Peaceable Kingdom Syllabus

IDIS 150: PEACEABLE KINGDOM
TRANSFORMING OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ANIMALS
Interim 2012
M-F 2:00-5:00 pm, Hiemenga Hall 335

Professor: Matt Halteman
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I. Required Materials
Jonathan Balcombe, The Inner Lives of Animals
T. Colin Campbell, The China Study
Jonathan Safran Foer, Eating Animals
Barbara Kingsolver, Animal, Vegetable, Miracle
Tom Regan, Empty Cages: Facing the Challenge of Animal Rights
Peter Singer, Animal Liberation
Robert Wennberg, God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe
Various handouts (distributed in class)

II. Course Description

Though stewardship of the animal kingdom is one of the primary responsibilities accorded to human beings in the Christian creation narrative, the question of how best to respect the creatures under our care is one that Christians too often neglect to ask. This omission is unfortunate, given the mounting evidence of fallenness in the social and commercial practices that presently govern our relationships to animals. While large-scale animal farming has increased consumer convenience, this convenience comes at a cost, and not just to animals. Our current food system is proving to have negative, if unintended, consequences for the environment, local and global commerce and agriculture in both rural and urban communities, and public health. In view of these considerations, the purpose of this course is two-fold: first, to gain insight into the problem through a survey of the theological, moral, environmental, and socio-economic issues surrounding the treatment of animals and the allocation of natural and human resources by our current food system and other industries that use animals; and second, to take the initial steps toward becoming agents of renewal by discerning an array of concrete approaches to addressing these problems (e.g., legislating for less intensive, more sustainable food systems; community supported agriculture; cooking and eating lower on the food chain; exploring “locavorism,” vegetarianism, and veganism; animal welfare and rights advocacy, etc.).

III. Course Objectives

Objective One: To investigate the question of how we should understand and relate to animals, and to do so explicitly in light of the problems (especially animal exploitation and suffering) that confront our current cultural paradigm of viewing animals primarily as instruments for human ends.

Objective Two: To provide resources for and to inspire interest in the cultivation of more compassionate and ecologically responsible lifestyles by considering an array of strategies for transforming the social practices that cause the above referenced problems.
**Objective Three:** To function as a community of support for one another as we think through the advantages and drawbacks of attempting to put these strategies into practice in our own lives.

**Objective Four:** To discern the possibilities and the challenges that these issues raise for the broader goals of thinking about and living out an authentic Christian life.

**IV. Requirements and Grade Assessment**

Grades for this course are determined on a pass/fail basis in view of the following two inputs. Please note that fulfillment of each of these aspects of the course is required in order for you to be eligible to pass the course.

**Attendance and Participation—30%**
To earn a passing grade in this course, each of you must attend class regularly, participate in class discussions and activities, and make a sincere effort to respect, support, and challenge your colleagues. Since some of us are naturally inclined to verbal participation and others of us are not, frequency of verbal input isn’t always the most reliable indicator of who is involved; in other words, it is possible to participate vigorously without speaking up a whole lot in class. My aim is to foster a classroom environment in which different people with different learning styles may flourish equally, and that means I never put people on the spot and I strive to include as many people in the discussion as can be persuaded to get involved. The more tightly-knit our classroom community, the more progress we are likely to make together (both academically and personally), so please be attentive to your colleagues’ different learning styles and comfort levels.

**Course Journal—70%**
Your course journal will be comprised of your responses to seven writing exercises (including a 4-to-5 page final position paper on responsible eating/living) assigned over the course of the interim pertaining to course readings, media, and discussion. Please bring drafts of your journal assignments to class on the appointed days, as your responses will provide the basis for class discussions. I reserve the right to “spot-check” journal responses at any time, though I am not likely to do so as long as the quality of class discussion remains high. On **Monday, January 23**, I will collect the entire set of assignments, which I will then grade as a whole.

**V. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a very serious form of academic dishonesty that is covered in detail in the Calvin College Student Handbook and Student Conduct Code available at [http://www.calvin.edu/student-life/safety-student-conduct](http://www.calvin.edu/student-life/safety-student-conduct). As a student of Calvin College, you are responsible for having read and understood this information, and I will conduct class with the expectation that you are aware of and responsible to the college’s definitions, policies, and sanctions concerning plagiarism. I am not trying to scare anyone here, but it is my duty to make you aware that Calvin College takes academic honesty very seriously.

In order promote thorough understanding of what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, I am providing you here with some helpful information on plagiarism from the Calvin College English Department. **My expectation is that you will read this information carefully and ask any questions you may have about it before turning in your first written daily assignment for this class.**
From the Calvin College English Department Statement on Plagiarism (available at http://www.calvin.edu/academic/engl/writing/plagiar.htm):

“Definition of Plagiarism
Students plagiarize when they do not credit the sources of their writing—the words, information, ideas, or opinions of others. Plagiarism takes several forms; plagiarism in all its forms deserves a response from the student’s instructor and from Calvin College.

Context for the policy
Calvin College divides its core curriculum into three parts: knowledge, skills, and virtues. Studying in core courses like Philosophy 153, students expand their knowledge of God’s world, develop their ability to act effectively in that world, and deepen their commitment to living for God and for others. When students plagiarize, they reject the opportunity to learn something new, to understand alternative perspectives, and to develop their own opinions; they fail to develop the skills of research and writing that enhance their ability to understand, inform, and persuade; and they act contrary to the virtues that ought to guide their lives, virtues such as diligence, honesty, courage, stewardship, and justice. Acts of plagiarism affect not only the plagiarizer but also the entire academic community. First, plagiarism taints the trust between instructor and student, creating a climate of suspicion. For example, instructors who have encountered plagiarism might be more inclined to question students’ integrity. Moreover, hoping to deter students from plagiarizing, instructors might be more likely to craft exceedingly narrow assignments, limiting students’ freedom to pursue academic research as their interests lead them. Acts of plagiarism also taint relationships among students and compromise the fairness of grades. Finally, acts of plagiarism challenge the academic reputation of Calvin College and all its graduates.

Extended Definition
A first step toward avoiding plagiarism is understanding plagiarism in all its forms. The English 101 Committee, therefore, provides the following extended definition of plagiarism.

1. Students plagiarize if they submit as their own work any of the following:

a. An entire essay written by someone else. This form of plagiarism includes, for example, essays purchased from web sites that specialize in academic essays, essays published on the web or in other sources, and unpublished essays written by others.

b. The exact words of someone else without quotation marks around those words. This form of plagiarism can include copying exact wording without quotation marks even if a student provides documentation in the “Works Cited” section.

c. A paraphrase of someone else’s words without documentation. This form of plagiarism includes reordering or replacing someone else’s words while keeping the main idea or the central information.

d. A summary of someone else’s words or ideas without documentation. This form of plagiarism includes using some, few, or even none of the original words to reproduce a shorter version of some or all of someone else’s ideas or text.

e. Undocumented use of information from someone else. In this kind of plagiarism, a student takes
information that she found in a particular source and presents it as her own knowledge or as common knowledge. A student must document information that appears in one or only a few specialized sources, is the work or idea of a particular person, or represents a controversial stance on a topic. A student need not document information that is common knowledge.

f. Undocumented use of information that someone else has collected. A student must document research aids such as web-based “research” services and annotated bibliographies.

g. The sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, pattern of thought, or visual representation of information (images, tables, charts, or graphs) from someone else. This form of plagiarism includes any of these textual features even if students present the ideas or information in their own words.

2. Students are accomplices to plagiarism if they do any of the following:

a. They allow a fellow student to submit their work as the student’s own, or they write an essay for another student and allow that student to submit it as his or her own.

b. They do not report a fellow student who plagiarizes.

c. They contribute an essay to a collection of essays (among friends or at a web site) that they know provides opportunity for other students to plagiarize.”

VI. Course Calendar
The following course calendar is tentative, and we will nip and tuck the schedule as we move along. Discussions of listed topics will routinely carry over into the next session’s proceedings.

Course Introduction
W. Jan. 4  Course Overview and Introductions

Creation: Animals as Fellow Creatures of God
Th. Jan. 5  Animals and Our Personal, Cultural, and Theological Narratives

Required Reading:
2. Halteman, Compassionate Eating as Care of Creation (CECC), 1-10, esp. 5-10, “Imagination: Envisioning the Peaceable Kingdom”.

Media: Eating Mercifully (Humane Society of the United States Faith Outreach)

F. Jan. 6  A Scriptural and Theological Case for the Moral Importance of Animals

Required Reading:
Recommended Reading (skimming encouraged):
Andrew Linzey, “Liberation Theology for Animals” (available online)
Please Google: Andrew Linzey + “Liberation Theology for Animals”; then follow the Google Books link to Animal Theology, Chapter 4 (62-75).

M. Jan. 9  
Sentimental Education: The Wonders of Animal Intellect and Emotion

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading (skimming encouraged):
Balcombe, SN, 79-120.

Media:
1. A Conversation with Koko (Nature)
2. Excerpts from Animal Minds (Nature)
3. The Emotional World of Farm Animals (Animal Place)

Fall: The Challenges of a Flawed Dominion
T. Jan. 10  
A Change in Perception: Enlarging Our Moral Universe

Required Reading:
1. Tom Regan, Empty Cages: Facing the Challenge of Animal Rights (EC), chapters 1-2 (9-34).
2. Andrew Linzey, “How We Minimize Animal Suffering and How We Can Change” (handout).
3. Wennberg, GHA, pp. 51-58 (from “Entering a More Complex Moral World” to the end of chapter 2) and pp. 73-83 (from “Eco-Feminism and the Insights of Female Experience” to the end of chapter 3).

Media: The Witness (Tribe of Heart)

W. Jan 11  
Industrial Animal Farming

Required Reading:
4. Leonard Vander Zee, “And Also Many Animals” (The Banner, Apr. 08)* http://www.thebanner.org/magazine/article.cfm?article_id=1497

*These two articles from The Banner represent some of the different opinions currently under discussion in the Christian Reformed Church.

Recommended Reading (skimming encouraged):
2. Halteman, “Varieties of Harm to Animals in Industrial Farming” (handout).

Media:
1. Peaceable Kingdom (Tribe of Heart)
2. Fowl Play (Mercy For Animals)

Th. Jan. 12 Animal Use in Other Industries
Required Reading:
1. Regan, EC, chapters 7-10, “Turning Animals into Clothes, Performers, Competitors, Tools” (107-177) (feel free to do some skimming here).

Media:
1. Earthlings (A Documentary Film by Shaun Monson)
2. Promoting Responsible Research (PCRM)

F. Jan. 13 Moral Standing for Animals: Philosophical Arguments
Required Reading:
1. Singer, AL, “All Animals are Equal” (1-23).
2. Regan, EC, “Human Rights” (37-52) and “Animal Rights” (53-74).
4. Linzey, “Animal Rights as Religious Vision” (available online)
   Please Google: Andrew Linzey + “Animal Rights as Religious Vision”; then follow the Google Books link Animal Gospel, Chapter 6 (47-55).

Recommended Reading (skimming encouraged):

Redemption: Strategies for Working Toward Renewal
M. Jan. 16* Workshop on Organic Produce Farming and Community Supported Agriculture Speaker: Katie Brandt, Groundswell Farm (www.groundswellfarm.org)

Required Reading (this reading pertains to our Monday and Tuesday sessions):
4. Safran Foer, EA, “I Do” (203-244)
Media: *Eating in Place: A Conversation on Food, Agriculture, and Michigan's Future* (Grand Rapids Area Council for the Humanities)

*Optional Class Outing*: Trip to Nourish Market, 634 Wealthy Street SE, GR 5:00 pm—Shopping and book signing with Joel Salatin, Polyface Farms.

T. Jan. 17*  
Workshop on Pasture-Raised Animal Farming  
Speaker: Karen Lubbers, Lubbers Family Farm ([http://www.lubbersfarm.com](http://www.lubbersfarm.com))

*January Series*  
**Speaker**: Joel Salatin, Polyface Farms ([http://www.polyfacefarms.com](http://www.polyfacefarms.com))  
“Dancing With Dinner”  
12:30 pm, Covenant Fine Arts Center (January Series)

W. Jan. 18  
Eating Lower on the Food Chain: Vegetarian and Vegan Nutrition and Health  
**Speaker**: Trulie Ankerberg-Nobis, M.S., R.D. (via telephone conference)

**Required Reading:**
2. Campbell, selections from *The China Study* (see handout for page #’s).  
3. Please familiarize yourself with the websites for the Physician’s Committee for Responsible Medicine ([www.pcrm.org](http://www.pcrm.org)) and Vegan Outreach ([www.veganhealth.org](http://www.veganhealth.org), [www.veganoutreach.com](http://www.veganoutreach.com)).

**Media**: *Forks Over Knives* (Brian Wendel and Lee Fulkerson)

Th. Jan. 19*  
Animal Advocacy  
**Required Reading:**
2. Balcombe, SN, “The New Humanity” (186-204)  
5. Peter Singer and Bruce Friedrich, “On ‘Direct Action’ Activism”, (online at: [www.serv-online.org/Friedrich-Singer_june2011.html](http://www.serv-online.org/Friedrich-Singer_june2011.html)).  


**Media:**
1. *Wegman’s Cruelty* (Compassionate Consumers)  
2. *Open Rescue* (Compassion Over Killing)
**Speaker**: Wayne Pacelle (President & CEO, Humane Society of the United States)
“The Bond: Our Kinship With Animals, Our Call to Defend Them”
7:30 pm, Calvin College Chapel
9:00 pm, Reception and book signing

**F. Jan. 20**
Eating as an Act of Justice: Traditional, Conditional, Vegetarian, or Vegan?

**Required Reading:**
1. Halteman, *CECC*, “Conviction: Compassionate Eating as a Spiritual Discipline” (10-19); “Onward Toward the Peaceable Kingdom” (36-40).

**Recommended Reading and Browsing:**

*Please note that we will meet as a class from 2:00-3:15, take a short break, and then report to The Animals and the Kingdom of God Lecture at 3:30.

**Speaker**: Bryant Terry, “Out of the Factory, Into the Field: Cooking as Inspiration for Liberation”, 3:30 pm, CFAC Recital Hall. Reception and book-signing to follow.

**Compassionate Comestibles Potluck**: 6:00 pm, Commons Annex Lecture Hall (Optional)

**S. Jan 21**
**Wake Up Weekend 2012: Animals! Awareness! Advocacy!** (Optional)
A full schedule of events is available at [www.wakeupweekend.com](http://www.wakeupweekend.com). Highlights include a panel discussion with Bryant Terry on urban farming and “food deserts”, a vegan brunch at Brick Road Pizza, a workshop on Eating and the Church, a lecture by Mercy For Animals Executive Director Nathan Runkle, an art exhibition on human/animal kinship, a vegan chili cook-off, and a benefit concert for SASHA FARMS animal sanctuary featuring socially conscious local bands.

*All Saturday events are optional

**M. Jan. 23**
Responsible Eating, continued
Raising Awareness at Calvin College and Beyond
**Course Journal due in class.**

**T. Jan. 24**
Course Retrospective: Looking Back and Moving Forward