

## At the Edge of the Wild

63<sup>rd</sup> Minisymposium of the Centre for Environmental History

2<sup>nd</sup> Rachel Carson Center Lecture

Presentation:

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The analogy between artificial selection and natural selection powerfully introduces Darwin's argument in On the Origin of Species. The parallel between wild species and domesticated breeds was and is far from complete, however, and the combination of similarity and difference that made Darwin's juxtaposition of wild and domesticated animals both effective and ambiguous still persists. Indeed, as human impact on the environment has become increasingly pervasive, the reciprocal resonance of these categories has intensified; the animal wild has become more appealing as it has become less available. And as the valence of wildness has altered, the stakes around its definition have increased, with implications for such varied enterprises as livestock breeding and environmental conservation. This talk will explore the shifting understandings of wildness in animals and the practices that these understandings have inspired and shaped over the past three centuries, as well as the shifts in societal values that have had important consequences for people, for other animals, and for the environments that we all inhabit.

**Ort / Place:** IFF, 1070 Wien, Schottenfeldgasse 29

**Zeit / Time:** Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, 18.00 c.t. – 20.00