



# Animal Geography News

*The official newsletter of the Animal Geography Specialty Group*

Volume 5, Issue 1

April 2014

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## Letter from the Chair...

Welcome to our fifth Animal Geography Specialty Group newsletter! I would like to start off by thanking our board members for their work on behalf of the group – and especially Katie Gillespie for taking the lead on this newsletter. While Katie and Elizabeth will be leaving our board this year as they graduate (congratulations!), we are looking forward to seeing who will join us for the next year – voting is now open for the two graduate student board positions (please see page 3 for details).

I am pleased to announce the winner of our graduate student paper competition: Jenny Isaacs from Rutgers University. Please find an abstract for her paper and contact information inside! We did not receive any qualifying entries for the undergraduate paper competition, so I'd like to remind all faculty that this is a great opportunity for both undergraduates and graduate students to get some recognition for the work they are doing.

Our sub-field has continued to grow this past year and we are pleased to highlight multiple publications and research projects in the following pages. Please continue to peruse the animal geography bibliography (see resources page of [website](#)) and make sure we have all of your publications listed.

We successfully launched our animal geography mentoring program in the fall and we continue to seek mentors and mentees alike (see [mentors](#) page of website). The board recognizes that many of us are doing animal geography work on our own in various departments and we hope that this mentoring program will serve as a catalyst for connection and innovation in the field.

The upcoming AAG meeting in Tampa will have another strong showing of animal geography sessions. We have provided a full schedule on the last page for planning purposes. A highlight this year will be Alice Hovorka's talk on April 10<sup>th</sup> for The Gender, Place, and Culture Jan Monk Distinguished Annual Lecture session. Her talk is entitled: *Feminism and Animals: Exploring Interspecies Relationships in Botswana and Beyond*. We congratulate Alice for being invited to give this lecture and we are looking forward to what she has to share.

Our business meeting is scheduled for the lunch hour (11:50-12:30) on Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> in 30B of the Tampa Convention Center, fourth floor. This is an opportunity to participate in shaping the coming year for the specialty group and we invite all of you to join us.

For those going to the AAG meeting in Tampa I hope you enjoy the conference and take time to rub elbows with fellow animal geographers! Safe travels! For those of you unable to attend the AAGs this year, we thank you for your support and we hope to see you soon!

~ Julie Urbanik, AnGSG Chair

## Recent AnGSG Member Publications and Advancements

### **Publications —**

Bergeaud-Blackler, F., Zivotofsky, A.Z. and Miele, M. 2013. Knowledge and Attitudes of European Kosher Consumers as Revealed through Focus Groups, *Society & Animals*, 21 (5), Theme issue Religious Slaughter, pp. 425-442.

Gillespie, K. Forthcoming. Sexualized Violence and the Gendered Commodification of the Animal Body in Pacific North-western U.S. Dairy Production. *Gender, Place and Culture*.

Johnston, C. L. 2013. Review of *Animal Cities: Beastly Urban Histories*, P. Atkins, ed., *Journal of Historical Geography* 42: 223-224.

Hennessy, E. 2013. Producing 'Prehistoric' Life: Conservation Breeding and the Remaking of Wildlife Genealogies. *Geoforum*, Volume 49: 71-80.

Latimer, J. and Miele, M. 2013. Naturecultures? Science, Affect and the Non-human, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30(7/8) 5-31.

Miele, M. 2013. Religious Slaughter: Promoting a Dialogue about the Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing, *Society & Animals*, Volume 21 (5), Theme Issue Religious Slaughter, pp. 421-424.

### **Advancements —**

**Rosemary-Claire Collard** received her PhD from University of British Columbia Geography in December 2013. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at University of Toronto and will begin a new position as a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Geography at Concordia University in Montreal in Fall 2014.

**Elizabeth Hennessy** is finishing her dissertation in Geography at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In the fall, she will begin an Assistant Professor position in World Environmental History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a joint appointment in the Nelson Institute and History Department.

**Connie L. Johnston** received her PhD from Clark University Graduate School of Geography and was hired as a visiting instructor at the University of Oregon, both last fall.

## New AnGSG Google Group — Don't forget to switch over!

The Animal Geography Specialty Group is transitioning to a new email list service. We will now be using [Google Groups](#). This service will give members the option of participating through one of two interfaces: your messages can be sent via email by using the address [angsg@googlegroups.com](mailto:angsg@googlegroups.com). Additionally, you can send a message by logging directly into the Google Group where you can click the red button "New Topic" to send a message. This new service has many more features that will allow you to customize the way you receive information from AnGSG. Please contact Communications Officer Sharon Wilcox at [sharon.e.wilcox@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.e.wilcox@gmail.com) if you have any problems or questions.



Human-dolphin observation in Key Largo, FL; Photo by :  
Russell Fielding

### **Canoeing & Kayaking on the Hillsborough River**

Saturday, April 12, 10am-4pm

Cost: \$58

Contact Russell Fielding ([russell.fielding@du.edu](mailto:russell.fielding@du.edu)) for more information or  
to sign up.

## Congratulations to the 2014 Student Paper Competition Winner, Jenny Isaacs!

Congratulations to this year's winner of our 2014 AnGSG Graduate Student Paper Competition: Jenny Isaacs. She is doing her Ph.D. in Geography at Rutgers University and she has a new baby boy named Jesse. The awards committee was impressed with the level of the papers submitted this year, but Jenny's attention to the literature within animal geography is what set her paper apart from the others. We have provided her title and abstract here, as well as her contact information if anyone would like to get in touch with her.

### Follow That Bird: Considering the Agency and Application of Animal Tracking Science and Technology in Shaping Conservation Practices

JENNY R. ISAACS

Graduate Degree Program in Geography, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 08901-8551, USA, email [jenny.isaacs@rutgers.edu](mailto:jenny.isaacs@rutgers.edu)

**Abstract:** In the wild, conservation biologists and biogeographers have traditionally studied groups of animals; accordingly wildlife management decisions are made at the population landscape level. However, studying groups of animals has proved insufficient towards appreciating idiosyncratic difference within populations. A focus within geography on everyday life and individual bodies as situated sites of experience provides the appropriate backdrop for study of non-human agency and individual lived subjectivities. Animal geographer, Christopher Bear, states "our increasingly re-defined role as 'more-than-human' geographers might usefully be interpreted as integrators of the different understandings that exist of animals...that tell us something of the animals themselves" adding that "human geographers lag behind colleagues in the natural sciences, who already tag fish and ring birds to track their paths and learn more of their everyday individual habits" (2011, p.302). With recent advancements in tracking science and technology, new understandings of the "animals themselves" and their habits are changing bird conservation. I consider examples of how innovations in tracking technology drive conservation practices to evolve as they reveal the diverse individuality of non-human actors. I discuss how tracking data is used for social-political effect to influence discourse, policy, and financial support through the construction and mobilization of conservation narratives. I share recent GIS data on movements of migratory shorebird individuals which challenged what researchers thought they knew about the species. I show how conservation approaches that utilize individualized data prove essential in planning for species protection and recovery through adaptive management approaches.



Jenny Isaacs



Russell Fielding presents at Montana Tech University Campus. His talk on Whale Hunting drew a large audience and was well-received.

## Congratulations to Julie Urbanik & *Placing Animals!*

We are pleased to announce that Julie Urbanik's book *Placing Animals: An Introduction to the Geography of Human-Animal Relations* has been selected as a 2013 Outstanding Academic Title by *Choice* - the premier library journal. This places her book in the top 10% of the 7,000 titles reviewed by the journal each year and brings visibility to animal geography both within the larger academic community and within geography itself. Congratulations Julie!

## Reminder: Vote for Graduate Student Officers!

### GRADUATE STUDENT OFFICERS (2 POSITIONS) - 2014-2015 term

**Election Procedures:** Members are reminded that as of last year, online voting was approved for AnGSG board positions. Online voting for this year's graduate student officers will be open until April 4. Election results will be announced at the AnGSG Business meeting on April 11. **Please [vote here for this year's candidates](#):**

#### Anita Hagy Ferguson

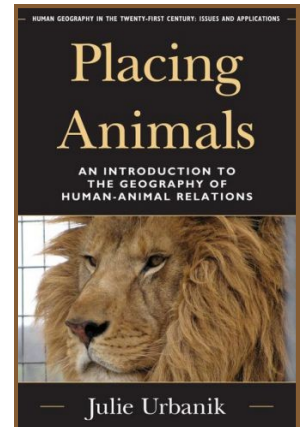
Ph.D. Student, Environmental Social Science  
School of Human Evolution and Social Change  
Arizona State University

"I am a Ph.D. student at Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. I am set to advance to candidacy on April 1st. My own research is framed as critical Animal Geography, but it is inherently interdisciplinary work as I investigate the socio-geographic complexities of large predator landscape scale conservation. I am currently working with faculty at my institution to establish an interdisciplinary Animal Studies research group that brings together faculty and graduate students concerned with the animal. My goal is to work collaboratively with other researchers and creatives (artists, performers, writers) to advance understanding of the nonhuman animal and human-nonhuman relationships in shared landscapes and to utilize participatory methods to engage people outside the academic sphere in discussions about the animal."

#### Matthew Rosenblum

MA Student  
Department of Geography  
University of Kentucky

"I am a masters student in the department of geography at the University of Kentucky. I'd like to nominate myself to be one of the AnGSG Graduate Student Officers. Currently I'm planning my research project which is situated in the Florida Everglades and concerns invasive species management as a discourse of power. I have experience running paper competitions- I was in charge of the graduate student paper competition at this year's Dimensions of Political Ecology conference. That aside I am interested in playing a part in animal geography's continued growth as a viable, academic, sub-discipline."



## Highlights in Recent Animal Geographies Research

### Human-African Wild Dog Relations in Botswana

Valli-L. Fraser-Celin, PhD Student, Geography, University of Guelph, Canada

My research focuses on human-African wild dog relations in Botswana where I examine the ways in which different stakeholder groups think and feel about, interact with, and position wild dogs. Wild dogs are facing high risk of extinction in the wild and with only approximately 6,600 individuals present in Africa, they are considered one of the most endangered carnivores in sub-Saharan Africa. Botswana's wild dogs represent a viable population for their continued survival. However, conflict with local communities over livestock often presents a challenge for their conservation. Cattle represent a source of well-being and socio-cultural status for Botswana and sharing spaces with wild dogs presents a direct threat to their livelihood. Consequently, wild dogs are often poisoned, snared, or shot both in retaliation and indiscriminately.

Animal geographers are well aware that human-animal relations are far more complex than we may initially perceive them to be, where broader socio-cultural and political-economic factors often influence such relations. Further, wild dog behaviour and ecology also shape the ways in which humans may perceive and interact with them. Therefore, my advisor, Dr. Alice Hovorka, and I are collaborating with Dr. Glyn Maude from the Kalahari Research and Conservation-Botswana research group (KRC) in order to engage in an interdisciplinary approach to examining human-wild dog relations. From May through August 2013, I traveled to Botswana where I conducted 80 semi-structured interviews with commercial and subsistence cattle and game farmers in two study sites situated outside of protected areas where human-wild dog interactions are occurring, yet understudied. Preliminary findings suggest that although farmers hold predominately negative perceptions of wild dogs, they have important positive perspectives as well, such as acknowledging their importance for tourism, the economy, and the ecosystem. Focusing on these positive dimensions could prove useful when engaging in more community participatory conservation strategies. In order to do so, I have disseminated preliminary findings to all my participants as well as to the Department of Wildlife and National Parks in Maun, Botswana.

Further, the interactions between wild dogs and other stakeholder groups, such as tourists, who revere them (or may know nothing about them), and the researchers, who study and spend so much time with them, are equally important. Investigating these allows for an understanding of the different relationships that exist between humans and wild dogs in Botswana and how they influence broader conservation strategies. Therefore, during my next field season, I will examine the ways that tourists and researchers perceive and position wild dogs in the broader context of wildlife tourism and conservation in the country.

Further, I will continue engaging in interdisciplinary research with the KRC research group in order to better understand wild dog behaviour and ecology and how they subsequently interact with humans. By grounding my research in animal geography frameworks and methodologies, I also want to foreground wild dogs as active agents who co-construct their relationships with the humans they share spaces with. My dissertation will therefore provide a holistic picture of human-wild dog relations in Botswana. Ultimately, my hope is to further our understanding of the ways in which various human groups perceive and interact with wild dogs (and vice-versa) and how these can contribute to the bigger picture of wild dog conservation initiatives and land use planning in Botswana.

Dr. Alice Hovorka (University of Guelph, Geography): [The lives of animals in Botswana.](#)

Dr. Glyn Maude's work on [Kalahari wild dogs in Botswana:](#)

**Animal  
Geography  
Specialty Group  
Business Meeting  
is Friday, 11 April  
11:50 am—  
12:30 pm  
in  
30B – Tampa  
Convention  
Center, Fourth  
Floor**

**Don't forget  
to support the  
Animal  
Geography  
Specialty Group!  
Faculty  
sponsorship is  
\$5.00; student  
sponsorship is  
\$1.00. Additional  
contributions  
won't be turned  
down!**



## Highlights in Recent Animal Geographies Research, Cont.

### Examining human and wild elephant well-being in Botswana: A One Health perspective

Allie Mayberry, MA Student, Geography, University of Guelph, Canada

While working for a captive elephant volunteer tourism operation in northern Thailand, I became very interested in exploring the overlap between human social issues and elephant conservation issues. Looking to pursue this interest through higher education, I contacted Dr. Alice Hovorka at the University of Guelph who was seeking a graduate student to explore human-elephant relations in Botswana with her Animal Geography research team. Specifically, my research project will examine the links between the well-being of humans and free-ranging African savannah elephants (*Loxodonta africana*) using a One Health perspective.



In northern Botswana, high elephant densities combined with widespread human settlement has led to an increased prevalence of interspecies conflict. Humans and elephants must share limited resources including water, fodder, and land, and their inability to do so harmoniously is affecting the daily lives of both species. For humans, conflict with elephants generates material (e.g. agricultural crop loss, injury/death, and infrastructure destruction) and psychological consequences (e.g. fear, post-traumatic stress, inability to fulfill social roles). For elephants, conflict with humans generates habitat fragmentation, injury/death, and reduced access to resources. To date, human-elephant conflict research has focused on documenting material human losses and implementing compensation policies designed to address immediate impacts. While this focus provides essential insight, such approaches neglect to examine the social and psychological well-being of humans living in close proximity to elephants. Further, few studies consider the consequences of conflict on the daily

lives and circumstances of elephants, themselves. The One Health movement, which recognizes that the health of humans, animals, and the environment are inevitably interconnected, offers a novel perspective for assessing human-elephant well-being in Botswana's rural north. By examining the relative lives of humans and elephants, this research aims to provide a more holistic understanding of human-elephant dynamics.

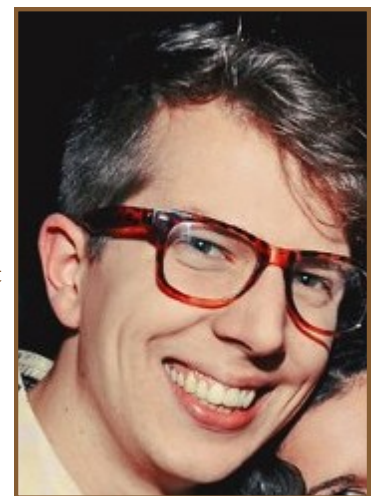
My fieldwork is scheduled for May through August 2014 and will focus on the Makgadikgadi/Boteti region of northern Botswana. I am very much looking forward to conducting this research on the ground and further exploring human-elephant dynamics, specifically within the Botswana context!

### Critical Geographies of 'Pet Love' and the 'Crazy Cat Lady'

Will McKeithen, MA Student, Geography, University of Washington

My work is situated at the nexus of gender, sexuality, animality, and the non/human divide. My current research undertakes a critical geographic study of, to borrow Heidi Nast's analytic, 'pet love.' Situated largely in the realms of popular culture, digital networking, and animal advocacy organizations, my research centers the figure of the "crazy cat lady," associated figures like the normative "responsible pet owner" and the abject pet hoarder, and the cultural discourses and affective investments that produce "good" and "bad" forms of pet love. By focusing attention on the modes of gendering, (de)sexualization, social isolation, and spatial imaginary that produce the "crazy cat lady," this research centers the social forces that produce uneven geographies of pet love, care for nonhumans, and more-than-human dwelling. Thus, I hope to put into conversation current debates surrounding the feminization of private spaces, the home as a space of care, the feminization of care generally and care for animals specifically, and the heteronormativity of humanism. In so doing, I hope we can move away from asking *why would these women have so many cats?* and instead interrogate *why doesn't everyone care for more cats?!*

My other work includes a current collaboration looking at the uses of parasitic helminthes in biotechnology, an interest in the spaces and ethics of "queer ecologies," and the politics of panda reproduction.



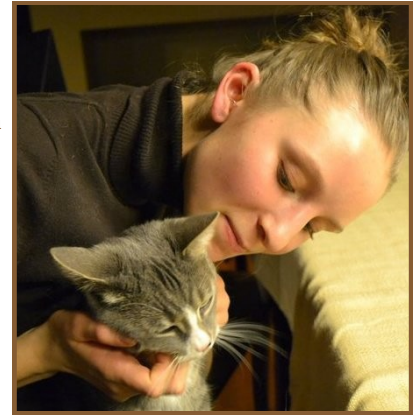
**The Gender,  
Place and Culture  
Jan Monk  
Distinguished  
Lecture with Alice  
Hovorka,  
Thursday, April  
10, 10:00-  
11:40am, Grand  
Salon E, Marriott,  
Second Floor**

## Highlights in Recent Animal Geographies Research, Cont.

### Human-feral cat relations in Guelph, a journey to animal geography

Lauren Van Patter, MA Student, Geography, University of Guelph, Canada

After completing my undergraduate degree in environmental science in 2012, I took a year off to decide what I wanted to do next. During this time my partner and I found a grackle nestling whose nest had been blown out of a tree. After learning that the local wildlife rehabilitation centre was at capacity, we decided to raise her. We kept her safe from our cat, a rescued feral who used to go outside, and had likely killed birds himself. We fed her canned puppy food, as recommended by the rehabilitation centre, made from industrially farmed pigs and cows. As a vegan, I struggled with the complex and conflicting values involved in these decisions. By the time she flew away, I knew I was interested in studying the ethical dimensions of human-animal relations. I decided that I wanted to explore the conflicts surrounding domesticated cats and wildlife, and started my master's in geography with Dr. Alice Hovorka at the University of Guelph in September of 2013.



I was drawn to animal geography for several reasons. I appreciated the complexity and diversity of human-animal relations represented in the literature, and the attention paid to the ethical dimensions of these interactions. I also valued the emphasis on animal agency and subjectivities. After reviewing the animal geography and critical animal studies literature, I became fascinated with feral animals. They are contentious and transgressive, falling somewhere between domesticated and wild. They are often actively exterminated, and there isn't anywhere they are perceived as belonging. I became interested in the systems of knowledge and power that contribute to the discursive production of feral animals as 'unnatural', 'invasive' and 'alien'. As a result, my project seeks to explore human-feral animal relations through a Foucauldian analysis of feral cats in Guelph. I am interested in how the dominant and challenging discourses construct feral cats, and the potential for understanding their management through a biopolitical lens. My research will include critical discourse analysis, as well as interviews with feral cat colony caretakers.

### Parasites as (in)significant and intimate others

Skye Naslund, PhD Student, Geography, University of Washington

Though I originally came to my research through a lens of health geography, my current work on the conceptualizations of the parasite draws significantly from an engagement with animal geographies and posthumanism. In my work, I consider parasites as animals and as unique organisms questioning how it is that such animals' agency are overwritten in biomedical research and practice. Troubling the abjection and disgust that are often expressed toward the parasite, I consider the parasite as a(n) (in)significant and intimate other. As such, I challenge the exclusion of the parasite from the popular and academic imaginary of what constitutes an animal. I am currently working on a project considering the changing conceptualization of the parasite through shifting biomedical practices resulting from the introduction of helminthic therapy, or the treatment of humans with parasitic worms. In doing so, I hope to push the field of animal geographies to include a broader array of animals than the more traditional considerations of pets, farm animals, zoo animals, and other charismatic mega fauna, arguing for a more inclusive animal geography that continues to break down the speciesism that persists within the discipline more broadly.



## Producing “Prehistoric” Life: Giant Tortoise Breeding in the Galápagos Islands

**A Photo Essay, Elizabeth Hennessy, PhD Candidate, Geography, UNC Chapel Hill**

To begin my dissertation research on the politics of giant tortoise conservation in the Galápagos Islands, I spent August 2011 as a volunteer and participant observer with the Galapagos National Park’s Giant Tortoise Breeding Center. The ostensibly “pristine” nature of national parks is not only a discursive production, but is also materially produced through practices of science, conservation, and tourism. Part of my ethnographic fieldwork explored the human-animal relations through which new generations of this iconic endangered species are produced, as shown in the following photos.



1. Tortoises from four different islands breed in captivity at the main breeding facility at the national park headquarters. Here, two park guards excavate tortoise eggs from a nest. In 2011, they incubated more than 100 eggs from these four tortoise species.

2. Tortoise conservation is not only a matter of protecting animals “in the wild” from nonnative predators and preserving their habitat, but also involves daily practices of care and management. Here, Park Guard Fausto Llerena, who has raised baby tortoises for more than 30 years, feeds them one of their three weekly meals of otoy greens.



3. Cleaning up after those feedings is another major element of tortoise care. Here Fausto, another volunteer and I scrub the watering pool of an adult giant tortoise, the famous (and now late) Lonesome George. Although George obstinately refused to reproduce, many of the other 90 adults living at the center are prolific sires and dames. One male has fathered nearly 900 babies since the late 1970s.

4. The nonhuman biopolitics of tortoise conservation also involves surveilling the tortoise populations, which are spatially separated in pens according to their ‘home’ populations (roughly each island in the archipelago is home to a distinct species of giant tortoise). Here, Fausto and I paint numbers on the backs of the juveniles’ carapaces, so they can be individually identified and tracked.

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## Producing “Prehistoric” Life, Cont.



5. The health and growth of the juvenile tortoises is monitored every three months, until they are 5 years old and large enough to be repatriated to their home islands. Here, Fausto weighs a struggling little one. Over the past 30 years the process of raising tortoises has been refined into a series of routinized practices that has made this one of the most successful conservation breeding programs in the world—more than 4,000 tortoises have been produced and populations are beginning to reproduce on their own in the wild.

## Perspectives: The Value of Animals in Society

**Elise Schlosser, Graduate Student, Geography, Eastern Oregon University**

This is more of an observation that has culminated from recent events. The value our society places on animals. Since January, 2014, three instances come to mind. I have included one link for each example. Some of these issues were discussed on the animal geography listerv, others were sent in a link, or I happened across on the web. None are new topics. In all likelihood, everyone reading this has probably written or discussed the subject matter at length.

First was the rhino hunt, in the name of conservation. [“Black rhino hunting permit auctioned for \\$350,000”](#). This issue was discussed on the listerv. The following quote and the issue itself led to a very good discussion, in my opinion. “...all money raised will go toward protecting the species. He also said the rhino that the winner will be allowed to hunt is old, male and non-breeding...”

Two questions that came to my mind are as follows: 1) In the field, how does one know the particular animal’s gender, *well, ok*, more directly, how does one determine if an animal is old and non-breeding? 2) Will it be relocated to an enclosure, or to a fenced area, region, or pasture for easy access and identification without other rhinos? A more salient point, contributed by another and based on the article and discussion, was the suggestion that an old and non-breeding animal was of no worth. This comment ties directly into the next topic, the giraffe.

Second was the slaying of an 18 month old giraffe, because it was of no value. Even though, as stated in the article, another zoo was willing to take him. Even though he was given a name, an identity, and most likely a celebration of his birth as seems to be common place to do so, instead we read an article about a nonsensical death. [“Zoo Kills ‘Unwanted’ Giraffe Marius, Feeds Carcass To Lions”](#).

As I stated in response to a discussion I had on this topic, another zoo offered to take the giraffe, but the Copenhagen Zoo would not do it because this zoo is not a participating member of their organization. And so we return to politics and economics over life.

As a child, one of my favorite things to do was go to the Turtle Back Zoo, in New Jersey. I spent many weekends and had many birthday parties there. As I grew older and I suppose wiser to what I was seeing I visited less often. On one hand, zoos offer a world of wonder and awe for those who have a love of animals and it is great exposure compared to a page in a book. I equate this to my first visit to Oregon, seeing high mountain desert as I drove the highway from Boise to LaGrande, there was no comparison to any photograph in a geography book!

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## Perspectives: The Value of Animals in Society, Cont.

But seeing the grizzly bear on a cement slab or the panther pacing in a 20' x 15' cage in a zoo, this is not an existence, nor a good representation of life in the wild. Zoos should be doing the very thing they promote themselves to do..conservation and education. Not killing an animal they see as valueless.

Tuan (1984) summarizes the human view quite adeptly, "A former keeper at the Moscow Zoo wrote: All day long a huge annoying and rowdy crowd paraded before the cages. This crowd, which would have been panic-stricken by the sight of a single one of these beasts un-caged, delighted in seeing them so disarmed, humiliated and debased. The mob avenged its own cowardice with boorish calls and shakes of the animals' chains, while the keepers' protests were countered by the incontestable reply, "I paid for it" (p. 83)."

Third, the infamous Sochi dogs. "[Volunteers smuggle Sochi dogs out of town](#)". Another common thread, "They soon lose their value and become strays."

I followed about ten articles on this issue. It was suggested many of these dogs had homes until their owners were "relocated" for building of the Olympics venue. Many (people) had no where to go or were not allowed to bring their pets. This makes sense to me, given how un-feral many of them appeared to be.

I realize there is a cultural aspect of how animals are viewed in society. Sochi's dogs are not unlike American or English justification of hunting coyote, fox, or otter. They are (or were as in the case of the otter) considered pests, and if thought to be a varmint, then it is somehow justifiable to take a life. This view is not dissimilar to having cats and dogs on the menu in Asia. What I find interesting is that Americans cannot adopt Russian children, but it is ok to adopt their dogs, but only because dogs are seen as pests.

We exploit based on looks with other humans and we do the same with animals. Janis Driscoll (1995) suggests, "...public support for conservation efforts often depends upon the attractiveness of the animal species involved" (p. 139; see also Gerrek, 2004). Driscoll argues, there are popular and unpopular animals and with that a greater need and difficulty in public education regarding conservation efforts of certain species. We want to save the dolphins but hold little discourse for the sardines on which they feed.

One article discussed how it costs about \$2000.00 to get a dog to America from Sochi. I find it fascinating that it costs thousands of dollars to emigrate an animal, a life viewed as worthless. This is similar in cost to bringing a dog back to the States from war torn areas such as Iraq or Afghanistan.

In comparison or maybe contrast, it is interesting to see how Americans reacted to this issue compared to other societal issues such as gay rights/attitudes in Russia, or Africa for that matter. I wonder if Sochi's stray animal issue were cats instead of dogs, would the reaction and support have been the same?

## Perspectives: Shoot to Conserve: Corey Knowlton's Rhino Hunt Escalates the Debate over Trophy Hunting and Environmentalism

Jenny Isaacs, PhD Student, Geography, Rutgers University

Excerpted from Mongabay.com

Knowlton is the hunter who won the Dallas Safari Club auction on January 11th to kill a Critically Endangered black rhino. All the money—\$350,000—will go to a fund to protect rhinos. The plan is that sometime soon—once the paperwork clears the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—Knowlton will go to Namibia on a "trophy hunt" (accompanied by a park service official), shoot the designated rhino, and bring the old bull's hide back home to Texas.

But Knowlton says he was unprepared for the vitriol he received after his name was leaked on the Internet. After all, he insists he is only trying to do a good thing for conservation, and he has the backing of the biggest and most well-known international players in conservation including the WWF, IUCN, the Namibian government, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service International, and Save the Rhino.

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## Perspectives: Shoot to Conserve, Cont.

Knowlton's story is important to freeze-frame because it spotlights an important ongoing debate among those who don't want to see big charismatic species go extinct: is it good policy to allow trophy hunters to shoot endangered species if the money goes to conservation? Or is it fatally flawed from an ethical point of view? Does it actually work for the benefit of species and local communities? When this rhino is killed and if the trophy hide is imported back to the U.S., who, besides Corey Knowlton, is to be blamed (or thanked)?

....

The story of Corey Knowlton reveals some arguably uncomfortable realities about establishment approaches to conservation. Though animal welfare groups might find him and his hunt despicable, Knowlton has the backing of many major conservation groups as well as the Namibian and U.S. governments. Conservation professionals have strong alliances worldwide with pro-hunter groups who share the goal of preserving nature. Hunters argue that "sustainable uses" of nature, including trophy hunting, provides much-needed cash and habitat for wildlife management.

In fact, when Knowlton goes on his trophy hunt, it will be in the company, under the supervision, and with the permission of the Namibian Ministry of the Environment. He has repeatedly claimed that this hunt will be the most regulated, most scientifically-vindicated ever to occur in Africa.

...

It seems ironic that a group called Save the Rhino would be *for* killing one. But, the group issued a statement, citing financial reasons for why this particular animal has to be killed, i.e. why such ethical lapses may be necessary.

"Couldn't they get \$750,000 without having to suffer an animal being shot? Well, yes...It would be nice if donors gave enough money to cover the spiraling costs of protecting rhinos from poachers," the group wrote. In response, Knowlton asked rhetorically on his Facebook page why the anti-hunting groups didn't place any bids.

Calling it an "innovation" within a conservation world suffering from not enough funds, Save the Rhino defended trophy hunting as a way to make money when nature doesn't "pay to stay."

As Richard Conniff explains in the New York Times, in this story there may not be any win-wins—only compromises, trade-offs, and hard realities.

"Protecting wildlife is a complicated, expensive and morally imperfect enterprise, often facing insuperable odds. The risk with trophy hunting is twofold: Commodifying an endangered species creates a gray zone in which bad behaviors can seem acceptable, and the public relations disaster this time could hurt Namibia's entire conservation effort. But so far nothing else matches trophy hunting for paying the bills. For people outraged by this hunt, here's a better way to deal with it: Go to Namibia. Visit the conservancies, spend your money and have one of the great wildlife experiences of your life. You will see that this country is doing grand, ambitious things for conservation."

But many remain unconvinced. At the end of January, Raabia Hawa, KWS Honorary Warden, Founder of Walk With Rangers and an Honorary Warden with the Kenyan Wildlife Service, posted an open letter to Knowlton calling on him to think of the rangers who work every day to save Africa's vanishing wildlife.

"The wildlife of a nation remains the sovereign property of its people. Would this not mean then, sir, that privatizing such public property would, in fact, be a gross violation of the rights of the African people?" she wrote. "You kind sir, have been duped into believing that your hunt will aid conservation in Africa. It will not. Aside from gaining Namibia huge disrepute, it will go against the very fiber of what we are trying so hard to achieve—the protection and true management of our last wild things."

But Hawa's voice is not the one being heeded this time. The bottom line is, like it or not, this is what the partnership between big trophy hunters and conservation looks like: it's Corey Knowlton being supported by Save the Rhino and other conservation groups whose mission is to protect wildlife, while others cry foul from the sidelines.

Here are the facts: at some point in the future, date unknown, an old bull of over thirty years, who by some good fortune has escaped the violence of poachers for decades, will wake up one last morning, be pointed out by the park guards who have kept him safe and healthy for years, and will be shot dead by an ecstatic Corey Knowlton. Afterwards the dead rhino will be butchered and the heaps of fresh meat will be eaten by the local community. When the thrill of the hunt and the harvesting of the meat is over, the big, prehistoric looking hide will be flown back to Texas as a prize. In return Namibia's rhino program will receive \$350,000, which it will use to pay rangers, support local communities, and boost its rhino populations.

All this will be done in an effort to save rhinos, just not that particular one. Read more [here](#).

## Animal Geography Specialty Group - Sponsored Conference Activities

Day	Time	Title	Location	Chair	Organizers
Tuesday, 8 April	8:00 – 9:40 am	1111 Epistemologies of Violence (1)	11 - Tampa Convention Center, First Floor	Amy Piedalue	A. Piedalue & K. Gillespie
Tuesday, 8 April	10:00 – 11:40 am	1211 Epistemologies of Violence (2)	11 - Tampa Convention Center, First Floor	Kathryn Gillespie	A. Piedalue & K. Gillespie
Tuesday, 8 April	12:40– 2:20 pm	1410 Epistemologies of Violence (3)	10 - Tampa State Convention Center, First Floor	Amy Piedalue	A. Piedalue & K. Gillespie
Tuesday, 8 April	12:40 – 2:20 pm	1471 Lively Commodities I. Industrious Biologies	Meeting Room 4 - Marriott, Second Floor	Paul Jackson	R.C. Collard, J. Dempsey, J. Goldstein
Tuesday, 8 April	2:40 – 4:20 pm	1571 Lively Commodities II. Encounters & Intimacies	Meeting Room 4 - Marriott, Second Floor	Jessica Dempsey	R.C. Collard, J. Goldstein, P. Jackson
Tuesday, 8 April	4:40 – 6:20 am	1671 (Panel Session) Lively Commodities Panel	Meeting Room 4 - Marriott, Second Floor	Jesse Goldstein	R.C. Collard & J. Dempsey
Wednesday, 9 April	8:00 – 9:40 am	2109 Place as Material-Semiotic Phenomenon I	9 – Tampa Convention Center, First Floor	Benjamin Haywood	B. Haywood
Wednesday, 9 April	10:00 - 11:40am	2209 Place as Material-Semiotic Phenomenon II	9 – Tampa Convention Center, First Floor	Benjamin Haywood	B. Haywood
Wednesday, 9 April	2:40 - 4:20pm	2574 Uncomfortable Companions: living and dying with awkward creatures	Meeting Room 7, Marriott, Second Floor	Franklin Ginn	F. Ginn & M. Barua
Thursday, 10 April	10:00 - 11:40am	3256 The Gender, Place and Culture Jan Monk Distinguished Annual Lecture — Alice Hovorka	Grand Salon E, Marriott, Second Floor	Lynda Johnston	P. Hopkins & S. Doshi
Friday, 11 April	11:50 am - 12:30 pm	4340 Animal Geography Specialty Group Business Meeting	30B – Tampa Convention Center, Fourth Floor	Animal Geography Specialty Group	
Friday, 11 April	12:40 – 2:20 pm	4440 Wildlife Conservation and Management (1)	30B - Tampa Convention Center, Fourth Floor	Elizabeth Walton	E. Walton & R. Loraamm
Friday, 11 April	2:40 – 4:20 pm	4540 Wildlife Conservation and Management (2)	30B - Tampa Convention Center, Fourth Floor	Elizabeth Walton	E. Walton & R. Loraamm
Friday, 11 April	4:40 – 6:20 pm	4640 Wildlife Conservation and Management (3)	30B - Tampa Convention Center, Fourth Floor	Cody Schank	E. Walton & R. Loraamm