

## **Pro Animal Politics - Do We Need a Concept of Ideology?**

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Animal advocates face a world constructed in such a way as to systematically deny and repudiate value systems which centre upon the knowledge of the violent “truth” of human utilisation of non-human animals. I will argue that this problem has been inadequately dealt with by liberal philosophies within animal rights theory, which typically suggest that substantiated truth claims, reason and deliberation should be enough to generate progressive change. Against this view, I will argue that pro animal advocates frequently possess a political worldview that cannot be compatible with others and therefore cannot be adequately communicated: it constantly risks individual deliriums, public perceptions of irresponsibility, and generates unexplained “counter-conducts” and secret societies. In other words, animal advocates frequently appear “ideological” rather than “rational.”

In this paper, I am interested in exploring the value of “ideology” as a political concept in the context of pro animal politics. Returning to the old tension between a Marxist conception of ideology and Michel Foucault’s interest in discourse and knowledge, I shall argue that we need a revised concept of ideology to theorise the practice of resisting and refusing to be bound by the materiality of prevailing truths about animals: “We do not want this truth. We do not want to be held in this system of truth” (Foucault: 2007, 201).

### **Biography**

Dinesh Wadiwel is Senior Lecturer in the School of Social and Political Sciences, The University of Sydney. Dinesh’s research interests include violence, race, disability rights and critical animal studies. He is author of the monograph *The War Against Animals* (Brill,2015) and is convener of the Human Animal Research Network, The University of Sydney.