

**David (Dáithí: Dawh-Hee) Aaron Rooney**

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**Education**

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PhD candidate in Communication Studies, specializing in Rhetoric, Language and Political Communication, University of Texas at Austin, September 2020-May 2024. 4.0 GPA.

My dissertation examines rhetorics of the animal, particularly how the concept of animality figures humans and non-human entities (various animal status, AI, objects). I argue that “animality” operates as an organizing referent that hierarchically positions some animals, some non-human entities, and some humans as more or less deserving of protection, intermingling with cultural and racial anxieties about an appropriate distance from nature, command over instinct and the body, as well as alienation through symbolic language.

M.A. Communication Studies, Baylor University, May 2020. 3.95 GPA.

Thesis examines the use of animal metaphor by nuclear abolitionists during the Cold War and the 2015 ecological documentary *Racing Extinction*.

B.S. Industrial and Labor Relations, focus on Disability Studies & Employment, Labor Law, and Rhetoric of the Labor Movement. Minor in Law and Society from the Sage School of Philosophy, Cornell University, 2018.

**Article Publications**

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**Rooney, David** and Muller, S.M. “Woke Sausages at the Cracker Barrel: Gastronomism and the Synecdochic Politics of Plant-Based Meat,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* (2023): 26(3) (in production).

**Rooney, David.** “‘A Primordial Situation’: Metonymical Linkages in US Newspaper Coverage of Wet Markets.” *Environmental Communication* (2022): 16(6), 836-849; <https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2022.2125548>.

**Rooney, David.** “‘All Fishing is Wildlife Poaching’: Nonhuman Animal Imagery and Mutual Avowal in *Racing Extinction* and *Seaspiracy*.” *Journalism and Media* (2022): 3(2), 257-277; <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia3020020>. [Special Issue, “Communication in Defense of Nonhuman Animals during an Extinction and Climate Crisis,” edited by Carrie P. Freeman and Núria Almiron.]

**Chapters in Textbooks**

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**Rooney, David,** Tyler Welsh, Johnathan Henson, Millie A. Harrison, & Jessica Knapp. “Argumentation & Persuasive Claims” In *Professional Communication Skills*, edited by Nathaniel R. Repay, Millie A. Harrison, & John A. Daly. Toronto: Tophatmonocole Corp., 2023.

**Rooney, David,** Timothy Steffensmier, Jessica Knapp, & Jessica L. Ford. “Persuasive Presentations” In *Professional Communication Skills*, edited by Nathaniel R. Repay, Millie A. Harrison, & John A. Daly. Toronto: Tophatmonocole Corp., 2023.

**Research in Progress**

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**Rooney, David,** Muller, S.M., Cecilia Cerja “‘Long Live the (Liver) King: Carnivore Diets, Alt-Right Influencers, and the Rhetoric of White Nationalism” **extended abstract accepted** May 2023 at *Frontiers in Communication*. Manuscript returned November 2023. [Special Issue “Media, Racism, Speciesism: Issues and Solutions for Creaturely Racism in the Anthropocene” edited by Natalie Khazaal, Ellen Gorsevksi and Tobias Linné].

**Rooney, David.** \*\*ommitted for peer review\*\* Manuscript under review (revise and resubmit decision September 2023, returned November 2023).

**Rooney, David.** \*\*ommitted for peer review\*\* Manuscript under review (revise and resubmit decision April 2023, return date intended November 2023).

**David Rooney.** *Soy Boy Beta Cuck: Alt-Right Food Rhetoric and the Meatification of Right-Wing Extremism*. Book manuscript. Two chapters of proposal drafted, and another is in progress.

**Rooney, David,** Emily Mendelson, and Jacob Smith, “Oh we’ve reached Sentience:” Bunny the Dog, Talking Animals and Parasocial Relationships on Tiktok,” manuscript intended for *New Media & Society*.

**Rooney, David.** “‘Willing but Uncertain:’ Exploring Hesitations and Motivations in Environmental NGO Messaging Choices on Reforms to Animal Agriculture,” Manuscript in draft intended for *Environmental Communication*. Data collected August 2023.

### **External Projects & Funding**

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Animal Agriculture Messaging & Environmental NGOs

*Mercy for Animals* (April-October 2023)

- Research project titled “Willing but Uncertain: Exploring Hesitations, Motivations and Perceptions of Animal Agriculture Advocacy from a Nationwide Survey of Environmental Organizations.”
- Qualtrics survey (mix of open-ended and multiple-choice questions) sent to 638 environmental organizations across USA with >10 staff, ~11% full completion rate (70), across 27 states.
- Deliverables include a white paper report for policymakers and organizers (completed Oct 2023), production of a video interview (completed Oct 2023) and potential journal article (ongoing).
- Approximately \$5,000 offered in research funds.

City/county attitudes towards plant-based purchasing minimums

*Mercy for Animals* (October-December 2023)

- Ongoing project which aims to culminate in end of Q3 2023.
- Will measure local attitudes towards policies that ensure a portion of local budgets concerning food are spent on plant-based alternatives.
- \$4,000 personal research grant, other funds guaranteed but exact amount yet to be determined (such as research recruitment through a third party, which is in negotiations).

## **Book Reviews**

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**Rooney, David.** Review of *Zoetropes and the Politics of Humanhood* by Allison L. Rowland. Submitted to *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* November 2023.

**Rooney, David.** Review of *Impersonating Animals: Rhetoric, Ecofeminism, and Animal Rights Law* by S. Marek Muller. *Environmental Communication Division blog*, December 22, 2021. <https://sites.google.com/view/ecdnca/blog>.

**Rooney, David.** Review of *Climate in Motion: Science, Empire, and the Problem of Scale* by Deborah R. Coen. *Not Even Past*, December 4, 2020. <https://notevenpast.org/climate-in-motion-science-empire-and-the-problem-of-scale-by-deborah-r-coen-2018/>.

**Rooney, David & Vilo, Felipe.** Review of *Future Remains: A Cabinet of Curiosities for the Anthropocene* ed. Gregg Mitman, Marco Armiero and Robert S. Emmett. *Not Even Past*, May 11, 2021. <https://notevenpast.org/ihs-climate-in-context-future-remains-a-cabinet-of-curiosities-for-the-anthropocene-2018/>.

## **Conference Presentations**

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**Rooney, David.** (2024, May) “‘Nobody died because this guy got a pig heart.’ Automotricity and criminality in the first pig-to-human heart transplant,” Rhetoric Society of America 21<sup>st</sup> Biennial Conference, 2024 (Denver, Colorado).

**Rooney, David.** (2023, November) “‘They want to kill our cows. That means you’re next.’ White Masculine Victimhood and the Green New Deal’s War on Hamburgers,” *Environmental Communication Division*, 109th National Communication Association Convention, 2023 (National Harbor, Maryland).

- **Top Student Paper in Environmental Communication (\$150)**
- **Environmental Communication Top Papers Panel (#2 paper)**

**Rooney, David.** (2023, November) “AI-Symbiosis and Animal Experiments: Neuralink’s reconfiguration of the Human,” *Cross Examination Debate Association Division*, 109th National Communication Association Convention, 2023 (National Harbor, Maryland).

**Rooney, David** and Muller, M.S. (2023, June 5-9) “Woke Sausages:” Reading the Gastronativist Backlash to Cracker Barrel’s plant-based change,” the 2023 Conference on Communication and Environment (COCE), (Harrisonburg, Virginia).

- **2023 COCE Top Paper award (all conference submissions).**

**Rooney, David.** (2022, November) “No Dogs Left Behind: Negotiating Animality in the Dog-Meat Trade,” *Critical and Cultural Studies Division*, 108th National Communication Association Convention, 2022 (New Orleans, Louisiana).

**Rooney, David.** (2022, November) “He died like a dog:” Trump, Conan the Dog and animal metaphor,” *Public Address Division*, 108th National Communication Association Convention, 2022 (New Orleans, Louisiana).

**Rooney, David.** (2022, November) “#NoBonesDay: Multi-species engagement and Animal Rendering in Pandemic Times,” *TikTok on the Clock: An Investigation into Subject Formation on TikTok* Panel, 108th National Communication Association Convention, 2022 (New Orleans, Louisiana).

Scott, Craig, Karen Schlag & **David Rooney.** (2022, May) “Naming the Unnamed: Technological and Other Understandings of Anonymity and Anonymous Communication,” 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual International Communication Association Conference, 2022 (Paris, France).

**Rooney, David.** (2020) “Pet Rhetoric: Yulin Dog Meat Festival and the Racial Economy of Animal Hospitality,” Rhetoric Society of America Biennial Conference, 2020 (Portland, Oregon) \*Conference subsequently canceled due to COVID–19 pandemic.

**Rooney, David.** (2020) “‘Remember Your Humanity and Forget the Rest:’ Animal Metaphor in Nuclear War Discourse,” *Public Address Division*, 106th National Communication Association Convention, 2020 (Indianapolis, Indiana).

**Rooney, David.** (2020) “‘Killer-Animals:’ Understanding Trump’s Animalization of Immigrants,” *International and Intercultural Communication Division* 106th National Communication Association Convention, 2020 (Indianapolis, Indiana).

**Rooney, David.** (2020) “Animal Vanishing: Animetaphor and Climate Change in *Racing Extinction*,” *Visual Communication Division*, 106th National Communication Association Convention, 2020 (Indianapolis, Indiana). \*did not present due to technological difficulties with the virtual conference.

**Rooney, David.** (2020) “Anthropo(u)osis in Nuclear Warfare: The Comfortable Vocabulary of Savagery and Animality,” Southern States Communication Association Convention, 2020 (Frisco, TX) \*Conference subsequently canceled due to COVID–19 pandemic.

**Rooney, David.** (2020). “Disrupting Whiteness in Animal Rights Discourse: Tilikum v. SeaWorld and the Slavery Metaphor,” Southern States Communication Association Convention, 2020 (Frisco, TX) \*Conference subsequently canceled due to COVID–19 pandemic.

**Rooney, David.** (February 2020). Criminal Animals: Trump, MS-13 and & ‘Bad immigrants,’ Camp Rhetoric 2020: Rhetorics of Citizenship hosted by Arnold-Ebbitt Interdisciplinary Rhetoricians at Pennsylvania State University, February 29-29, 2020 (State College, PA).

**Rooney, David.** (December 2017) “Animal Death as First Death: Multiplicity and Finitude in Derrida,” Derrida and Literature Conference for graduate students within English, Comparative Literature or French programs at Cornell University, December 2017. Sponsored by the Class of 1916 Chair, Dr. Johnathan Culler.

## **Teaching Experience**

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## *University*

**CMS 342K: Political Communication** (UT-Austin)      Fall 2023—Spring 2024

### *Instructor*

- Upper-division course of 40-50 upper-level students (juniors, seniors). Responsible for assigning readings, lecturing, assignment generation, exam writing, etc. The course has an Ethics Flag and a Writing Flag, and assignments consist of both long-form essays and two exams.
- Assisted by a graduate TA.
- Received a “**Moody Shoutout**” that recognizes positive impact of instructors on the community (Fall 2023)

**CMS 306M: Professional Communication** (UT-Austin)      Fall 2022—Spring 2023

### *Assistant Instructor*

- Acted as sole instructor. Responsible for generating lectures, lecturing, assignment generation, exam writing, textbook generation, grading, etc.
- Normal student enrollment ~25 per section. 2 sections taught per semester. The course has an Ethics Flag, mostly consists of presentations and short essays.

**CMS 342K: Political Communication** (UT-Austin)      Fall 2021—Spring 2022

### *Assistant Instructor*

- Responsible for 100% of course grading and student correspondence, including weekly office hours and managing Canvas page and the gradebook.
- Normal student enrollment >50. The course has a Writing Flag and largely consists of long-form essays.

**CMS 359T: How People Talk** (UT-Austin)      Spring 2021

### *Teaching Assistant*

- Grading short-form and long-form essays and held office hours/student correspondence.
- Responsible for grading 75% of class assignments and attendance. The course had a Writing Flag.

**CMS 338: Leadership Stories** (University of Texas-Austin)      Fall 2020

### *Teaching Assistant*

- Grading and correspondence with students for an asynchronous course with an Ethics flag.
- Grading 10-20 short essays a week and 50 long-form essays over semester.

**CMS CSS 1301/1302: Public Speaking** (Baylor University)      Sept 2018-May 2020

### *Teaching Assistant*

- Teaching 5 sections to ~12 students a section (~60 total). Responsible for administering and grading all class assignments/exams, attendance for those students. Included instruction to many ESL students (from 2018-2020, roughly 1/5 of students every semester).
- Experience with online teaching/grading (Spring 2020) with Canvas/PitchVantage as well as lectures (to ~200 students) in Spring of 2019 when instructor was ill.

## *Forensics*

**Wyoming Debate Union** (University of Wyoming)

October 2020- Present

### *Coach*

- Advising and coaching college debaters on topics related to US alliance commitments and defense pacts (2020), anti-trust and competition law (2021), vesting legal rights and duties in non-human entities (AI, animals, nature) (2022), as well as nuclear targeting and launch policy (2023).
- Includes both individual instruction and lectures, particularly on philosophical criticisms for each the topic.

**Jayhawk Debate Institute** (University of Kansas)

June 2022/23

- Lead a “lab”—class—of about 20-30 high school students on debate strategy for a topic on fiscal redistribution: the pros and cons of Universal Basic Income, reforming Social Security, and a federal jobs guarantee.
- Included teaching argumentation basics and construction, research guidelines and scholarly citations, as well as personalized advice and skills training.

**Glenn R. Capp Debate Forum** (Baylor University)

July 2018-May 2020

*Coach*

- Coaching college debaters, including a team ranked #9 in the country and younger/novice debaters to regional championships. Frequent traveling and individual instruction.

**Baylor Summer Debate workshop**

July 8-15, 2018/19

*Varsity lab leader*

- Instruction to high school debaters on debate strategy for a topic about reforming immigration policies. Included: teaching the format of argument construction, debate styles, how to produce files and research, giving lectures on history of critical thought, judging debates.

**Gonzaga Debate Institute**

July 15-28, 2017

*Varsity Lab Leader*

- Teaching debate to high school students on the topic of education reform. Included: lesson planning, lectures to ~125, RA oversight.

**Cornell Johannesburg and Dubai Partnership**

June 8-22, 2017

*Teaching Assistant*

- Teaching debate strategy and fundamentals to ~50 college students and running a parliamentary debate style tournament (SA)
- Teaching rhetorical advocacy and communication to ~25 young professionals (some MBA students, some working full-time) (UAE).

**Cornell International Summer Debate Camp**

July 27- August 7,

2014/15/17

*Counselor/Teaching Assistant*

- Lectured and developed activities for ~60 high school students (mostly international, ESL). Judged debates, lectured, and developed student activities.

*Other*

**Splash! At Cornell Organizer & Teacher**

2014-2018

- Helped organize and run a program for hundreds of local low-income high school students to travel to Cornell to take classes on various subjects from Cornell professors and students (for free).
- Taught classes on a variety of topics, ranging from the concept of speciesism to the history of the American prison industrial complex to students and parents.

## **Invited/Guest Lectures**

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"Navigating the Publication Process as a Doctoral Student." In *Rhetoric of Expertise* (graduate seminar taught by Dr. Johanna Hartelius), Department of Communication Studies, University of Texas at Austin, February 2023.

## **Service & Other Activities**

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### **Conference Submission Reviewer**

Rhetoric Society of America, 2 divisions (Public Rhetoric, Rhetorical Criticism), 2023.  
Southern States Communication Association, 2021  
National Communication Association Conference, Environmental Communication Division, 2023.

### **Committee Member**

UT-Austin Communication Graduate Student Community—Professional Development Committee, 2023-present.

- Organized research development workshop for graduate students (fall 2023).
- Organized CV workshop for graduate students (spring 2024).

**Rhetoric & Public Affairs** (Michigan State University Press) Sept. 2018-May 2020

### *Editorial Intern*

- Copy-editing for works to be published in the journal. Included making edits on grammar/wording, checking reference authenticity and format/citation corrections.

**Cornell Disability Studies Journal Senior Editor** 2016-2018

- Editing papers submitted for publication, helped organize the publication of journal issues surrounding disability studies, legal discrimination, and literary analysis.

**Cornell Forensics Society (Speech & Debate)** 2013-2018

- Quarter-finalist NDT 2018, Semi-finalist CEDA Nationals 2017/18.
- Policy Debate captain from 2014-18, developed a particular interest in coaching younger debate students on the team, as I had started policy debate as a novice in college.
- **Public Debates:**
  1. with a representative from PETA on banning animal testing,
  2. on the efficacy of the War on Terror with West Point cadets at Cornell and at the Cornell Club in NYC,
  3. at the Gonzaga Debate Institute on education reform.
- **Community Service:** instructor in the MacCormick Secure Center Debate and Discussion Club, a weekly debate instruction to juvenile prisoners sentenced in adult criminal court. We would give lectures on topics the students were interested in (for example, lectures from faculty on Malcolm X's legacy, lectures on Aristotle etc.) and facilitate student debates on topics of their choosing, bringing literature to help them prepare (the facility lacked adequate educational supplies).

**Cornell Students for Animal Rights** 2014-2018

- Helped organize events on campus. Notable: Bringing activist Christopher Sebastian to speak on race and queer violence as it connects to animal liberation (Spring 2018).
- Canada Goose protest and pamphlet work in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.
- Worked on student outreach projects with representatives from *PETA* and Mercy for Animals.