Themed Session Call for Papers

Animals and leisure: Rights and Wellbeing

Chairs: Dr Janette Young (University of South Australia) & Associate Professor Neil Carr (University of Otago)

Theme focus: Animals form an integral component of the leisure experience as objects, tools, and sentient beings: from the dog playing at the beach with its human companion, to the horse being used by police to aid crowd control, to the elephant being hunted so that its head may be displayed on the wall of the hunter’s home as a tourist souvenir, to the kangaroo sitting on the table at a restaurant waiting to be consumed as cuisine. Many of these animals and the roles they play in human leisure can enhance the physical and mental health and general wellbeing of humans and provide the latter with valuable social capital. While some work has begun to examine these benefits, especially in relation to dogs, far more work is needed and the conceptual foundations that leisure studies is built on arguably need to be brought to bear to aid such work. In addition, more work is needed to examine how such benefits can be actualised; a call that recognises that leisure does not exist in isolation from life.

If animals are seen as more than mere objects then all of this work needs to be situated within the context of animal rights and welfare (or wellbeing if you prefer). While debate continues to rage about the rights and sentience of animals such discussion has been limited within leisure studies and where it has occurred has mainly been confined to the exotic other rather than the more mundane, everyday animals, and narrowly focused within tourism studies.

Any research agenda for animals and leisure that speaks only of the position of animals in human leisure is arguably guilty of missing the idea that as sentient beings animals may also have and/or desire leisure; a leisure that may coincide with but is distinct from human leisure. This suggests leisure is not only a right of humans but also of non-human animals.

Do all animals desire leisure, do they desire it in the same way as humans, what rights to leisure should they have, who should be responsible for ensuring those rights, and what happens when these rights conflict with human moral values and/or perceived needs. All of these are questions that need addressing within the sphere of a leisure studies field that is willing to look beyond merely the human.
12th Biennial ANZALS Conference
9 December - 11 December 2015
Adelaide, South Australia

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**Animals and leisure: Rights and Wellbeing**

This session aims to provide a forum for the discussion of the position of animals (encompassing wild, semi-domesticated and domesticated animals, and pets) in leisure studies and leisure experiences, the potential benefits and drawbacks of the positioning of them in leisure environments, and the right to leisure of animals. Potential themes for presentations include, but are not limited to:

- Demand for access with pets to leisure spaces
- Health and wellbeing benefits of human-animal interactions in leisure
- Leisure, animals, and individual and communal social capital
- Animal rights and wellbeing in human cuisine
- Right to leisure of animals
- Do animals ‘need’ and/or have leisure?
- Animal abuse in leisure
- Animals in leisure and human identity construction
- Ethics of hunting
- Zoos and aquaria as morally contested spaces
- What is a circus and what makes them morally repugnant
- Fashion, leisure, and animals
- How to understand non-human animals’ leisure
- Volunteerism and animal protection as leisure

Abstracts should be 250-350 words clearly indicating the following information:

- Author name(s) indicating position and affiliation as well as full details of correspondence author.
- Full paper title as it will appear in the conference programme.
- Abstract including Background (outline of the context/literature informing the study or issue), Approach/methodology (indication of the broad theoretical orientation and/or methodological approach) and Significance/Key learnings (description/application of findings or key learnings).
- Full references for any research cited in the abstract (no tables, figures or footnotes).

Abstracts using Word format are to be submitted to Dr Janette Young (janette.young@unisa.edu.au)

**Deadline for abstracts is Friday 29th May 2015**