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# Human–Animal Relationships (HAR) Introduction

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# Welcome

- ... Tufts
  - ... Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine
  - ... “HAR”
  - ... Human-Animals Studies
  - ... Ethics and Values Signature Program
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# Purpose of This Course

- In the Syllabus is this language:
    - “When the course is completed students should be able to ... identify some of the most basic issues and debates in veterinary medicine”
  - Consider that **while veterinarians are almost universally respected and acknowledged as healers**, there is occasional shrill criticism → → →
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Where is

## Veterinary Medicine Headed?

- Claim at beginning of *Canadian Veterinary Journal* article by Frederick Leighton (see session 10):
    - “Over the past several decades, **the veterinary profession in North America has become severely imbalanced ...**
    - ... and **now serves society in a very lopsided way.**
    - What we do, we do very well.
    - But what we do not do, or do too little, is a **shameful disservice to society.**”
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## More Shrill Criticism

- Matthew Scully, former special assistant and deputy director of speechwriting to President George W. Bush, wrote in 2002:
    - “The profound betrayal of veterinary ethics everywhere around us—the sworn obligation of every veterinarian ‘to protect animal health [and] relieve animal suffering.’”
    - “Some shill of a vet comes by every few days to check on the stock.” [*Dominion*, 2002, page 268]
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# Responding—Ethics and Values at TCSVM (Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine)

- First year—Human Animal Relationships
  - Second year—Law and Veterinary Medicine
  - Third year—Ethics and Veterinary Medicine
  - Third year—Euthanasia
  - Fourth year—Ethics Seminar
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# The Personal Side—

## Who is in this class?

- 80 DVM students
  - 13 MAPP students
  - TCSVM and Center for Animals faculty, and guest lecturers (Weeks 2-4)
  - Using the chance to read widely, to ask questions, and to listen carefully to both lecturers **and fellow students**
  - **At the beginning, suspending your present ideas of HAR**
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# The Educational Side— General Objectives

When course is completed, students should be able to:

- ❑ Identify some of the most basic issues and debates in veterinary medicine, including issues in veterinary education, the veterinary profession, and public health.
  - ❑ Students should be able to relate these issues to these distinct categories of nonhuman animals:
    - Wildlife
    - Companion animals
    - Research animals
    - Farmed or food animals
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# General Objectives

- Describe trends, changes and “ferment” in social values regarding nonhuman animals.
  - Compare and contrast roles of veterinarian as individual practitioner, as participant in veterinary education, and as member of the veterinary profession.
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# General Objectives

- Recognize the value of developing a “culture of discussion” ...
  - ...a community that promotes
  - Open inquiry
  - Respect for empirical realities
  - The importance of evidence-based medicine
  - The possibility of human achievement through a combination of careful inquiry (science) and concern for others (ethics)
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# Specific Objectives

- When the course is completed, students should be able to:
    - Compare and contrast the categories of the 6 boxes diagram
    - Describe the most significant ethical issues involved in euthanasia
    - Describe what is meant by “evidence-based medicine” and why this notion is so important to both science and ethics
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# Specific Objectives

- Recognize that researchers are producing information about links between mistreatment of humans and cruelty to nonhuman animals
  - Grasp importance of the debates over research and the search for alternatives to use of whole animals
  - Know meaning of term “conservation medicine”
  - Recognize roles veterinarians can play with local shelters and in shelter medicine generally
  - Recognize the increasing importance of veterinarians in the field of public health
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# Schedule

- 1. **Session 1** Introduction to Human-Animal Relationships, **Dr. Waldau**
  - 2. **Session 2** Euthanasia in Veterinary Medicine and Society, **Dr. Dinnage**
  - 3. **Session 3** The Link—Abuse of Animals, Harm to Humans, **Dr. Lorna Grande**
  - 4. **Session 4** Animals in Research: A Spectrum of Attitudes, A Range of Issues, **Dr. Jerald Silverman**
  - 5. **Session 5** Conservation Medicine, **Dr. Rutberg and Wildlife Clinic Faculty**
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# Schedule

- 6. **Session 6** Alternatives in Education and Research, **Dr. Kumar**
  - 7. **Session 7** Companion Animals and Shelter Issues, including Shelter Medicine, **Dr. Rauch**
  - 8. **Session 8** Wildlife, **Dr. Rutberg**
  - 9. **Session 9** Farm Animal Issues, **Dr. Waldau**
  - 10. **Session 10** Public Health, **Dr. Lindenmayer**
  - 11. **Session 11** Clinical Medicine—An Introduction, **Dr. Shaw**
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# Course Basics

- **Each student must sign in each session**
  - Reflection Journal assignments are in the syllabus
  - Two parts:
    - Looking Back—reflection on discussion in prior week
    - Looking Forward—reflection on current issue or one or more of the readings
  - It is important, **and hard**, to express your views on certain subjects.
  - Tradition at Tufts to have vets engage with important social issues.
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# Student-led Tradition

- Culture of dialogue
  - Goals of EVSP and ethics classes ... develop a culture of communication, critical thinking, respectful engagement of opposing opinions
  - Long tradition of student participation and suggestions
  - Community contributions/insights are an important part of the values decisions at the school—these need to be considered carefully and should be part of many discussions
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## Reading for Other Classes Not Allowed

- ... unless you get prior permission
  - This course *should* compete with other courses for your attention and time
  - Politeness to visitors
  - Contributions to fellow students
  - Above all, basic importance of issues
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# Class-wide Discussions

- Realities of “discussion” among 90+ students ...
  - “Public speaking”
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## More Basics

- Start on time, and end at 10 minutes before hour
  - Re-start on the hour
  - End after 50 minutes (10 minutes before hour)
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# Back to the Educational— Learning Together

- **Winged Migration**, by Jacques Perrin
  - ... a truly international story ...
  - ... an earlier “globalization”
  - Extraordinary list of “thanks” in the credits
  - What it takes to tell an international story
  - Such breadth is an integral part of HAR ...
  - ...and one of the reasons **learning together** is essential
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## ...the importance of actual realities...

- Science-based inquiries and the need to “get it right”
  - Ethics-based inquiries and assessing the impact of our actions
  - Another “reality-based” issue → →
  - Evidence-based medicine ...
  - ...common sense ... thus not always mentioned prominently...
  - But need for evidence-based work *always* there...
  - “Fundamental requirement of good medicine and good ethics”
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# Back to the Personal

- “Personal archeology”
  - Each of you brings a unique story to this course...
  - ...because each has met a unique subset of the “animal world”
  - Betty Lawrence’s life (Reading #2)
  - Our task is to work with the diverse points of view... (Reading #1—high profile discussions)
  - Our task ... get differing views to dance in meaningful conversation.
  - We’re not here to tell you how to think—but, instead, to facilitate your own thinking about your views.
  - Thereby you can see fundamental features of your own views AND “human-animal relationships.”
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# The Social Element

- Consider an argument about the emergence of “a new social ethic” re nonhuman animals
  - By prominent veterinary ethicist Dr. Bernard Rollin, Distinguished Professor and Director of Bioethical Planning, Colorado State University
  - Rollin has taught a course in veterinary medical ethics at Colorado State since 1978
  - A principal architect of federal legislation dealing with the welfare of experimental animals
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## Rollin's arguments about *changing* social consensus on “animals”

- 1985 federal law betokened **a changed social consensus regarding “animals”**
  - = new attitudes ... “ferment”
  - Sept 2005 *JAVMA News* reports Rollin talk re **farm animals** at AVMA's annual meeting
    - Week 9 we'll see the underlying materials
  - We use these topics to raise questions about **the role of veterinarians in shaping public policy** regarding human-animal relationships.
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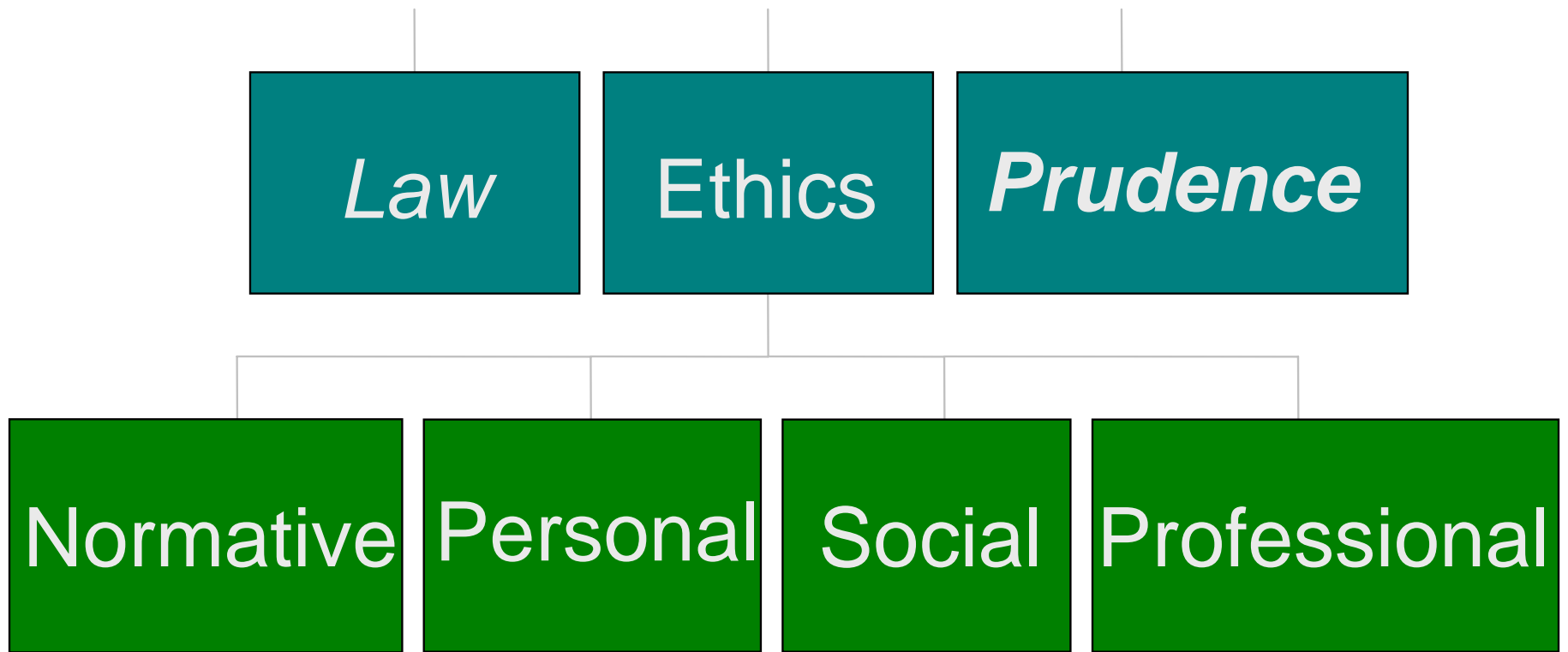
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# Central Concept—6 Boxes Diagram

- Purpose—a simple mapping of different sources of “Right” and “Wrong”
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# 6 Boxes Diagram



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# Introduction to Minutes Papers

- First session—will test you at beginning
  - Here's the question:
  - “Draw the 6 Boxes diagram”
  - The point—to have you be familiar with this basic “map”
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# Back to the Big Picture

- What **we** are doing? (“We” here is *all* of us)
  - —getting you ready for the role of professional in the wider society...
  - ...by considering topics that come under big descriptions like...
  - ...“human-animal relationships”
  - ...“human-animal studies”
  - ...“veterinarians and social values”
  - ...even “animal law” or “animal rights”
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# How We Do This...

- Look at...
    - ...what is happening
    - ...what has happened
    - ...what can happen
  - ...among ...
    - veterinarians locally
    - veterinarians in US (think locally, act globally)
    - veterinarians worldwide
    - the publics around the world
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# Two Long-term Relationships

- Jane Goodall and two HAR issues...
    - 40 year relationship Jane has had with Fifi  
...speaks of HAR potential
    - general situation in Gombe bespeaks of another potent relationship...
  - Gombe = 10 x 2 miles on shore of Lake Tanganyika...but
  - ...around Gombe, “things have changed” dramatically
  - Our own conception of our relationship to other animals is also changing dramatically ...
  - One good development, one very scary ...
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# How do *we* explore HARs?

- Many use language about the importance of the “Human-Animal Bond” (HAB)
  - ...even as there is increasing utilization and marginalization of nonhumans.
  - Legal changes inside and outside US
  - Social changes around the world—increased meat eating
  - “Ferment”
  - A good starting point—observations from within the veterinary profession
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## DVM Newsmagazine article

“Activist agendas sway veterinary profession”

Activist agendas sway veterinary profession.  
Jennifer Fiala. DVM Newsmagazine Online.  
Advanstar Communications Inc. Oct 1, 2003

<http://www.dvmnews.com/dvm/>

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# Who *is* causing the ferment?

- Veterinarians?
  - 4-year-long inquiry—what should your role be?
  - Or is it activists? 10,000+ groups around the world
  - Animal Protection fundraising is about \$2 billion per annum out of an annual US total of \$175 billion
  - Foundations, which give about \$30 billion per year, only give about \$30 million to animal causes
  - Animal protection grant numbers are *much* lower than environmental grants
  - Are scientists causing the ferment?
  - “Delivering the goods” versus bias and misuse
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# British Medical Journal article

“Where is the evidence that animal experimentation benefits humans?”

“Few methods exist for evaluating the clinical relevance or importance of basic animal research, and so its clinical (as distinct from scientific) contribution remains uncertain.”

(Pound P. Ebrahim S. Sandercock P. Bracken MB. Roberts I. Reviewing Animal Trials Systematically (RATS) Group. Where is the evidence that animal research benefits humans? [see comment]. *BMJ*. 2004;328:514-517.)

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# Who else might be causing the ferment?

- Consumers?
  - “Don’t tell me, I don’t want to know” versus intelligent consumption
  - Industry? →
  - Realities of economic competition
  - Risk of self-serving rationalizations
  - Students? young people?
  - Women?
  - Religion? →
  - ... whether engaged or disengaged, a potent force
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## Are politicians and lawyers causing the ferment?

- Many developments in cases, new legislation, administrative policies, and even enforcement
  - *Dominion*, 2002 book by President Bush's speechwriter
    - Text in syllabus ...
    - Is this politics or is it religion?
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# Empiricism as subversive?

- Exploration of the world can be subversive of many assumptions we now hold
  - Science as the premier tool of exploration
  - ...true, science can be poorly done
  - ...and even if well done, science can be used in highly biased ways
  - But science has internal tools for self-correction
  - *Ethics as a tool of exploration*
    - The 6 Boxes—there are many kind of “ethics”
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# Discussion Groups

- Group assignments
  - Meet and designate/elect spokesperson to report orally what the group decides
  - MAPP students have been assigned to each group
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# Today's Topic

- What are the **four most basic issues faced by veterinary medicine today?**
  - Elect a spokesperson—we'll put these issues on the board at the beginning of next session.
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# Break

- Group reports when we come back



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# Today's Topic

- What are the **four most basic issues faced by veterinary medicine today?**



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# Basic Issues Faced by Veterinary Medicine Today

- Group A: AR v AW; general ethics;
  - Group B: cost of care; lack of large animal vets; malpractice
  - Group C: use of lab animals for RS;
  - Group D: euthanasia; pets as property
  - Group E: role in public health;
  - Group F: responsibility for conservation; convenience procedures;
  - Group G: food animal production; bioterrorism
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# The Grey Wolf



U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)

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# Getting Past Ignorance and Arrogance About Basic Facts

- What is the magnitude of our impacts on nonhuman animals?
  - Estimates of number of animals involved in general uses
    - Note different kinds of intention involved in each basic category
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## Basic Facts

- 15-30 million **laboratory animals** annually in the US alone
  - 100-200 million **companion animals** live with humans in US
  - More households now have companion animals than have children
  - 10,000+ companion animals are killed per day for lack of a home
  - 9,000-10,000 million **food animals** (this doesn't count fish) annually in US alone
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## Basic Facts

- Billions of **wildlife** killed annually
  - 1 billion? 10 billion? 100 billion?
  - Impacts here go well beyond hunting and road kill—many habitats are poisoned by environmentally disruptive toxins
  - Worldwide total, if we add in fish, is clearly in the tens of billions.
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# Human-Animal Relations

- An integral part of human lives
  - Diverse in the extreme
  - Interwoven with traditions and self-identities
  - Subject of much controversy today
  - “Animal lover”
  - “Terrorist”
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# Veterinarians' Role(s) in Human-Animal Relations

- An area sorely in need of veterinarians' informed viewpoints
  - ...makes this a central course.
  - Good medicine is the ground of doing good ethics.
  - But...
  - ...what is the place of the individual, of veterinary education, of the profession in the following?
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## Time Magazine, August 15, 2005

- Cover story—“Evolution Wars”
  - “The push to teach ‘intelligent design’ raises a question: Does God have a place in science class?”
  - 25 states have had anti-evolution proposals at state board of education or in state legislatures since 2001
  - Another 9 states have had challenges in local schools or panels in 2005 alone
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## Time Magazine, August 15, 2005

- “Woof, Woof! Who’s Next?”
  - “Meet Snuppy, the first cloned puppy, a scientific tour de force and **a hint of stranger things to come.**”
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... the future?

- **Laboratory-cultured meat: Home, home on the strange?**
  - Associated Press, August 11, 2005
  - BALTIMORE --Researchers are dishing up the perfect conundrum for vegetarians -- meat grown in a laboratory dish, not on the hoof.
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# With much controversy around, which views should we present?

- ... ***you*** fill in the blanks ...
  - Acknowledge the importance of freedom of expression in academic context
  - Wide-range of views—an educational opportunity
  - Practical advantage of having been exposed to quality discussions of different points of view
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Should we present *ALL* views?

- Consider the problems in doing so ...

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# NEJM article

## “Controversial Journal Editorials”

Kassirer JP, Angell M. Controversial journal editorials. *N Engl J Med*. 1997;337:1460-1461.

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- “What is our responsibility to seek an objective or balanced viewpoint in these articles?”
  - “... In the editing process we do not ask that opinion pieces hew to a middle-of-the-road view.”
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- “Even if it were possible to define such a thing, a journal filled with conventional wisdom would not be useful to our readers, let alone stimulating.”
  - “Furthermore, a view that seems eccentric or even outrageous today may become commonplace tomorrow.”
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- “When we select opinion pieces for publication, therefore, we consider the importance of the topic, the novelty of the argument, and the logic and persuasiveness with which the argument is made, but we do not ask whether it conforms to today's dominant view, nor do we necessarily agree with it.”
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- “Since we do not try to achieve balance in opinion pieces, what about doing so by publishing opposing points of view in the same issue of the *Journal*?”
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- “... publishing opposing articles on every controversial issue discussed in the pages of the *Journal* would not only be unwise but also tedious.”
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- “First, it would suggest that all issues have two, equally persuasive sides. Although the popular media, with their adversarial style and emphasis on combat, may promote that idea, we believe it is simplistic. Sometimes there are not two but many points of view....”
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- “Furthermore, the debate format tends to drive out considerations of the subtleties of an argument in favor of its most extreme or provocative elements, which are usually well known.”
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- “We also believe that trying to balance one point of view with its opposite each time we feature a controversial subject would be insulting to our readers. It would imply that they cannot evaluate an argument on its own merits or retain and modify it in the light of later arguments. Ideas, even unpopular ones, do not need antidotes.”
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# Faculty Role

- ***Our role is to push you***
  - The “ethics and values” are ***yours***
  - The thinking process can be clear or muddled—our task is to push you to see and clarify your own thinking processes
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# Where We Are Going

- Syllabus ...
- Session on euthanasia → → →



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# “Euthanasia”— What’s in a word?

- “Good death”
  - By whose measure?
  - ... for the good of the animal in order to relieve extraordinary suffering
  - versus
  - Painless death of *any* animal that is not wanted by certain humans
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# Basic Questions

- How many think it is *immoral* to *ever* use euthanasia?
  - How many think it is *never* wrong to kill a nonhuman animal?
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## Revisiting the Purpose of This Course

“enrich the student's understanding  
of various aspects of the human  
relationship to animals”

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# What is the role of veterinarians in ...

- Preventing violence to companion animals
  - Preventing violence to the human owners
    - Human children
    - Should you *have to report*?
  - Preventing violence to wildlife
  - Preventing violence to farm animals
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# Discussion Topics

- Last is complicated ... what counts as violence?
    - Some argue that, under the values of our traditional “husbandry ethic,” some contemporary practices should be modified
  - What is role of veterinarians on issue of controversial surgeries?
    - Declaws
    - Ear cropping
    - Tail docking
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# More Discussion Topics

- What is the role of veterinarians in
    - Environmental matters and environmental ethics
    - Animal welfare
    - “Animal rights”
    - Political campaigns that deal with nonhuman animals issues
    - Fostering cultural change
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## How to handle?

- What to do with a person who keeps a bird in a cage that is obviously too small?
    - How do you approach him/her?
    - Are there *legal* obligations?
    - Are there *ethical* obligations?
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# What You Now Should Know

- What the course is about
  - Course mechanics
  - Importance of attendance and discussion
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