Call for Proposals: (Dog) Training for Utopia: Radical reimaginings of the canine-human relationship

Dr Tiro Miller and Dr Erin Jones invite submissions for an upcoming co-edited volume exploring **utopian perspectives on dog training**. This book aims to critically engage with the ethical and philosophical questions that shape how we understand and teach dogs, moving beyond traditional behaviourist frameworks to consider the broader implications of training methods on our dogs and ourselves. We want to ask, how does "dog training" train us to think about dogs and humans? In a world where dogs and humans were truly free, what would our entangled interspecies lives look like and how can we train for that?

We welcome contributions from scholars and practitioners across disciplines, including philosophy, animal studies, ethics, cognitive science, and animal behaviour, who are interested in thinking radically about how the concept of "training" could be reimagined and repurposed into something that aims at freedom and flourishing – something utopian.

Topics of Interest Include (but are not limited to):

- The ethics of agency in dog training – how can we train dogs for the lives we want them to lead, rather than the lives they are constrained into now?

- The role of autonomy and coercion in shaping training practices – what does it mean to coerce and manipulate? How do we think about training without these elements?

- Comparative approaches: What can philosophy teach us about dog training? How can we use different framings and worldviews to escape the confines of current thinking about dogs?

- Epistemic injustice in canine behaviour science

- The intersection of moral philosophy and training methodologies

- Critical perspectives on the practice of dog training through the lens of political theory: anarchism, critical animal studies, decolonial thought, queer theory, feminism, posthumanism, Disability justice, etc.

- The philosophy and ethics of reinforcement: reward, motivation, and deprivation

- Free will, determinism, and cognition in the context of learning and training

Submission Guidelines:

Please submit a 500-word (approx) proposal in English along with a short bio (max 200 words) by 30/08/2025 to trainingforutopiabook@gmail.com. Abstracts should outline the core argument of your proposed submission and its relevance to the theme of the book. We encourage diverse perspectives and both theoretical and applied approaches. While we expect that most submissions will be in essay form, we are open to (printable) creative work including poetry and personal reflection.

Accepted contributors will be invited to submit their full contribution (max word count depends on the type of contribution) by 30/04/2026. If you have access needs in any part of the submissions process, please let us know.

For inquiries, please contact: Erin or Tiro at trainingforutopiabook@gmail.com

We look forward to your contributions! If you want more information about anything we've mentioned here or about either of the editors, please don't hesitate to ask.