

Titles & Abstracts:

Lori Gruen

"Empathy in Mind"

Empathy has come to mean many different things. It has been described as an epistemic state -- knowing what another individual is feeling, or as an affective state-- feeling what another individual is feeling. Some see empathy as a discrete act -- coming to experience the world as you imagine someone else does. Some see it as a process that blends attunement, judgment and action. It has also been under attack as not just useless for ethics, but actually dangerous (see Bloom 2016). When empathy is understood exclusively to involve an experience in which the agent loses herself in the emotions of another, might project her own feelings onto the other, or is unable to reflect upon the experience or engage in a cognitive perspective-taking process, then it seems reasonable to wonder what role, if any, empathy should play in an account of mature, reflective ethical engagement.

In this paper, I argue that empathic experiences are not simple emotional, but rather reflective, responses from individuals who are able to differentiate themselves from others, who can knowingly simulate or take the perspective of another, and who can at least make rudimentary causal inferences. This type of empathy engages the imagination and allows the empathizer to gain understanding of another's frame of mind. And, as with any attempt to understand another, one might do this well or not so well and thus there is room for revising or correcting one's empathy. I explore various studies as well as anecdotal experiences I have had with chimpanzees over the last decade to reflect on the value of empathy in ethics and philosophy of mind.

Kelsey Gipe

"Empathy and the Problem of Altruism"

The inclination toward altruistic behavior – behavior that benefits another while not benefiting oneself and sometimes even incurring a cost to oneself – is both a defining characteristic of humans and a bit of a mystery. Altruism is of great social importance to us while at the same time it appears to be *prima facie* disadvantageous to any given altruist. What motivates us to act altruistically? Do our closest primate relatives behave in an altruistic manner, or is altruism something that is uniquely human? In the following paper, I intend to answer these questions. I will first ask whether our closest primate relatives, chimpanzees, exhibit genuinely altruistic behavior and conclude that they do not. I will then make the case that our capacity for empathy as perspective-taking is what motivates altruistic behavior in humans. Finally, I will defend my claim that empathy is the impetus behind human altruism from competing claims regarding emotional contagion, Theory of Mind, and what Shaun Nichols terms the “Concern Mechanism”.

Kristin Leimgruber

"Sensitivity to Social Rewards and the Evolution of Uniquely Human Prosocial Behavior: Evidence from Young Children and Capuchin Monkeys (*Cebus apella*)"

The breadth, scope, and complexity of human generosity is unparalleled in the natural world. However, a closer look at human generosity reveals that people are not always prosocial – in fact, research suggests humans may not only be uniquely generous, but also uniquely selfish. I propose that a sensitivity to social cues signaling the probability of social rewards and repercussions allows humans to engage in efficient and flexible prosocial strategies not seen in other species. I will support this claim with data investigating impact that two of these cues – those signaling the presence of an audience (audience cues) and those signaling the transparency of one's actions (transparency cues) – have on prosocial decision-making strategies in young children and capuchin monkeys (*Cebus apella*).

Peter Carruthers

"Basic Questions"

This paper argues that a set of questioning attitudes are among the foundations of human and animal minds. While both verbal questioning and states of curiosity are generally explained in terms of metacognitive desires for knowledge or true belief, I argue (following Whitcomb, 2010, and Friedman, 2013) that each is better explained by a pre-linguistic *sui generis* type of mental attitude of *questioning*. I review a range of considerations in support of such a proposal and improve on previous characterizations of the nature of these attitudes. I then broaden their explanatory scope to include a number of forms of exploratory search. The paper has three main goals: (1) to characterize the nature of the questioning attitudes, outlining their causal role and type of content; (2) to argue that they are fundamental components of the mind, being widespread among animals and not constructed during ontogeny out of other attitudes; and (3) to suggest that they encompass a great deal more than just curiosity (also motivating exploratory and foraging search, and perhaps also attentional search and memory search).

Gary Comstock & William Bauer

"Psychological Unity in First-Order Accounts of Metacognitive Behavior in Animals"

Experimenters claim to have shown that monkeys have metacognition, second-order thoughts about their thoughts. If they are correct, the results undermine the argument for discontinuity between human and animal minds. But Peter Carruthers argues that the evidence for animal metacognition can be explained entirely in first-order terms, and we agree. However, Carruthers' account is deficient in a respect that has implications for discontinuity; he fails to acknowledge that an animal's first-order beliefs and desires must be related to each other in the right way. They must be psychologically unified. When the principle we call Unity is added to Carruthers' account, his deflationary interpretation of the metacognition results is strengthened. However, the early Carruthers' broader claim that all animal experience is nonconscious is weakened. We conclude that whereas monkeys have not yet been shown to be metacognizers, neither have they been shown not to be conscious.

Hans-Johann Glock

"Determinacy of Content -- The Hard Problem about Animal Thinking"

The discoveries of cognitive ethology over the past 50 years have lent succour to an 'assimilationist' position that credits non-linguistic yet intelligent animals with 'thinking', here understood in the blanket sense of intentional states (believing, desiring, intending, knowing). At the same time 'differentialist' philosophers have continued to question that conclusion on a priori grounds. Few of their arguments have stood the test of time. But one objection associated with Stich and Davidson has never been rebutted adequately. In first approximation, it runs as follows:

P(1) We are only justified in ascribing beliefs to animals, if we can specify the contents of her believings.

P(2) We cannot specify the contents of the (alleged) believings of animals, because of their lack of language.

C(1): We are not justified in ascribing beliefs to animals.

C(2): Animals do not have beliefs.

The step from C1 to C2 invites the widespread charge of deriving an 'ontological' conclusion from a premise which is 'merely epistemological'. In fact, however, the indeterminacy argument should be reconstructed as semantic.

P(1*) Ascribing beliefs to animals is vacuous unless something *counts as* an animal believing one specific 'content' rather than another.

P(2*) Nothing counts as an animal believing one specific content rather than another, because of their lack of language.

C(3) Ascribing beliefs to animals is vacuous.

My presentation defends P(1*). At the same time it tries to meet the objection by challenging P(2). It does so by drawing on the idea that there are non-linguistic equivalents of 'modes of presentation', and that these can be determined within acceptable limits on the basis of attributing to animals specific needs and behavioural capacities. In making my case I shall be discussing, among other things, Gibson's idea of affordances, Quinean considerations about indeterminacy of meaning and content and the Wittgensteinian idea that we must reckon with a certain 'indeterminacy of the mental' even in the case of linguistic subjects. Just as Quinean threats of indeterminacy for linguistic subjects can be met by appeal to a hermeneutic anthropology, Stich and Davidson's threat for non-linguistic subjects can be mitigated by appeal to a hermeneutic ethology.

Nicolas Delon & Duncan Purves

"Meaning in the Lives of Humans and Other Animals"

This paper argues that contemporary philosophical literature on meaning in life has important implications for the debate about our obligations to non-human animals. If animal lives can be meaningful, then practices including factory farming and animal research might be morally worse than ethicists have thought. We argue for two theses about meaning in life: (1) that the best account of meaning in life must take intentional action to be necessary for meaning—an individual's life has meaning if and only if the individual acts intentionally in ways that contribute to finally valuable states of affairs; and (2) that this first thesis does not entail that only human lives are meaningful. Because non-human animals can be intentional agents of a certain sort, our account yields the verdict that many animals' lives can be meaningful. We conclude by considering the moral implications of this pair of theses for common practices involving animals.

Darcia Narvaez

"Humanity's Evolved Nest and its Co-Construction of Human Nature and Morality"

Humans are social mammals with a host of evolved needs. Humans are born highly immature compared to other animals, so much so that a great deal of brain and body capacities are shaped after birth. Like every other animal, humans have a nest for the young that matches up with the maturational schedule of offspring. For humans, it is particularly intense in early life and then several decades long before adult capacities are matured. This means that human personality and human nature are highly influenced by the type of nest provided. Most people in civilized nations are not raised within the evolved nest, leading to different human capacities, worldview and moral orientation from those who are raised within the evolved nest.

William Hopkins

"Cognitive Neuroscience Research with Chimpanzees and Other Great Apes: Benefiting Human Health and Improving Animal Welfare"

Over the past 50 years, a remarkable body of literature has accumulated demonstrating sophisticated cognitive and linguistic capabilities of captive and wild great apes. These data have been a vital component of basic research in the psychological and biological sciences. The evidence of psychological continuity between apes and humans for several higher order cognitive functions, such as self-awareness, theory-of-mind, language and empathy, has created tension between the animal rights and scientific community regarding the ethics of (1) the type of research that is morally justifiable in these species and (2) given their psychological continuity, to what extent their captive environments provide sufficient stimulation to meet their physical and psychological needs. The assumption for many is that rigorous scientific research with great apes can only prevail at the expense of the welfare needs of the apes. In this paper, I argue against this view and present data showing the value of cognitive neuroscience research for advancing great ape psychological welfare and physical health. I also present data demonstrating how collaborative efforts between behavioral management programs and scientists can be mutually beneficial to the goals of each initiative and, most importantly, to the apes. Finally, I end my presentation advocating for the creation of a National Chimpanzee Cognitive and Behavior Program developed with the use of the NIH-supported US colony. The aim of this program is, in part, to further advance our scientific knowledge of chimpanzee behavior and cognition as a means of (1) promoting conservation efforts in the wild and (2) advancing chimpanzee and human health.

Katherine A. Cronin

"Advancing Primate Welfare Through Science at a Modern Zoo"

Historically zoos have been known as places of entertainment, but the mission of modern zoos often encompasses conservation, education, and research to advance animal welfare. For example, at the Lester E. Fisher Center for the Study and Conservation of Apes at Lincoln Park Zoo, we work alongside population biologists to maintain healthy, sustainable populations of chimpanzees across accredited zoos nationwide, and run project ChimpCARE to open lines of communication that can improve the lives of chimpanzees in any environment. Lincoln Park Zoo is a free zoo that is fortunate to have 3 million visitors per year and we consider this high visitorship an opportunity to expose people from a wide range of backgrounds to conservation and behavioral science. A central line of research at the Lester E. Fisher Center for the Study and Conservation of Apes evaluates how the zoo environment (i.e., habitat design, visitor presence, group composition) impacts animal welfare. The questions and results are considered in collaboration with animal managers so that the science is applied to decision making ensuring the best care for the animals. While the Center's research historically focused on chimpanzees and gorillas, the scope has expanded to encompass Japanese macaques housed in a state-of-the-art habitat equipped with touchscreen computers where we have been working to advance and simplify approaches to evaluate psychological well-being. In sum, the modern zoo is a valuable place where scientists can evaluate population sustainability and individual welfare and work together with managers to apply the results in ways that enhance the lives of animals.