



“Are we Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?”

On November 2, 2016 at 11:00 am

Dr. Frans de Waal will present

“Are we Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?”

This event is open to the public in the Ellis Room of the Richards Center on the Columbia Seminary campus located at 701 S. Columbia Drive, Decatur, GA near Atlanta.

Dr. Frans de Waal is the C. H. Candler Professor of Psychology at Emory University and Director of the Living Links Center at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center in Atlanta. He will be the next lecturer as part of its “Science for Seminaries” program sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).

About the Talk:

The wall between human and animal intelligence is starting to look like a Swiss cheese. Whereas a mechanistic view of animals prevailed during most of last century, an undercurrent of scientists nourished a more cognitive approach, which by now has become dominant. It started a century ago with the observation that chimpanzees solve problems with a flash of insight. Initially, this kind of research was ridiculed and suppressed, while a taboo was placed on anthropomorphism.

From a Darwinian perspective, however, the most parsimonious assumption about closely related species (such as humans and apes) is that behavioral similarity reflects psychological similarity. Anthropomorphism is actually a logical position regarding our closest relatives. Neuroscience increasingly supports this view, and human uniqueness claims have fallen one by one over the last few decades. Other primates are now seen as political, cultural, perhaps even moral beings.

This cognitive revolution has been rippling beyond the primates to include the entire animal kingdom, from tool-using crows to cooperating dolphins. Many unexpected new capacities have been discovered, such as that animals are aware of their own knowledge (metacognition) or reflect on past and future (time travel).

Dr. de Waal will provide a general overview of the methods and findings of animal studies with an accent on primates and elephants, but also including octopuses, corvids, cetaceans, and fish. The central message of this new science, known as evolutionary cognition, is one of mental continuity across all species, with human intelligence being a variety of animal intelligence.

About the Speaker:

Dr. Frans B. M. de Waal is a Dutch-American ethologist and biologist known for his work on the behavior and social intelligence of primates. His first book, *Chimpanzee Politics* (1982) compared the schmoozing and scheming of chimpanzees involved in power struggles with that of human politicians. Ever since, Dr. de Waal has drawn parallels between primate and human behavior, from peacemaking and morality to culture. His scientific work has been published in technical articles in journals such as *Science*, *Nature*, *Scientific American*, and outlets specialized in animal behavior. His popular books, translated into over twenty languages, have made him one of the world's most visible primatologists. His latest books are *The Bonobo and the Atheist* (Norton, 2013) and *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* (Norton, 2016).

In addition to his roles at Emory University and the Yerkes National Primate Research Center in Atlanta, Dr. de Waal is a Distinguished Professor at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. He has been elected to the (US) National Academy of Sciences and the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences. In 2007, he was selected by *Time* as one of The Worlds' 100 Most Influential People Today, and in 2011 by *Discover* as among 47 (all time) Great Minds of Science.

About the Program Series:

Columbia Theological Seminary is one of ten Christian Seminaries part of a pilot program by AAAS for integrating science into core theological curricula. Grants totaling \$1.5 million were awarded to the schools for integrating science into the curriculum for at least two core theological courses (such as those in systematic theology, biblical

studies, church history, and pastoral theology) over the next two years. This integrated approach will bring science into the core of seminary theological education, impacting individual seminaries as well as the ministries in which graduates serve. **This AAAS lecture is one of many science-focused, campus-wide activities to complement these courses. Resources from the project will be made available to interested seminaries as the project unfolds, some of which will be archived online at www.ScienceforSeminaries.org.**

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is the world's largest general scientific society and publisher of the journal Science (www.sciencemag.org) as well as Science Translational Medicine (www.sciencetranslationalmedicine.org) and Science Signaling (www.sciencesignaling.org). AAAS was founded in 1848 and includes 261 affiliated societies and academies of science, serving 10 million individuals. Science has the largest paid circulation of any peer-reviewed general science journal in the world, with an estimated total readership of 1 million. The nonprofit AAAS (www.aaas.org) is open to all and fulfills its mission to "advance science and serve society" through initiatives in science policy, international programs, science education, public engagement, and more. For the latest research news, log onto EurekAlert!, www.eurekalert.org, the premier science-news Web site, a service of AAAS.

Columbia Theological Seminary is "Cultivating faithful leaders for God's changing world." As an educational institution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Columbia Seminary is a community of theological inquiry and formation for ministry in the service of the Church of Jesus Christ. Columbia offers six graduate degree programs and dozens of courses and events as a resource for church professionals and lay people through The Center for Lifelong Learning. For more information, please visit www.CTSnet.edu.

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