

Topics in Performance Studies:

## Animal Rites

H28.0650/V30.0301; Fall Semester, 2004

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11-12:15

Professor Una Chaudhuri

19 University Place, Room 503

[ucl@nyu.edu](mailto:ucl@nyu.edu) Phone: 212.998.8815;

Office Hours: By appointment through Patty Okoh-Esene, ext. 29595 or [pao4907@nyu.edu](mailto:pao4907@nyu.edu)

This course will explore the relationship between performance and the fast-growing new field of Animal Studies, which examines the cultural meaning of human animal practices. These include not only *literary representations* of animals (from Aesop's *Fables* to Will Self's *Great Apes*), not only *dramatic representations* of animals (from Aristophanes' *The Frogs* to Shaeffer's *Equus* to Albee's *The Goat*), not only animal performances in circuses and on stage, but also such ubiquitous or isolated *social practices* as pet-keeping, cock-fighting, dog shows, equestrian displays, rodeos, bull-fighting, animal sacrifice, hunting, animal slaughter, and meat-eating. We will study plays and films that explore the ways our interaction with animals shapes our accounts of the human, the "other" (including the racial and ethnic other), and the world.

BOOKS (Available in the New York University Book Centers):

J.M. Coetzee, *The Lives of the Animals* (Princeton UP, 1999)

Nigel Rothfels, *Representing Animals* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2002)

Plays:

Edward Albee, *The Zoo Story*, *The Goat*

Peter Shaeffer, *Equus*

Caryl Churchill, *Far Away*

Eugene O'Neill, *The Hairy Ape*

Eugene Ionesco, *Rhinoceros*

A. R. Gurney, *Sylvia*

Elizabeth Egloff, *The Swan*

**COURSE PACKET** (available for purchase from the Advanced Copy Center on LaGuardia place, containing the following two plays): Terry Johnson, *Cries from the Mammal House*, Sam Shepard, *Geography of a Horse Dreamer*

**READINGS ON E-RESERVE.** A number of assigned reading for this course (those marked with an asterisk below) are on Electronic Reserve on Bobst library's ERes system. You may access the E-reserves from the Libraries' homepage. Click on "Reserves", select "Electronic Reserves" and then search by department or instructor name. The url is:

<http://eres.library.nyu.edu/courseindex.asp>. **E-Reserves course pages are password-protected.**

**The password for your course is xxxxxxxx**

**COURSE WEB-SITE** (NYU Blackboard, automatically available to all registered students through your NYU Home account): Contains course documents and some of the course readings

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance, **Punctuality**, Participation

Preparation: careful reading of all assigned materials before class. *From each item read, select a short excerpt that you find especially interesting or important, and be prepared to discuss/comment on it in class.*

Class Presentation: see below

Two papers: see below

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS AND SCREENINGS:

Week 1: 9/7: "A quack-quack here, and a moo-moo there:" Zooësis and the Ubiquitous Animal. Introduction to the course. Read: Randy Malamud "How People and Animals Coexist." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 24 January 2003. <http://chronicle.com/free/v49/i20/20b00701.htm>

9/9: Read: \*Chapter 1 of *Animal* by Erica Fudge  
\*John Berger, "Why Look at Animals?" *About Looking*. New York: Pantheon, 1980. 1-26.

Weeks 2 and 3: 9/14-9/16: THE ANIMAL MYSTIQUE: MYTHS, DREAMS, DESIRES  
Peter Shaeffer, *Equus*  
Shepard, Sam. "Geography of a Horse Dreamer" (course packet)  
\*John Jeremiah Sullivan, "Horseman, Pass By: Glory, Grief, and the Race for the Triple Crown," *Harper's Magazine*, October 2002.  
See *Racetrack* by Frederick Wiseman (film)

9/21-9/23: PRESENTATIONS START. Elizabeth Egloff, *The Swan*  
\*Midas Dekker, "Just Like Animals," Chapter 1 of *Dearest Pet: On Bestiality* London: Verso, 1994, 2000. pp. 5-18.

Week 4: 9/28-9/30: ANIMAL GEOGRAPHIES, 1: The City  
Edward Albee, *The Zoo Story*  
\*Wolch, Jennifer. "Zoöpolis," *Animal Geographies: Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands*, Jennifer Wolch and Jody Emel, eds. London: Verso, 1998. pp. 119-138  
\*Jean Baudrillard, "The Animals: Territory and Metamorphosis," from *Simulacra and Simulation*. Trans. Sheila Faria Glaser. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998. 129-141.  
\*Deleuze and Guattari, "Becoming Intense, Becoming Animal"

(Over this weekend, Oct 1-3, try to see the play "Animal" by Kevin Augustine at HERE Arts Center; 146 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 212-868-4444)

Week 5: 10/5-10/7: ANIMAL GEOGRAPHIES, 2: "Home and Abroad," Nation and Empire.  
Johnson, Terry, *Cries from the Mammal House* (Course Packet)  
\*Anderson, Kay, "Animals, Science, and Spectacle in the City," *Animal Geographies: Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands*, Jennifer Wolch and Jody Emel, eds. London: Verso, 1998. pp. 27-50.

Week 6: 10/12-10/14: Presentations  
**Mid-term paper: Due 10/12, in class.**

Week 7: 10/19-10/21: ANIMAL HISTORIES  
Erika Fudge, "A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals." (in *Representing Animals*).  
\*Cartmill, Matt, "Hunting and Humanity in Western Thought" *Social Research*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (Fall 1995), Arien Mack, Ed. pp. 773-786.  
\*Ritvo, Harriet, "Introduction: the Nature of the Beast" *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987. pp. 1-42.  
\*Matthew Scully, "The Shooting Field," Chapter 2 of *Dominion* (St. Martin's Press, 2002).

10/20. 6:15-8 p.m. Film screening: *Amores Perros*. Great Room, 1st Floor, 19 University Place.

10/25 6:15-8:15. Film screening: *Carnages*. Great Room, 1st Floor, 19 University Place

Week 8: 10/26-10/28 ANIMAL IDEOLOGIES

\*Rachel Rosenthal, "The Others."

Kathleen Kete, "Animals and Ideology: The Politics of Animal Protection in Europe (in *Representing Animals*).

Glen Elder, Jennifer Wolch, and Jody Emel, "*Le Pratique Sauvage: Race, Place, and the Human-Animal Divide.*" *Animal Geographies: Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands*, Jennifer Wolch and Jody Emel, eds. London: Verso, 1998. pp. 72-90.

Week 9: 11/2-11/4: ANIMAL REPRESENTATIONS and ANIMAL TECHNOLOGIES

\*Simons, John, "The Non-Human as Human: Anthropocentrism" from *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation* (New York: Palgrave, 2002)

Akira Mizuta Lippit, ". . . From Wild Technology to Electric Animal" (in *Representing Animals*)

Jane Desmond, "Displaying Death, Animating Life: Changing Fictions of "Liveness" from Taxidermy to Animatronics," (in *Representing Animals*)

Video: "Disney's Animal Kingdom"

Week 10: 11/9-11/11: PRIMATE PERFORMANCE

11/9 Guest Lecture: Erika Rundle

Eugene O'Neill, *The Hairy Ape*

\*John Berger, "Ape Theatre."

\*Haraway, Donna, "Apes in Eden, Apes in Space: Mothering as a Scientist for National Geographic" *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science*, New York: Routledge, 1989. pp. 133 -185.

\*Corby, Raymond, "Ambiguous Apes" *The Great Ape Project: Equality Beyond Humanity*, Paola Cavalieri and Peter Singer, eds. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1993. pp.126-136.

See film *Primate* (library)

Week 11: 11/16-11/18: ANIMAL HOLOCAUSTS

J.M. Coetzee, *The Lives of the Animals*

Andrew Beckett, "Against Nature," Guardian Unlimited website, August 4, 2004.

([www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk))

A one-page description of your proposed paper (including sources) is due in class on 11/18

Week 12: 11/23: Film: *Zoo* by Frederick Wiseman

11/22 (Monday) 6-8 p.m. Film screening: *Zoo* In The Great Room, 1st Floor, 19 University Place.

Week 13: 11/30-12/2: ANIMAL TRANSGRESSIONS

**Final Paper: Due Thursday, December 2 at 5 pm in my mailbox (5<sup>th</sup> floor, 19 University Place)**

Edward Albee, *The Goat*, A. R. Gurney, *Sylvia*

Week 14: 12/7-12/9: ANIMAL PASTS, ANIMAL FUTURES

Caryl Churchill, *Far Away*

Eugene Ionesco, *Rhinoceros*

Andrew Isenberg, "The Moral Ecology of Wildlife," (in *Representing Animals*)

12/14: CONCLUSION