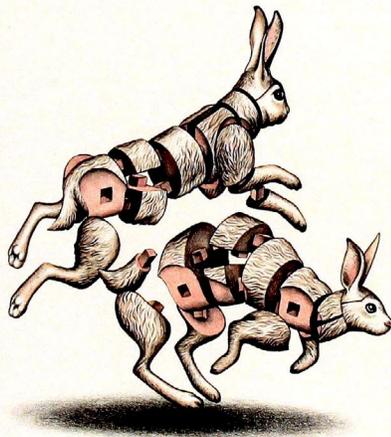
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Emmy Lingscheit, "Rabbit Deconstruction," lithograph, 22 x 30", 2012