

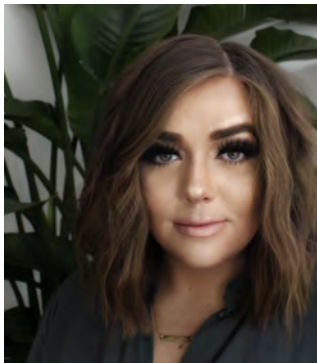


SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

# GRADUATE EXIT SEMINAR

SHELBY CARLSON

## To kill or not to kill? Perceptions, preferences, and psychometrics of the lethal and (il)legal treatment of wildlife



The killing of nonhuman animals is a routine and widespread practice in many contemporary societies. In the context of wildlife specifically, this practice can occur under legal circumstances, such as through the authorized application of lethal control, or illegally through the killing of wildlife in violation of state, federal, or international law (i.e., poaching). Regardless of legal status, the decision to support or engage in any action that results in the intentional death of a wild animal is influenced by a range of cognitive, social, and cultural factors. Thus, this dissertation draws upon theoretical frameworks established within the fields of sociology and psychology to advance, and refine, the application of social science concepts in the context of wildlife conservation and management. Specifically, Study 1 assesses the influence of moral and instrumental support for the lethal (and legal) management of human and nonhuman (wild) animals accused of violating

social expectations or rules via the application of capital punishment and lethal control respectively. Study 2 shifts focus on to the illegal killing of wildlife by invoking social norms theory to examine normative beliefs regarding the frequency and acceptability of poaching. And finally, in an investigation of the methodological rigor by which perceptions and preferences regarding wildlife have been assessed, Study 3 compares the construct validity of six psychological concepts commonly employed in conservation social science applications. Demonstrating the value of the continued integration of social science research into the study and practice of wildlife conservation and management, this collection of studies provides practical implications regarding the killing of other living beings and the systematic ways in which beliefs and behaviors toward wild animals are studied.

Advisors: Dr. Alia Dietsch and Dr. Jeremy Bruskotter

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 12, 2022**  
**1:00 P.M.**

**Join the seminar via Zoom:**

<https://osu.zoom.us/j/97061631605?pwd=aFRJbFA2M2ROdzZEdGE3TkGUGJ1QT09>

Meeting ID: 970 6163 1605 Password: 718862

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