

HUMANIMALIA

Vol. 13, No. 1 (Fall 2022)





Humanimalia is a biannual journal devoted to the study of human–animal relations. It is interdisciplinary, open-access, and peer-reviewed, publishing original articles from a wide range of cultural, historical, philosophical, political, and aesthetic perspectives.

Humanimalia has three aims: to explore and advance the vast range of scholarship on human–animal relations, to encourage exchange among scholars working from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and to promote dialogue between the academic community and those working closely with animals in non-academic fields.

We invite innovative works that situate these topics within contemporary culture via a variety of critical approaches. Ideally, we seek papers that combine approaches, or at the very least draw upon research in other disciplines to contextualize their arguments.

As much as possible, we seek papers that acknowledge and seek to advance a more-than-human conception of aesthetics, culture, and society.

<https://humanimalia.org>

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It gives us great pleasure to present to you this new issue of *Humanimalia*, the first in its new incarnation, and after a short hiatus during which the journal moved from its original home at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana to Utrecht University in the Netherlands. We have a new look, a new logo, and a new editorial team, but we remain committed to promoting a more-than-human conception of aesthetics, politics, culture, and society as we continue the work of the journal in this next phase of its existence.

Humanimalia was founded in 2006 by Istvan Csicsery-Ronay and Sherryl Vint, both long-time editors of *Science Fiction Studies*, in consultation with Donna Haraway and China Miéville. At the time, *Humanimalia* was the only animal studies journal to be fully online and open-access, and part of its core mission is to promote inter- and transdisciplinary work from across the humanities, natural and social sciences and beyond—the original CFP also invited legal scholars, veterinarians, zookeepers, and amateur naturalists to submit their work. This commitment to accessibility and transdisciplinary dialogue remains a key aim of the journal.

The first issue was published in 2009, and a further twenty-two issues followed over the next twelve years, comprising almost three hundred articles and reviews. In late 2020, Istvan announced his retirement, and for a time it seemed that the journal would cease operations altogether. Luckily, I was able to convince Istvan to hand over the reins to me and I set about arranging for *Humanimalia* to move to the Netherlands. Fortuitously, this transfer coincided with the launch of OpenJournals.nl, a newly established open-access publishing platform, which would become *Humanimalia*'s new home. Meanwhile, I assembled a new team of editors: Marianna Szczygielska (feminist history of science), Clemens Driesen (more-than-human geography), Kerstin Weich (philosophy and veterinary medicine), and Mari Bastashevski (art and design). My fellow literary animal studies scholar Dominic O'Key agreed to come onboard as book reviews editor. Together, we have spent the better part of the past two years getting the journal back up and running in its new guise.

When it first launched, *Humanimalia* bore the subtitle “a journal of human/animal interface studies”. In redesigning the journal, we opted to drop the subtitle, feeling that it was no longer necessary given that human–animal studies is now firmly established as a field of inquiry. Nevertheless, it bears emphasizing that the journal retains a particular interest in the question of the various *interfaces* between humans and nonhumans, which, in this digitally mediated age of extinctions, are increasingly not just cultural but also technological. The field of animal studies has long been preoccupied with the “disappearance” of animals from everyday modern life and, concomitantly, with the (im)possibility of authentic, unmediated encounters with nonhuman others. This discourse has often been marked by an underlying suspicion of media and technology, which tends to assume that culturally or technologically mediated encounters with animals are not just qualitatively different but inherently less “real” than encounters with actual animals in the wild—a view that implicitly buys into the fantasy of unmediated access to animals. A fundamental assumption of *Humanimalia*'s approach is that the relationship between humans and nonhumans is always historically, culturally, and technologically mediated, and, conversely, that history, culture, and technology are and always have been constitutively more-than-human.

This principle of universal mediation and humanimal interaction in and through technological interfaces is represented in the journal's new logo, which was designed by Mari Bastashevski in collaboration with a rout of snails using a customized haptic interface. Each dot constitutes a single touch; a line between the dots connects two touches occurring simultaneously. Snails can generate up to six lingering touches simultaneously: three with their bodies, two with their antennae which they use to test where to go next, and one for the trail, which the touchpad registers as a lingering touch. Mari prepared the ground by introducing two baseline 2D geometries that constitute the foundation of human design—a circle and a line—and then allowed the snails to build on that. The logo is the choreographic record of two snails dancing across this interactive digital plane; a visual representation of the “dance of relating”.

Humanimalia is devoted to the study of human–animal relations from a wide range of cultural, historical, philosophical, political, and aesthetic perspectives and disciplinary approaches. This broad range is reflected in the current issue, which features six research articles on subjects ranging from taxidermy and display practices of nonhuman primates in natural history museums (Verity Burke) and the construction of nonhuman personalities at several animal shelters in Finland (Nora Schuurman), to human–tiger cohabitation in India (Kath Weston) and human–mouse cohabitation in Amsterdam (Eva Meijer), to the phenomenal presence of dogs in classic Hollywood cinema (Borbála László), and the hermeneutic and pedagogical challenge and necessity of reading literary animals *as* animals (John Drew).

In order to mark the transition to this new phase in the journal's history, we wanted to invite some of the founding figures in the field to look back on the past two decades and to look forward to how they see the field developing. We took as inspiration the pioneering series of position papers published by H-Animal under the title "Ruminations" in the mid-2000s. For this issue, we are delighted that Erica Fudge agreed to revisit her Ruminations on "The History of Animals" from 2006. We hope to make this a recurring series of interventions featuring established and emerging scholars in the field. For future issues, we are also actively looking to include a variety of different forms, from proposals (modest or indecent), provocations, roundtables, and special sections to artistic or multi-media contributions, and we invite you, our readers, to get in touch with ideas and suggestions.

The issue concludes with eight book reviews on a range of recent titles that showcase the transnational scope and growth of the field. For this issue we are bringing back a format that was a hallmark of *Humanimalia* in the early days, namely the double book review, where two scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds each review the same book, in this case Charis Olszok's recent monograph *The Libyan Novel: Humans, Animals and the Poetics of Vulnerability* (2020), which is reviewed by Susan McHugh and Nadine A. Sinno.

The theme of what McHugh calls “regional creatures” (i.e. non-English perspectives on animals and animality) continues with Deborah Amberson’s review of *Animality in Contemporary Italian Philosophy*, edited by Felice Cimatti and Carlo Salzani (2020), and in Salzani’s own review of *Animals and Humans in German Literature, 1800–2000*, edited by Lorella Bosco and Micaela Latini (2020). In his review of *Outside the Anthropological Machine*, edited by Chiara Menozzi (2021), André Krebber wonders “whatever happened to Giorgio Agamben in human–animal studies” — a question that finds another potential answer in Adam Kotsko’s review of *Agamben and the Animal* (2022) by none other than the ubiquitous Carlo Salzani. Rounding out the issue are Dominic O’Key’s review of Juno Salazar Parreñas’s *Decolonizing Extinction* (2018) and finally Philip Howell’s review of Chris Pearson’s *Dogopolis: How Dogs and Humans Made Modern New York, London, and Paris* (2021).

Many thanks to the authors and peer reviewers, without whose hard work and generosity we wouldn’t have an issue at all; to everyone at OpenJournals for making the transition as smooth as possible; to our companions and partners, human and nonhuman; and of course to Istvan for giving us the opportunity to continue the work he started. We hope you enjoy reading this issue and we look forward to receiving your feedback and submissions for future issues.

On behalf of the editorial team,

Kári Driscoll, Managing Editor

Utrecht, October 2022