

Susana Monsó (Madrid, 1988)

Assistant professor

Department of Logic, History, and Philosophy of Science
National Distance Education University (UNED)

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AOC: Philosophy of mind, ethics, philosophy of comparative psychology.

AOS: Philosophy of animal minds, animal ethics.

Employment:

Sept. 2021 - : Assistant professor

Dept. of Logic, History, and Philosophy of Science
UNED, Madrid

Sept. 2018 - Aug. 2021: Post-doctoral research fellow

Unit of Ethics and Human-Animal Studies
Messerli Research Institute, Vienna

Mar. 2018 - Aug. 2018: Post-doctoral research fellow

Institute of Philosophy
University of Graz

Oct. 2016 - Feb. 2018: Post-doctoral research fellow

Unit of Ethics and Human-Animal Studies
Messerli Research Institute, Vienna

Oct. 2015 - Mar. 2016: Pre-doctoral lecturer (part-time)

Unit of Ethics and Human-Animal Studies
Messerli Research Institute, Vienna

Dec. 2012 - Sept. 2016: Pre-doctoral research fellow

Dept. of Logic, History, and Philosophy of Science
UNED, Madrid

Academic background:

PhD in Philosophy. UNED, Madrid. 2016.

Dissertation title: "Morality and mindreading in nonhuman animals"

Advisors: Jesús Zamora Bonilla (UNED) and Mark Rowlands (University of Miami)

Awarded summa cum laude with international mention (July 1st 2016).

MA in Human Values and Global Ethics. King's College London. 2012.

Dissertation title: "Scientific responsibility for the welfare of farm animals"

Advisor: Leif Wenar (KCL)

Awarded with distinction.

Five-year BA (*licenciatura*) in Philosophy. Complutense University of Madrid. 2011.

Awarded with 1st-class honours.

Publications:

Books:

Monsó, S. (2021): *La zarigüeya de Schrödinger: Cómo viven y entienden la muerte los animales*. Madrid: Plaza y Valdés.

Articles:

Monsó, S. (2022): 'How to tell if animals can understand death.' *Erkenntnis*, 87, 117–136.

Andrews, K. & Monsó, S. (2021): Revised edition of the 'Animal cognition' entry. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Monsó, S. & Wrage, B. (2021): 'Tactful animals: How the study of touch can inform the animal morality debate.' *Philosophical Psychology*, 34 (1), 1–27.

Benz-Schwarzburg, J., Monsó, S. & Huber, L. (2020): 'How dogs perceive humans and how humans should treat their pet dogs: Linking cognition with ethics.' *Frontiers in Psychology* 11, 584037.

Monsó, S. & Osuna-Mascaró, A.J. (2020): 'Death is common, so is understanding it: The concept of death in other species.' *Synthese*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-020-02882-y>

Monsó, S. & Grimm, H. (2019): 'An alternative to the orthodoxy in animal ethics? Limits and merits of the Wittgensteinian critique of moral individualism.' *Animals*, 9 (12), 1057.

Pali-Schöll, I., Binder, R., Moens, Y., Polesny, F., & Monsó, S. (2019): 'Edible insects – defining knowledge gaps in biological and ethical considerations of entomophagy.' *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*, 59 (17), 2760-2771.

Monsó, S., Benz-Schwarzburg, J., & Bremhorst, A. (2018): 'Animal morality: What it means and why it matters.' *The Journal of Ethics*, 22 (3–4), 283–310.

Monsó, S. (2017): 'Morality without mindreading.' *Mind & Language*, 32 (3), 338–57.

Monsó, S. (2015): 'Empathy and morality in behaviour readers.' *Biology & Philosophy*, 30 (5), 671-690.

Book chapters:

Monsó, S. & Andrews, K. (2021): ‘Animal moral psychologies’ in Doris, J. & Vargas, M. (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of Moral Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Monsó, S., Aigner, A., & Grimm, H. (forthcoming): ‘Die traditionelle Tierethik und ihre Kritik: Der moralische Individualismus und die Grenzen und Vorzüge der Wittgenstein’schen Alternative’ in Lintner, M. (ed.): *Mensch – Tier – Gott. Interdisziplinäre Annäherungen an eine christliche Tierethik*, pp: 59-84. Nomos.

Rowlands, M. & Monsó, S. (2017): ‘Animals as reflexive thinkers: the aponoian paradigm’ in Kalof, L. (ed.): *The Oxford Handbook of Animal Studies*, pp: 319-343. New York: Oxford University Press.

Commentaries:

Monsó, S. & Osuna-Mascaró, A. (2020): ‘Problems with basing insect ethics on individuals’ welfare.’ *Animal Sentience*, 29 (8).

Monsó, S. (2019): ‘Humans are superior — by human standards.’ *Animal Sentience*, 23 (17).

Monsó, S. (2016): ‘The moral dimension of pre-reflective self-awareness.’ *Animal Sentience* 2016.121.

Conference proceedings:

Monsó, S. (forthcoming): ‘Treating animals as the sort of thing they are: Commentary on Gary Varner’s *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition*’ in Schmidt-Petri, C. & Schefczyk, M. (eds.): *Utility, Progress, and Technology*. Karlsruhe: KIT Scientific.

Monsó, S. (2021): ‘Is predation necessarily amoral?’ in Siegetsleitner, A., Oberprantacher, A., Frick, M.-L. & Metschl, U. (eds.): *Crisis and Critique: Philosophical Analysis and Current Events*, pp. 367–384. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Benz-Schwarzburg, J., Andrews, K., Botero, M., Monsó, S. & Wrage, B. (2019): ‘Can animals be moral? Assessing conceptual challenges and ethical implications’ in Vinnari, E. & Vinnari, M. (eds.): *Sustainable Governance and Management of Food Systems: Ethical Perspectives*. Wageningen: Wageningen Academic Publishers.

Monsó, S. (2018): ‘Why insect sentience might not matter very much’ in Springer, S. & Grimm, H. (eds.): *Professionals in Food Chains: Ethics, Roles and Responsibilities*, pp: 375–380. Wageningen: Wageningen Academic Publishers.

Pali-Schöll, I., Monsó, S., Meinschmidt, P., Purschke, B., Hofstetter, G., Einhorn, L., Mothes-Luksch, N. Jensen-Jarolim, E., & Jäger, H. (2018): ‘Edible insects in food and feed - far from being well characterized. Step 1: a look at allergenicity and ethical aspects’ in Springer, S. & Grimm, H. (eds.): *Professionals in Food Chains: Ethics, Roles and Responsibilities*, pp: 520–525. Wageningen: Wageningen Academic Publishers.

Book reviews:

Monsó, S. (2019). Review of ‘Varieties of Empathy: Moral Psychology and Animal Ethics.’ *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*, 12 (2), 185–187.

Monsó, S. (2017). ‘To be rational, or not to be rational—that is the question. Review of Michael Tye’s *Tense Bees and Shell-Shocked Crabs: Are Animals Conscious?*’ *Metascience*, 26 (3), 487–491.

Edited collections:

‘Animal ethics: Questioning the orthodoxy,’ special issue for the interdisciplinary journal *Animals* (edited with H. Grimm).

Teaching experience:

SS 2021: ‘Filosofía de la Ciencia II,’ BA in Philosophy, UNED.

SS 2021: ‘Ciencia, Tecnología y Género,’ Master in Theoretical and Practical Philosophy, UNED.

SS 2021: ‘Mujeres en Ciencia y Tecnología,’ Master in Gender Studies, UNED.

WS 2021: ‘Filosofía de la ciencia I,’ BA in Philosophy, UNED.

WS 2021: ‘Filosofía de la ciencia,’ Master in Theoretical and Practical Philosophy, UNED.

WS 2015 / WS 2016 / WS 2017 / WS 2018 / WS 2019 / WS 2020: ‘Practical Course on Ethics and Human-Animal Studies,’ Interdisciplinary Master on Human-Animal Interactions, Messerli Research Institute, Vienna.

SS 2017 / SS 2019 / SS 2020 / SS 2021: ‘Current debates in Applied Animal Ethics,’ Interdisciplinary Master on Human-Animal Interactions, Messerli Research Institute, Vienna.

SS 2017 / SS 2019 / SS 2020 / SS2021: ‘Philosophy Journal Club,’ Interdisciplinary Master on Human-Animal Interactions, Messerli Research Institute, Vienna.

SS 2018: ‘*Animal Liberation* and Its Critics,’ undergraduate pro-seminar, University of Graz.

SS 2018: ‘The Human-Animal Divide,’ undergraduate course, University of Graz.

Third-party funding:

‘Animals and the Concept of Death,’ ca. €160,000, Lise Meitner project funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF).

‘Morality in Animals: What It Means and Why It Matters,’ ca. €400,000, Stand-Alone project funded by the FWF. Proposal co-authored with Judith Benz-Schwarzburg (PI).

Awards and scholarships:

Juan de la Cierva post-doctoral two-year research scholarship awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (2018) – Renounced because of incompatibilities with FWF Stand-Alone project.

Outstanding doctorate prize awarded by UNED (2017).

FPI pre-doctoral scholarship awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (2012-2016).

Research visit scholarship awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness for a three-month stay at University of Miami (2014).

Research visit scholarship awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness for a three-month stay at the Messerli Research Institute (2016) – Renounced because of incompatibilities with pre-doctoral lectureship contract.

Cajamadrid scholarship for Erasmus students (2009-2010).

Erasmus scholarship awarded for a stay at Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam (2009-2010).

Academic excellence scholarship awarded by the Community of Madrid (2006-2007 and 2009-2010).

Presentations:

Invited:

‘*Playing possum: La tanatosis animal y el concepto de muerte,*’ online lecture for the Seminario de la Red Iberoamericana de Filosofía de la Mente (February 2022).

‘¿Entienden la muerte los animales?,’ online lecture at the Second National Symposium on Animal Protection, Colombia (June 2021).

‘Animals and the concept of death,’ online lecture at the Death Salience Workshop, organised by UCL (June 2021).

‘Schrödinger’s possum: How animals experience and understand death,’ online lecture at LSE’s Conjectures and Refutations Seminar (May 2021).

‘Tactful animals: How the study of touch can inform the animal normativity debate,’ online contribution at the Evonorm Workshop Series (January 2021).

‘The concept of death and the ethics of killing animals,’ online guest lecture at an ASENT lab meeting, LSE (January 2021).

‘The concept of death and the ethics of killing animals,’ online guest lecture at the Society for the Study of Ethics and Animals 2020 Virtual Talk Series (November 2020).

‘¿Entienden la muerte los animales?’ online guest lecture at the Seminar on Concepts, Language, and Cognition, National University of Córdoba, Argentina (October 2020).

‘The concept of death and the ethics of killing animals,’ online guest lecture at BOKU, Vienna (July 2020).

‘The concept of death and the ethics of killing animals,’ keynote talk at the Vetsuisse Public Health Conference, held at the University of Bern (November 2019).

‘Prosociality and meaning in the lives of animals’ at the conference *Animal Minds and Animal Ethics: Across Species, Across Disciplines*, held at the University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna (September 2019).

‘Is predation necessarily amoral?’ at the Ethics and Ecology workshop, 42nd International Wittgenstein Symposium, Kirchberg-am-Wechsel (August 2019).

‘Why we should care whether animals are moral’ (with Judith Benz-Schwarzburg) at the Arbeitskreis Mensch-Tier-Beziehung, Messerli Research Institute in Vienna (May 2018).

‘Animals and the concept of death,’ keynote talk at the VII Research Workshop on Philosophy of Biology and Cognitive Science, Complutense University of Madrid (May 2018).

‘Why we should care whether animals are moral’ at the meeting of the Society for the Philosophy of Animal Minds, to be held at the Eastern APA meeting in Savannah, Georgia (Jan. 2018) — Cancelled on short notice due to adverse weather conditions.

‘Animal intelligences’ at the event on Hypernormal Hybrids hosted by the World-Information Institute in Vienna (Nov. 2017).

‘Morality without mindreading’ at the Arbeitskreis Mensch-Tier Beziehung, Messerli Research Institute, Vienna (Jan. 2017).

Contributed:

‘Playing possum: Animal thanatosis and the concept of death’ at the X SLMFCE meeting, University of Salamanca (November 2021).

‘How to make comparative cognition less WEIRD’ (with K. Andrews), online talk as part of the symposium on ‘Comparative cognition and the human-animal divide,’ held at the 28th Conference of the European Society for Philosophy and Psychology (August 2021).

‘How to tell if animals can understand death’ at the Ninth SEFA meeting, University of Valencia (November 2019).

Participation in the panel ‘Can animals be moral? Conceptual challenges and ethical implications’ at the 2019 EurSafe Congress, University of Tampere (September 2019).

‘Must animal lives be meaningless?’ at the ‘Meaning in Life and the Meaning of Life’ conference, University of Graz (June 2019).

Commentary on Gary Varner’s *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition*, at the ISUS meeting in Karlsruhe (July 2018).

‘Why insect sentience might not matter very much’ at the 2018 EurSafe Congress, Messerli Research Institute, Vienna (June 2018).

‘The ethical importance of being a moral subject’ (with Annika Huber) at the conference ‘Ethical Theories and the Animal Issue: Between Science and Philosophy,’ University of Milan (June 2016).

‘Minimal morality: caring without mindreading’ at the XVII edition of the *Taller d’Investigació en Filosofia*, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Jan. 2015).

‘Morality and mindreading’ at the Philosophy of Mind workshop, University of Miami (Nov. 2014).

‘Two fallacies in animal cognition’ at the ‘De-Intellectualizing the Mind’ workshop, UNED, Madrid (July 2014).

‘Moral emotions in behaviour readers’ at the IV Research Workshop on Philosophy of Biology and Cognitive Science, University of Granada (April 2014).

‘Moral emotions without a theory of mind’ at the III Graduate Seminar on Philosophical Research, UNED, Madrid (March 2014).

‘Does empathy require a theory of mind?’ at the SIFA graduate conference (University of Cagliari) (Sept. 2013).

‘Does empathy require a theory of mind?’ at the SEFA graduate conference (Carlos III University, Madrid) (Sept. 2013).

‘Does empathy require a theory of mind?’ poster presentation at the ‘What is Cognition?’ workshop, Ruhr-Universität, Bochum (June 2013).

‘Science, responsibility, and animal suffering’ at the Graduate Seminar on the Philosophy of Science, UNED, Madrid (Nov. 2012).

Outreach:

Monsó, S. Response to the query 'Do any animals, other than us, have an awareness of their own mortality?', *New Scientist*, 12 February 2022.

Monsó, S. ‘¿Qué piensan los animales de la muerte?: por qué el duelo no es exclusivo de los seres humanos’, *El Español*, 15/9/2021.

Monsó, S. ‘What animals think of death’, *Aeon*, September 14, 2021.

Osuna-Mascaró, A. & Monsó, S. ‘Los animales entienden la muerte más de lo que se pensaba,’ *The Conversation*, October 12th 2020.

Andrews, K. & Monsó, S. ‘Rats are us,’ *Aeon Magazine*, March 2nd 2020.

Monsó, S. ‘¿Por qué se ríen los animales?’, *El Español*, 27/5/2016,

Monsó, S. ‘Tierische Intelligenzen,’ *Springer* 1/2018, pp. 6–7.

Participation in research projects:

2019 - 2021: “Animals and the concept of death”

Lise Meitner project, funded by the FWF

Principal investigator: Susana Monsó

2018 - : “Morality in animals: What it means and why it matters”

Funded by the FWF

Principal investigator: Judith Benz-Schwarzburg

2017: “Socio-cognitive abilities of domestic pigs, their ethical implications and medical indicators of well-being”

Funded by the Messerli Foundation

Principal investigator: Ludwig Huber

2014-2017: “Normative inferences and interferences in scientific research”

Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness Research Project (FFI2014-57258-P)

Principal investigators: Jesús Zamora-Bonilla, David Teira

2012-2014: “Inferentialism as social epistemology”

Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness Research Project (FFI2011-23267)

Principal investigator: Jesús Zamora-Bonilla

Press coverage:

La thanatose, ou quand l’animal mime la mort pour tromper ses prédateurs — Mention in the French magazine Sciences et Avenir (19/02/2022)

Do animals understand what it means to die? — Interview for VICE magazine (02/02/2022)

Vegetarianismo: la dieta del futuro — Interview for the Spanish podcast Carne Cruda (24/01/2022)

Animals respond to death in many ways. Mourning might be one of them. — Interview for Discover Magazine (21/01/2022)

Entrevista a Susana Monsó: ¿Cómo se enfrentan los animales a la muerte? — Interview for the Spanish podcast Muy Interesante (04/01/2022)

Elephant fight club — Interview for the American podcast Water Cooler Talk (30/11/2021)

¿Entienden la muerte los animales? — Interview for the Spanish podcast Inaplicables (20/11/2021)

Holt volt, holt nem volt: a halál — Interview for the Hungarian magazine 168 Óra (31/10/2021)

‘Manche Tiere ahmen verwesende Leichen nach’ — Interview for the German newspaper Der Spiegel (30/10/2021)

Power and possums — Interview for the Australian national radio ABC (25/10/2021)

What can dogs, coyotes and opossums tell us about death? — Mention in the American blog Psychology Today (3/10/2021)

‘Playing possum’ shows animals know death — Mention in Nature’s newsletter Nature Briefing (21/09/2021)

Así pasan su duelo las madres primates cuando mueren sus bebés — Mention in the Spanish newspaper El Español (20/09/2021)

Cómo viven y entienden la muerte los animales — Interview for the Spanish radio Canal UNED (15/09/2021)

Experimentación con animales. El caso Vivotecnia y muchos más — Interview for the Spanish radio programme Carne Cruda (18/05/2021)

How does it feel to be a bee? The quest to understand animal sentience — Interview for Horizon, the EU magazine on research and innovation (16/02/2021)

Tánatos — Interview for the Spanish podcast Catástrofe Ultravioleta (01/12/2020)

No soy más listo porque no entreno — Interview for the Spanish magazine Muy Interesante (17/06/2020)

Animal ethics – mit Dr. Susana Monsó — Interview for the Austrian podcast Wuide Goas (05/05/2020)

Los animales también tienen conductas morales — Interview for the Mexican newspaper Diario de Yucatán (23/07/2019)

¿Tienen moral los animales? — Interview for the Spanish press agency EFE (picked up by the Spanish newspapers El Mundo and Público, among others) (02/07/2019)

Organisation of academic events:

Conference ‘Animal Minds & Animal Ethics: Across Species, Across Disciplines,’ Vienna, 2019

EurSafe Congress ‘Professionals in Food Chains: Ethics, Roles and Responsibilities,’ Vienna, 2018 (Local organising committee)

V Research Workshop on Philosophy of Biology and the Cognitive Sciences, UNED, Madrid, 2015 (Local organising committee)

European Network for the Philosophy of the Social Sciences Meeting (ENPOSS), Madrid, 2014 (Local organising committee)

‘De-Intellectualising the Mind’ workshop, UNED, Madrid, 2014

Refereeing:

Journals:

Erkenntnis, British Journal for the Philosophy of Science, Journal of Value Inquiry, Philosophical Psychology, Biology and Philosophy, The Journal of Ethics, Journal of Consciousness Studies, Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics, Animal Welfare, Ethics and the Environment, Social Theory and Practice, Food Ethics, Physiology & Behavior

Presses:

MIT Press

Conferences:

Research Workshops in Philosophy of Biology and Cognitive Sciences (annual), EurSafe (annual)

Languages:

Spanish (mother tongue); English (fluent – C2 level); German (intermediate – B2 level).