



Our Hen House

CHANGE THE WORLD FOR ANIMALS

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Interviews with Saskia Stucki & Livia Boscardin, Steve Wise, Maneesha Deckha, Katie Sykes, Margo DeMello, and Kathy Hessler & Natasha Dolezal

By OUR HEN HOUSE

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*Following is a transcript of interviews with **SASKIA STUCKI & LIVIA BOSCARDIN, STEVE WISE, MANEESHA DECKHA, KATIE SYKES, MARGO DEMELLO, AND KATHY HESSLER & NATASHA DOLEZAL** conducted by **JASMIN SINGER** and **MARIANN SULLIVAN** of [Our Hen House](#), for the [Our Hen House podcast](#). The interview aired on Episode 223.*

JASMIN: We have our first interview today, which is -- all of the interviews today and next week are on the shorter side because we have so many people to get in, so they're all about like 5 minutes to 10 minutes. And we're gonna start with an interview with the two organizers. And we actually conducted this interview after the conference was over, so you'll hear them talking about it in past tense. But these two very inspiring young women, Saskia Stucki and Livia Boscardin, I really enjoyed getting to know them and they kind of gave us a glimpse into what it was like organizing this conference, so I want you to hear directly from Saskia and Livia.

Welcome to Our Hen House, Saskia and Livia.

LIVIA: Hi.

SASKIA: Hi. Thank you.

JASMIN: Thank you so much! We're so excited to be here, and this conference that you were the organizers for, it seems to be very groundbreaking. Is this the first annual European conference surrounding animal law issues?

LIVIA: It is, yeah. And it's organized by the law school of the University of Basel and the doctoral program, Law and Animals, in collaboration with EGALS, the Eurogroup for Animal Legal Studies, Animal Law Studies.

SASKIA: Yeah, so the concept is that we will be organizing an annual European animal law conference every year in April, so similar to the animal law conference in the US in October. So this was the first one, the initial one, and yeah, we tried to make a broad introduction to the whole field in Europe. So there have been other animal law conferences in Europe already, but this is the first in this coherent concept.

MARIANN: I think it was so interesting the way you brought experts in animal studies together with experts in animal law. What was the idea behind doing that? It really brought together a number of different fields, which I thought was unusual.

SASKIA: We wanted to start with an introduction to the basics of animal law with psychology, biology, philosophy, to have this ground work to prepare the people for the legal aspect of everything. So that's why the first panel was on these foundational issues, and we thought that legal scholars who haven't dealt with animal law issues that much would profit from this basic knowledge on animals, how they are, how they feel. There was a huge concept that animals are sentient beings, for example, so that was good to establish at the beginning.

JASMIN: Well, it seems to me that in the world of animal studies in particular, and when you're dealing with a bunch of academics, so frequently people wind up spinning their own wheels and talking amongst themselves. But what I thought was interesting and refreshing about your conference was that in addition to some of that theory and philosophy, there also seemed to be an underlying theme of action and ways to implement your thoughts and ideas into a way to change the world for animals. Is this something that resonates with you?

LIVIA: So, Professor Peters, who is responsible for the conference, who organized it with us, she's also the director of the Max Planck Institute in Heidelberg. She said in her conclusion, in her last words, that she thinks that academia has kind of a social responsibility to bring these issues, to discuss them, to sensitize the audience for it. And so I think it does resonate with us and was one of the goals of the conference as well.

JASMIN: Well, and I just want to add too that as someone who's not a lawyer and someone who is not an academic really, I got a lot out of the conference and I thought that it was very accessible while also challenging in the subject matter, the wide array of subject matter that the speakers were presenting on. And I'm wondering if one of you could tell me how you feel the overlap should be between animal law and animal studies.

SASKIA: So here, both fields are actually just nascent, so with the title "The Animal Turn," we actually wanted to mark that animal law belongs to the human-animal studies. I would also call it legal animal studies, so it's a sub-theme of the human-animal studies. So it was important for us to not just look at animal law as just a legal issue, but also as a broader, disciplinary view on it and to have sociological and philosophical perspectives on it, and maybe also yeah, the underlying power relations behind animal law. So I think legal animal studies can really benefit from other disciplines too, to look at the topic.

JASMIN: You're really paving the way here. To hear your thoughts on animal studies and animal law, and the fact that animal law, as you said, is really just emerging here in a lot of ways, for you to be at the helm of this conference, I think is incredibly empowering because you're bringing it together in a way that this is like the sea. This is the base of -- I'm making horrible metaphors here -- but this beautiful plant that's going to grow based on this seed. And I can only imagine how much it's going to expand from here. And I know I spoke with a lot of people who are like, "ooh, I didn't even get to register because it filled up so quickly." So clearly there's an interest there. And Basel seems like such a wonderful place. There's so many people who care about animals in a variety of ways, and I just have really been enjoying our time here.

MARIANN: Yeah, I was very, very impressed with the quality of the speakers and the wide number of subjects they covered. It's been a great experience.

JASMIN: Thank you so much for doing this. I hope that we get to run into each other again in the near future, hopefully in the United States or here in Europe. So thank you again.

LIVIA: Thank you so much.

SASKIA: Thank you to the both of you.

JASMIN: Saskia and Livia are so inspiring to me, and I love that they were putting this conference together, and they did such a brilliant job. Putting together conferences like these and events like these just -- it requires so much more work than anybody would ever realize.

MARIANN: Yeah, you're absolutely right. There's all this invisible work that goes into it. And this conference went very, very smoothly. And the *food* that they served -- there were coffee breaks and lunch and all the food was superb, which, as we all know at any conference that involves animals, that's so important.

JASMIN: Yeah, and it was so good. And it was of course all vegan, but it wasn't exactly labeled as such, and I think that they -- well I don't know about them, but I think that it had been done somewhat strategically, but you wouldn't even -- it was all from that restaurant Tibits, which we actually wound up eating at a few times. But this interview that we just did with Saskia and Livia, it was especially special because it was on your birthday! You celebrated your birthday in Basel! How was that?

MARIANN: Well, as you know, it was great. And they were kind enough to take us to...

JASMIN: Cafebar Salon.

MARIANN: Yeah, a wonderful, wonderful restaurant, a tiny little restaurant. It was just so European, I felt like I was in a movie. Well, 'cause it was in Europe, so that would be European too.

JASMIN: Well, and it was your big birthday. It was your Beatles birthday. "Will you still need me?"

MARIANN: Okay, enough of that.

JASMIN: "Will you still feed me?"

MARIANN: Well, I was fed extremely well.

JASMIN: Yeah. We're gonna talk more about the food there in our review on next week's episode because we're gonna be discussing some traditional fare that we were able to have while we were there. So anyway, it was just extraordinary, and Cafebar Salon was exquisite, and I just very strongly recommend it. It was almost like a '50s type of bar kind of in the way it was set up. Do you think that's accurate?

MARIANN: No, I don't know what it had to do with the '50s, but I thought it was very, very kind of old European, and they had a lot of like accordion music on. And it just had a lot of atmosphere, and I had a great time. It was a great birthday.

JASMIN: Yeah, it was. So anyway, let's get into our next two interviews. We are going to be talking to Steve Wise, who's the president of the Nonhuman Rights Project, and we've talked about that many times and he's also been on the show once before. And then we're going to talk to Professor Maneesha Deckha, who's associate professor of law at the University of Victoria, who's also been on our show before. This was like a big family reunion I think. They were speakers at the conference as well, and they both had such interesting things to talk about, and they kind of pertained a little bit to each other, which is why we're going to play these two interviews back to back.

MARIANN: Yeah, Steve, of course, his life and his work is dedicated to the prospect of obtaining legal personhood for at least one nonhuman animal, which he feels will break that wall, that ridiculous wall that legally separates humans and nonhumans so completely. Maneesha, on the other hand, feels that maybe we should go in a different direction. Their ultimate goals, I think, are very much the same. But their ideas of how to get there might differ a bit.

JASMIN: And so first we're going to start with Steve, and then we'll go right into Maneesha.

Welcome back to Our Hen House, Steve.

STEVE: Thank you for inviting me.

JASMIN: It's very exciting to be here with you in Switzerland. Who knows where we'll run into you next?

STEVE: Three weeks from now, I will be in Cordoba, Argentina.

JASMIN: Oh, wow. I'm totally there. Well, have fun there and don't cry for me. Or maybe cry a little 'cause I won't be there. Anyway, we were particularly intrigued today when there was a panel discussion going on, and I loved what you were talking about. Could you give us a bit of background, Mariann?

MARIANN: Yeah, it was a panel discussion with at least one scientist and several academics, in philosophy primarily. And you asked the question, which was very refreshing. I hope I paraphrase this correctly. When these people find out things or think through things or, particularly with scientists, research things and discover things about animals that are relevant to how they should be treated, do they have some kind of moral obligation to take that into the realm of practicality?

STEVE: That's exactly what I asked. There was one scientist, three academic philosophers, and they were arguing about, really, fairly irrelevant points. They essentially agreed that they were very interested in kind of distinguishing themselves, one from another, and then you had the lone biologist or psychologist. And so since it was all clear that they all were in favor of legal rights, or moral rights at least, for at least some nonhuman animals, then I asked whether, once they come to that conclusion, do they then have a moral obligation to inject themselves into the political and legal debates of the times that will then lead to the

nonhuman animals that they think ought to have either moral or legal rights actually attaining them?

JASMIN: Yeah. And I might be also not paraphrasing this very well, but the scientist who was on the panel said, "Well, I'll leave questions of morality to philosophers." Is that basically what he said?

STEVE: I think he may have said something like that, which was really not the answer I'm looking for.

JASMIN: And yet it seemed to me to almost be eye roll-worthy, to be honest, that that's how he responded because I almost think that there's just this wall that goes up when the question of morality is even posed to anyone, let alone a scientist. Do you think so?

STEVE: Well, we actually have had practical issues around this which cause me to ask the question. When we litigate on behalf of chimpanzees, for example, the three *habeas corpus* cases that we filed in the state of New York, we went to a whole series of chimpanzee experts, and nine of them stepped up. And interestingly, some of them did not step up. And I have a hard time understanding why someone would spend his or her life researching chimpanzees, seeing the extraordinarily complex cognitive animals they are, and then we come to them and say, "We want you to simply tell the court what you know," and they say "I don't want to get involved."

MARIANN: Can you tell us what's going on with that case? What are next steps?

JASMIN: Actually, let's just back up for a second because I know that many of our listeners are familiar with the Nonhuman Rights Project. But just in case there's some guy listening to this, this is the first episode, just give us the nutshell of what the Nonhuman Rights Project is, and then I definitely want to know what Mariann just asked about the latest in what's going on.

STEVE: Well, the Nonhuman Rights Project is an organization throughout the United States. And its purpose is to achieve legal personhood and fundamental rights for at least some nonhuman animals, to really break through the barrier that currently exists, the legal barrier between humans and nonhuman animals. And we spent about 30,000 hours from between 2007 and 2013 preparing our first cases. They were all demands that trial court judges, three of them, issue writs of *habeas corpus* on behalf of chimpanzees who are imprisoned within the state of New York. And so we asked each of the judges to issue the writs of *habeas corpus*, and each of them refused. Two of them gave us hearings and we talked about it there on our website. One of them simply refused without us ever seeing him, which we completely expected. And so now we are filing briefs. We filed one brief last week. We're gonna file another one this week and another one next week, in each of the three intermediate appellate courts of New York State. And then ultimately if we lose one or two or three of those cases, we'll then ask the New York Court of Appeals to hear our case.

JASMIN: And you've gotten quite a lot of media attention. Have you been impressed? I know every time I hear you reading an article about this, you're like, "God, he's in the news again!"

MARIANN: Yeah, it's really gotten remarkable media attention, and definitely not of the tongue-in-cheek variety. It's been taken very seriously by many different aspects of the

press, which I love to see. And I'm curious to know -- I've heard rumors that there will be other cases filed as well, perhaps in other states?

STEVE: Yes, we are now working on filing our fourth case on behalf of a number of elephants in non-New York State. And by the way, we also have -- we're not exactly sure when, but it's an upcoming lengthy article in the Sunday *New York Times Magazine* about our cases and the Nonhuman Rights Project.

JASMIN: Wow! That's so amazing. We're such big fans of everything you're doing. And how can people learn more about your efforts online?

STEVE: We put everything up there whether we win or lose, and it's www.nonhumanrights.org.

JASMIN: Well, talking to Steve Wise makes me feel like we will ultimately win.

MARIANN: Yeah, just talking to him gives me hope.

JASMIN: Thank you so much again for joining us on Our Hen House, Steve.

STEVE: Thank you for inviting me a second time.

JASMIN: Welcome to Our Hen House, Maneesha.

MANEESHA: Thanks, great to be here!

JASMIN: So great to have you again on our show. And I was wondering if you could tell our listeners a little bit about what you're going to be talking about at the conference.

MANEESHA: Sure. So my talk is called "Beyond Personhood: Toward a New Legal Subjectivity for Animals." So it's a talk that invites us to rethink personhood as the go-to legal category for animals, which if you look at some of the activist campaigns and just general kind of talk about these issues, is a goal for a lot of animal activists, an understandable goal given that we want to get away from property categorization for animals in the law and move toward something that can mark out an anti-exploitative zone for them.

But the reason I'm giving a paper on personhood is just because I think personhood has, from the way it's been formed in Western legal traditions, quite an exclusionary imprint on it that's hard to get away from. So what I'm arguing is that the property/personhood category in law was really built on the human/animal divide, and that that divide is kind of ingrained into how we think of what property is and how we think of what personhood is, such that it's really hard to kind of use it as an ever-expanding category for those kind of really marginalized subjects like animals.

So I'm suggesting that maybe we should think of a new category, like a new term, and what I'm currently toying with is the idea of beingness, to signal a more what I would hope is a category that can work with animals' differences better rather than fit them into a preexisting kind of human-designed category.

JASMIN: Can you explain how you plan on bringing in feminism? Because I know that that is also a focus of yours.

MANEESHA: Yes. So the paper actually draws from feminist theory, post-colonial theory, and also queer theory, to kind of explain why I'm saying personhood has its history. So a lot of feminist politics has looked at when we were unsure whether women would be recognized as persons in various countries. There was a lot of activism to get women formal legal equality, and now formal legal recognition as persons. But you can see in various different types of issues, let's say about reproductive rights or so on and so forth, that that category has not been a nice, easy fit for women because it has a specific mold that's really kind of reflective of more white, male property of interest from where it came.

So what I'm suggesting about animals is really influenced by critical theories of difference in the human realm, whether on issues of gender or raising culture or sexual orientation, that suggest that a liberal category that we assume may be exclusive now but can be opened up to include more beings may actually not be accurate because that category itself is exclusionary to begin with. And so feminism has always been kind of alive to the critique about sameness, right? Why do we have to be like men to have our rights respected or to be seen as full beings? And so it's the same type of critique. The personhood model invites us to think about and to always demonstrate how animals are like humans so that they can count. But that doesn't seem to me to be a transgressive move or argument to make. I'd rather do something that is more attentive to the differences animals have.

JASMIN: Well, I'm very much looking forward to watching your talk tomorrow. Thank you so much for sharing your wisdom with us once again.

MANEESHA: My pleasure, thanks for having me.

JASMIN: That was Steve Wise and Maneesha Deckha.

MARIANN: Yeah. One of the things I mentioned that I loved about this conference was the combination of sort of theoretical and practical. And I think you kind of see that in -- Maneesha's thinking is very at the theoretical level, and I think that's enormously important, for us to try to come up with new ways to think about solving these problems. And Steve's is at the very practical level; he's actually bringing these *habeas corpus* actions in New York State Court.

Another person who was, I thought, fascinating, and whose work I was not familiar with before this conference, was Professor Katie Sykes, who's an assistant professor of law at Thompson Rivers University in Canada. And she was talking about one of the most important issues facing animals, and that is the regulations in the World Trade Organization and just in general the regulation of international trade. And as she'll explain, the reason this is so important is because if you don't have limitations on trade, then everything that's horrible that's going to be done to an animal will just be done in the country that has the worst laws. All of the corporations will go to that country and then they'll be able to ship all their stuff to other countries, and not have to comply with their more difficult regulations regarding animal welfare. So if we can't get it right on the international level, we're just not going to get it right. So I was so happy that she agreed to speak to us about this.

JASMIN: Welcome to Our Hen House, Katie.

KATIE: Thank you for having me.

JASMIN: It's so exciting, not only because I think you have one of the best accents at the conference.

MARIANN: Ooh! I hadn't thought of that, but she does. It's perfect.

JASMIN: It's adorable.

MARIANN: And there are a lot of accents here.

JASMIN: Many, many accents. And actually, there was somebody talking, a philosopher who asked a 20-minute question that I probably could have asked in eight seconds. But anyway, he had this very, very debonair accent, nothing like that. But I said, I think he's from Queens and that that's a bullshit accent.

MARIANN: It was very Germanic, his accent. Yeah, I think all philosophers should adopt Germanic accents, though they all have them here.

JASMIN: Yeah. But in addition to that, you're also quite smart, and we've really enjoyed seeing you talk this weekend.

MARIANN: And particularly because I loved the subjects for your talks 'cause they were both very erudite and practical, because they talked about getting some real change for animals, and because you talked from an international perspective, and I don't think we're gonna get change if we get it just in one country. We have to think internationally. So can you just give us the gist of what you were talking about, especially of course that it's international in its ramifications, and how you talk about science? 'Cause I love the way you talk about science and its role.

KATIE: Yeah, thank you. I'm really glad you enjoyed it. I should say I'm not a scientist. I'm a lawyer and I don't really know much about science. But I have noticed how science is being used in the legal discourse of animals and popular discourse about animals. And it interested me because you're right that there's a need for a global level set of rules about the way that we treat animals because of the risk of a race to the bottom if different places have different rules, that there's a draw for industry to go to the place with the most lax rules. And we live in an interconnected world where products can cross borders very easily, partly because there are legal rules that require countries not to erect barriers to them crossing borders. So if there is nothing at the international level, then there is a risk that the local rules won't be effective, which is what another one of the speakers, Thomas Kelch, was talking about.

MARIANN: Can I just interject? We've been seeing that even at the state/national level in the United States because of the rules on eggs. And California has strict rules, and all the other states are trying to take down the barrier of getting their own eggs into California. So you're talking about that on a global level.

KATIE: Yup. It's the same thing kind of copied at the global level. But it's easier, I think, to have harmonized law in the US than it is to have harmonized law over the entire world, 'cause the entire world is a big place with a lot of diverse sets of legal systems.

MARIANN: It's pretty tough in the US too!

KATIE: Yes! But it's easier than the entire world. So what I was interested in with respect to the way science is used is that there's a lot of looking to science for kind of empirical, solid, objective evidence about what animals are like and then drawing conclusions from that about what we ought to do about animals and what the laws should be and what the norms should be. And that seems to have a particular importance at the international level because of this issue of there being many, many different cultures and different legal systems and different values about animals. Different cultures have different views about how much we should protect animals, and which animals, right? 'Cause we often talk about just animals, but of course there are lots of different animals, and it is very cultural which ones are sort of privileged, cared-for animals and which ones aren't.

So there is great resistance, and I think suspicion, about any claim that there is some kind of universal norm about animals, and a lot of I guess risk aversion, maybe is what I would say, among adjudicators at the international level, or a tendency to not want to appear to be sort of judicially activist by claiming that there is some grand international norm without something to back it up. So science looks like a nice way to back it up and say, this is objective, these are facts -- science is unbiased and universal and everyone agrees that science is right. But I just wanted to sort of question what the limits on that are because I can see scientific studies kind of being used to answer questions that aren't really objective, factual, empirical questions. They're normative questions, they're juridical questions. And I don't think you can sort of get out of dealing with those questions that easily by saying, oh look, here's a scientific study.

MARIANN: We have seen that so much in the United States, and the industry is constantly trotting out what they call science to justify their positions. And of course it's not really relevant to the point they're trying to make. So I think it's a hugely important thing to be looking at. And you are looking at it particularly in the context of the recent seal decision. Can you, for people who haven't heard about it or just heard about it tangentially, can you just summarize just very briefly what the seal decision was about? 'Cause it's really very exciting news for animals.

KATIE: Yeah. It is. It's the first international legal decision about animal welfare. And it's in a particular context of international law. It's World Trade Organization law, international trade law. So the dispute was between, on the one hand, the European Union, which has adopted a regulation banning seal products throughout the European Union, and on the other hand, Canada and Norway, which are both sealing nations, and they said that the ban violated the treaties that make up the body of law that governs members of the WTO because it discriminated against their products.

And an important issue in the case was that it wasn't simply a straight-up ban. It was a ban with exceptions, and the only exception, the numerically most important exception is for products of traditional indigenous hunting. So Greenland has a big Inuit seal hunt, and Greenland's seal products *can* get into the EU under this exception, and Canadian and Norwegian seal products, basically none of them can. The exception on its terms is available to them. There is an Inuit hunt in Canada, but it's much smaller numerically. And they actually haven't applied for the exception. So the dispute was over whether this was discriminatory.

But there is also, in the relevant treaties, there are kind of exceptions for -- one of them is for public morals. So you are allowed to adopt measures that discriminate if it's necessary

to protect public morals. And another sort of relevant legal framework was an idea about legitimate regulatory objectives, so regulating in a legitimate way. So under both of those tests, the panel, which is a sort of arbitral panel -- it's sort of like the first level of judicial decision-making at the WTO -- they found that animal welfare was a matter of public morals, and that it was also a legitimate basis for regulating.

MARIANN: Well that sounds like very good news for future attempts to allow nations to regulate and to consider animal welfare important to people.

KATIE: I think that's right. I think it's a very important finding. It's good news and bad news. Technically the EU did lose the case because WTO is weird. It's got this structure where you cannot discriminate, but you can if it fits in an exception, but then you can't sort of like be extra discriminatory, I guess? It's hard to explain.

MARIANN: So the precedent was good, even though the decision didn't quite come out the right way.

KATIE: The decision says that because the exception under the ban is so tilted towards one country and against another, that it doesn't work. So the EU could adjust the exception perhaps, they could get rid of the exception, or they could get rid of the ban. And it is now on appeal, so we don't know what will happen next. And another thing that was really important in this case was that the complainants had said, this is not necessary because you don't need a ban to protect the seals; you can have a labeling and sort of a welfare standards regime instead, so that the products could be labeled to say that they were produced through a humane hunt. And the panel said that doesn't work, just the nature of seal hunting is such that you could never have confidence in that, which I also think is a very significant and important finding.

MARIANN: Well, yeah. From my point of view, that would apply to almost everything as well. You just force people to look at things and they realize that they're bad. Well, thank you so much for being with us, and explaining a bit about this decision and what's going on internationally. And do you have hope that things are gonna get better?

KATIE: I do. I'd like to think of it as tempered realistic hope, but yes I do.

MARIANN: Well, thanks so much for being with us today.

KATIE: Thank you.

MARIANN: That was Katie Sykes, and she not only has a great accent, but she has a lot of smart things to say. Our next interview is with Professor Margo DeMello, the PhD. And she is the human-animal studies program director of the Animals in Society Institute. And she is also an adjunct professor with Canisius College, which has of course a very important human-animal studies program. And Margo is one of those speakers who is not coming from the legal side, and as we mentioned, there are people coming from both the academic side and the legal side. And Margo has a lot of interesting things to say about the similarities between the role of women in society and the role of animals, and how women have changed and moved out of their property status while animals still remain in it, and how this influences the way we think about them and the way we treat them. And she also has a wide-ranging interest in a number of other topics that she'll be introducing you to.

JASMIN: She also has great tattoos, for what it's worth.

Welcome to Our Hen House, Margo.

MARGO: Thank you!

JASMIN: It's amazing to be here. We're in Switzerland, which is so random, kind of!

MARIANN: Yes, but it's exciting that we're here, and we get to meet you at long last. We've heard about your work for many years in a number of different realms. Let's start with the House Rabbit Society. Can you tell us about it?

MARGO: I've been with the House Rabbit Society for 25 years now because I'm very old, since I got my first rabbit and I found out about them. They were the only rabbit advocacy organization in the world, and now they're one of I don't even know how many. But they're a fantastic organization.

JASMIN: Would it be too broad of a question to say, can you explain how rabbits are exploited? I know that rabbits actually run the gamut of being exploited in more ways than, I don't know, maybe any other species of animal. Is that right?

MARGO: I think that the chicken people might argue with that, but they clearly are exploited in many ways, through meat, through their exploitation in the laboratory industry, even as pets. They're clearly pets and clearly beloved, but they're also, as pets, kept in cages and outside as solitary animals, and suffer mightily that way. And then of course they're meat animals.

JASMIN: Now you mentioned that you started with the organization when you got your first rabbit. What was it that connected the dots for you and made you want to focus your advocacy efforts on rabbits?

MARGO: I think there was just something about them. I already had cats, who I still have and I still love, but there was something about rabbits that it didn't seem like enough people were paying attention to them and were caring about them and what their needs were.

MARIANN: And if I'm correct, you wear another hat as well, with the Animals in Society Institute. Can you tell us about that?

MARGO: Yeah. So I'm with the Animals in Society Institute. They are a think tank. They focus on animal issues and the human-animal relationship. And I am very interested in the human-animal relationship and in the academic studies of that relationship.

JASMIN: Well, I think that they are truly pioneers in this particular field of animal rights and social justice just in general. So it's very exciting to hear all that.

MARIANN: So tell us about this panel that you're moderating, "Are Animals the New Women?" *Are animals the new women?*

MARGO: I think animals are the old women and the new women. I think that animals and women both have been exploited for thousands and thousands of years. They both are linked by their property status. Women in a lot of countries have moved beyond property status, but animals clearly haven't. So as long as animals continue to remain the property of

others the way that women have been and continue to be in many cultures, then they will continue to be exploited. And I think that's why this is a topic at an animal law conference because we're continuing to look at, from a legal aspect, why animals remain exploited, and that property status of them is clearly an issue just as it has been for women.

MARIANN: Yeah, absolutely. And do you find that -- people have been talking about the connections between feminism and animal rights for a long time, but there are still a hell of a lot of women who aren't on board, and a hell of a lot of feminists who aren't on board. Do you find that there's any movement in that?

MARGO: I think that there is. Clearly the work of people like Carol Adams and Josephine Donovan has moved a lot of feminists in the mainstream world towards animal rights. A lot of them haven't moved over yet. There's still resistance clearly towards animal rights because I think there is some fear -- there *is* obviously some fear to give up something that is so entrenched, which is the consumption of animals and the use of animals. We've done it in every culture since the beginning of time. But I think there is movement, and I think that we're gonna continue to see movement. And I think a couple of the speakers on my panel are gonna talk about ways in which that movement can be spurred and continued.

MARIANN: Yeah, we're so glad we got a chance to catch up with you here in such wonderful places. And we're so looking forward to hearing more tomorrow.

JASMIN: Thank you so much for joining us in Our Hen House.

MARGO: Thank you for having me.

JASMIN: Just after we finished talking to the fabulous and multi-faceted Margo DeMello, she started to chat with us about one of the new projects she's working on. And this project is about an anthology she's currently coordinating that is about animals and which animals we mourn and which we don't. And we just were so taken and moved by this subject that we asked if we could turn the mic back on. It was a different setting, so you'll hear different background noise. And she said, yes, absolutely. But we just wanted to give you a little bit more about this amazing project that Margo DeMello is working on.

So after we finished interviewing you, Margo, you brought something up that we said, why didn't we record that?! And it sounds like you're working on an absolutely phenomenal anthology that, in my mind, to my knowledge, is unlike anything that's ever been written before. And my understanding of it is, though I want you to please explain it, is that it's regarding the animals who we mourn and the animals who we don't. Can you explain?

MARGO: It's gonna be on the mourning practices for nonhuman animals. So it's looking at the animals that we clearly grieve and that we clearly mourn, and those are pet animals. And in a lot of cultures we grieve deeply when our pet animals die, and so we're gonna have a lot of chapters on how we do that. And that's gonna include burial practices and cremation practices and pet taxidermy and pet obituaries, which are becoming more common now, and condolence cards.

But then there's gonna be a larger part of the book that's going to deal with all of the animals that we do not mourn. And that's gonna be the billions of animals that we kill and eat for food. That's gonna include the laboratory animals. That's going to include road kill. That's gonna include wild animals. It's going to include some of the sort of the liminal

animals that make up the exceptional cases, so for instance, war animals, animals that die at war that for the most part go unremarked, but then sometimes get these big memorials that sort of note their “sacrifice,” quote unquote. So it’s going to deal with sort of the whole question of how we use animals and kill animals and both note their passing but for the most part do not note their passing.

And when we do note their passing -- so for instance it’s becoming more common now for universities and for laboratories that experiment on animals, to have memorials for those animals, and what those memorials actually say about the use of those animals. There are just some very interesting cases, both historically and in the present, of exceptions sort of to the rule. So for instance there are gonna be a couple of chapters on horses, for instance, thoroughbred racing horses, some of whom get big ceremonies when they die and others who get slaughtered and their bodies get just sold to Mexico, so what happens when we do and what happens when they don’t. And I think it’s really important to look at this because of the fact that most animals, again, just escape our notice. They’re nothing to us. And other animals get unbelievably lavish ceremonies. And so for me, it’s an important thing to look at.

I’m surrounded by animals in my house and because I have so many they die frequently and they tear huge pieces out of my heart when they die, and so for me it’s a huge issue. And I think for us as people it’s just something we have to talk about.

JASMIN: Well, I’m really looking forward to this anthology, and I know a lot of our listeners are probably really intrigued by this as well because it’s like kind of the basis of all of our advocacy efforts. As I think Mercy for Animals’s banner says “Why love one but eat the other?” It doesn’t make sense. Why mourn one but not the other? It seems like these lines are so arbitrary.

MARIANN: Yeah, it sure does.

JASMIN: Well, thank you so much for shedding more light on this issue for us, and we definitely look forward to seeing that. Do you know when it might be out?

MARGO: Probably not for one to two years.

JASMIN: Okay, well, something to look forward to. Thanks again, Margo.

MARGO: Thank you for having me.

JASMIN: That was the amazing Margo DeMello, who I really enjoyed getting to know quite a lot at the conference. And you might have noticed there was quite a lot of background noise when we were interviewing Margo, especially for the beginning part. And I just want to say that we were actually at this speakers’ dinner which they invited us to. Oh no, it wasn’t the speakers’ dinner. It was the Friday night event dinner, and that was where we were talking to Margo. And it was at this hotel that we were staying at, what was it? The Hotel...

MARIANN: Euler.

JASMIN: Hotel Euler, or You-ler, as Americans like I like to call it.

MARIANN: Euler.

JASMIN: Euler. And well, the reason I want to bring this up is because there are few -- we ate really, really well in Switzerland with the huge exception of this dinner! Have you ever been to just a large function at -- you and I certainly have, when you were the chair of the Animal Law Committee for the TIPS section of the American Bar Association. We would go to these huge conferences and these hotels would make us something vegan. Well, this was a totally vegan dinner for whichever attendees of this conference and speakers had signed up to go to it. And there were presumably a lot of people in the crowd who were not vegan, and I would imagine that after that dinner, they are actually more of a meat-eater than before. This was the worst dinner I have ever been to. I think that the main course was like stuffed peppers, which sounds good but it wasn't at all.

MARIANN: No, the peppers were not really cooked, and they were -- well, stuffed is such a euphemism because they were just like dotted with a few chickpeas and... like, it was either hummus or chickpeas, like, those two things were different. And that's all. I mean, that's all it was.

JASMIN: Like, three chickpeas.

MARIANN: It wasn't so much that it was bad. I mean, it was, you know, a pepper and some hummus which was fine. It's that there was so incredibly little of it.

JASMIN: Yeah, and dessert was like baby food. It was like pear baby food or... Anyway...

MARIANN: The dessert had these little fried things, which would have been good if they had been much bigger and more substantial.

JASMIN: I would imagine most people went out to eat afterwards.

MARIANN: What was -- oh yeah, the appetizer was tomato soup.

JASMIN: Well, it was tomato soup with -- tomato orange soup. And I'm relatively certain that it was a can of tomato soup with a little Tropicana splashed in.

MARIANN: Yeah, it really was -- it made me feel like the Americans expect huge portions. You know, that's always the story. That's why Americans are so big, because their portions are so big. Well, if these are the portions that you're supposed to get in Europe, then I'm sticking to America.

JASMIN: Well, and I feel like we're sounding very ungrateful. Honestly everything else we had was phenomenal.

MARIANN: Everything else was absolutely delicious.

JASMIN: Out of this world. And you are going to have issues like this when you're dealing with a hotel. And I guess it's good in a way that the chef tried his or her hand at veganism. I'm not sure, I don't know if this is a good thing or not. But it was still a lovely ambiance, and of course we got to chat with Margo. And there was lots of wine involved. In fact, you might be able to tell if you listen to me in that first interview with Margo that I was a little bit under the influence.

MARIANN: You were happy that night.

JASMIN: Yeah, it was a happy night indeed. But so much of the other food was so delicious. And it was just really good to -- actually, breakfast at the hotel, they went out of their way to give us a bowl of hummus every morning to go with our buffet, so we would have like bread with hummus every morning, which involved bread, so we were happy, but it was --

MARIANN: Yeah, and then you could also have bread with jam for dessert.

JASMIN: Right, exactly, so that was our breakfast when we weren't eating our chocolate-smearred bread with salt and a side of espresso. But it was just such an interesting experience to try the different food there, and I loved it.

And a couple other people who we were able to talk to at the conference were the wonderful folks from the Center for Animal Law Studies at Lewis and Clark Law School. And I'm talking specifically about Kathy Hessler and Natasha Dolezal. And we have actually had Kathy on in the past because you were a visiting professor at the Center for Animal Law Studies, and so we got to know them quite well. But they are really paving the way for animal law over in Portland where they're based, and they certainly have their hand in most programs and conferences that revolve around animal law, and this conference was no exception.

So we got to talk to Professor Natasha Dolezal as well as Professor Kathy Hessler about some of the incredible work that they're doing to change the world for animals internationally, including in Kenya, which we chatted with them about as well. So I'm excited about this interview. You're going to be inspired by all the work they're doing.

Welcome back to Our Hen House, Kathy.

KATHY: It's delightful to be here, thank you.

JASMIN: And welcome to Our Hen House, Natasha.

NATASHA: Oh, thank you for having me.

JASMIN: We always said, the first time we're gonna have Natasha on the podcast, we're going to be in Europe.

MARIANN: Well, and here we are.

JASMIN: And here we are in Basel. And this is so exciting. We have obviously talked about the Lewis and Clark Center for Animal Law Studies many, many times. Mariann of course was a visiting professor there.

MARIANN: Yeah. Wasn't I complaining about it a lot then? No.

JASMIN: The things you said about Kathy!

NATASHA: We complained that you left, that was it! We're so sad that you left.

JASMIN: That's right, yeah. Well, we are so excited to be here at -- this is the first animal law conference in Europe?

KATHY: European animal law conference, that's right. And it's gonna be continuing every year.

JASMIN: Well, that's so exciting. And what was your role in the animal law conference here in Europe, and in other places as well?

KATHY: So I was lucky enough to be asked to participate in the International Animal Law Conference in Zurich two summers ago and present a little bit about what I was doing in the clinic and animal law from the US perspective. And Pamela Frasch was presenting on sort of education and the program, which was a wonderful opportunity. And every time we travel, we're just so excited to learn more about what people are doing in Europe and in other countries and to learn from them, and hopefully share some of the resources that we have in the US, with regard to animal law, and just to meet people who are doing this work. It's exciting.

JASMIN: What you're doing is so completely groundbreaking. And it must be amazing to take a step back and say, wow, this is catching on internationally. And you're really a model for what can happen with animal law.

Natasha, you just wrote an article for the Our Hen House online magazine, which we *love*.

MARIANN: Yeah, it's a terrific article. It's passionate and it's very personal, but you also bring in a lot of the policy issues. And we really want to ask you about what's going on in Kenya, which is a place that you guys have been working, but you've also been working all over the place. And how is this becoming an international movement?

NATASHA: I think that starts with the LN degree, which is the first advanced degree in animal law, and it's the only one in the country. And I think we are super proud of that because it's really a move forward for animal law. And now we're able to offer that to international students who can come to the center, learn about animal law, and be in a community where they're not alone because we find that many of them in their countries, wherever they are, are one. And so they really find a good community in Portland. And through those relationships, we've been asked to go to places like Kenya, to come here to Switzerland to present the program. And there's work going on all around us throughout the world. And we feel like we have an obligation to make those connections for people and to be a bigger community and expand CALS because we do have a program that's very large and robust. And we want to be able to spread that around.

So in going to Kenya, we are trying to help them and support those who are interested in bringing animal law to Kenya and proliferating it around Africa. We think that would be wonderful. But it has to start somewhere. And there is a movement of folks to start it in Kenya, and we're happy to support them in whatever way we can, and to open that opportunity up to our students who are interested in international work because like I said in my article, animals don't get to choose where they live, and so animal law is -- wherever the animals are, it's an issue for attorneys.

JASMIN: Well let's talk about your article a little bit. You have a very personal connection to Kenya, right?

NATASHA: I do, yeah.

JASMIN: And this is something that has been a part of your life for a very long time, before you even knew a such thing as animal law existed. And now you're going back to Kenya. Can you talk a bit about your own personal history with Kenya and why this calls to you?

NATASHA: Like most kids, I've always loved animals, but I felt inside me a special affinity for the animals that I saw in Africa. And in growing up, I just thought biology was the way to go, how I would be able to help them. And by happenstance -- that wasn't happenstance that I went to Kenya. I wanted to go there, but having a conversation, the law just naturally popped up by one of my professors there. And then I was living in Portland after that, and animal law was at Lewis and Clark. And then everything just clicked.

JASMIN: I love it when things are synchronistic like that and when it comes full circle. Kathy, can you expand a little bit about the specific programs you're doing internationally?

KATHY: I'd love to. So following on what Natasha said about Kenya, we think it's a really good example of what we're hoping to do more of. So we have these Kenyan partners who asked us for our assistance. And we want to help them meet their goals for animal law and develop what they would like to see in Kenya. So this is going to be the first animal law course that we're gonna be teaching with them on the African continent, and so we're delighted to do that. In the meantime, we're taking on projects for them in the clinic. So they want analysis about their laws compared to our laws and that sort of thing. We can prepare that in advance. We'll be able to bring that to them. So we want to follow the lead of those folks to understand their laws and to understand their culture and to understand what it is they want to achieve and help them and be a resource, as Natasha said. So this, we think, is a wonderful program because we'll be able to have students travel. We'll be able to create work product, legal work product for them. We'll be able to have some of their attorneys come and stay with us in Portland to learn how we do things in the United States. We have all these elements of the program that we think is a good model.

And I think that's one of the things that we hope to do. We get to go to a place and say, we are at a place that has over 30 animal law courses; it's possible. And people are amazed. And then we say, we want to help you develop what you want to develop in your own country and what your own goals are. So Kenya's one of them. We've been asked to speak in Japan and Brazil. We've written articles for law reviews in both of those countries. We've spoken in Switzerland, and we've taught this week in Zurich. We teach in Barcelona. And so having cooperative arrangements within and among students is really important to us, within and among attorneys, and within and among faculty. And so those are our three sort of areas that we're looking at. And so that's writing, it's exchanges with students, it's doing work, legal work as well as academic work. So those are the components of these programs, and we're trying to be available as a resource and responsive to what people need.

JASMIN: And there's action. That's something that is ringing true for me this weekend, is that we're not just talking about law, we're not just talking about animal studies. We're not just in a room with a bunch of academics who are hemming and hawing about this and that, but there seem to be actual actionable items, right?

MARIANN: Well, yeah. Just the fact that you're able to go to Kenya and there's somebody there for you to help, means that there's already something going on. But there's something going on everywhere. People who care about animals; they're starting to get organized. We

find that with our podcast listeners. People who care about animals are like this net all over the world and they're connected in such important ways, and I know that you're finding that. And by using CALS to empower them and to add to what they're doing, I think it's just such a powerful movement. Did you want to say something about what's going on in Brussels?

KATHY: Yeah. So one of the new things that's happening, Natasha will be meeting with some folks in Brussels this week coming to expand even further the work we're doing. And so one of the aspects of that is to develop another opportunity for students to intern or extern there. Another is to meet to talk about a goal that the European attorneys have with respect to stray animals and to see if there's a role for us to play in assisting them, but to be a backup, be a resource in whatever way we can, and again to develop more close connections with the attorneys doing that work and figure out ways that our institute can be connected to those institutes and to help them. One of the things we find sometimes is we have language that other people don't, and we have structures that other people don't, and just that reality, sharing that reality, has been both helpful for us and helpful for them.

JASMIN: And are you going to eat Brussels sprouts when you're in Brussels?

KATHY: Unfortunately, I won't be there! But Brussels sprouts are really important to Natasha.

NATASHA: And they're very good.

JASMIN: Didn't we once have like a deep-fried Brussels sprouts burrito?

MARIANN: Yes. That was in Arizona.

JASMIN: Arizona.

MARIANN: Yeah.

JASMIN: What was the name of that town again?

MARIANN: I don't remember.

JASMIN: No, I know exactly where. It was like an hour outside of Tucson. And anyway, deep-fried Brussels sprouts burritos. It's a thing, Natasha.

NATASHA: I'll look for it.

JASMIN: Excellent. Well, thank you both so much for joining us again, Kathy, and for the first time, Natasha, here in Our Hen House. So thank you both so much for joining us again in Our Hen House.

KATHY: It's a delight, thanks for having us.

NATASHA: Thank you.

JASMIN: So many amazing interviews. I just really feel so lucky to be in the hot seat, the one with the microphone, where I'm the one thrusting the microphone in the faces of all these brilliant people and these change makers. And next week we'll bring you many other interviews. Next week's show will focus less on the conference itself and more on activism

in general going on in Switzerland, such as in Basel. And we spoke with some other folks who are doing work in other countries as well who were at the conference or who we otherwise met over in Switzerland during our trip. But it's awesome, and I love these types of episodes when we're talking to multiple people.

MARIANN: Oh yeah. I hope, I just hope that listening to this conveys some of the excitement that we felt when we were there and that we can give people, well not a little taste of all the chocolate, but a taste of what was going on over there and how inspiring it really was to see all of these people, and especially seeing it happen on an international level and knowing we are everywhere.