

Literature 101: Animal Theory
Carla Freccero
freccero@ucsc.edu
Tu, Th 8-9:45am, Oakes Academic Room 105
Office Hours W 1:45-3:15pm and by appt., Hum I 637

Sections:

1. Tu 2:00-3:10pm, Kresge 325
2. W 11:00am-12:10pm, Kresge 325
3. W 12:30-1:40 pm, Kresge 325
4. Th 4:00-5:10pm, Oakes 102
5. F 8:00-9:10am, Kresge 325
6. F 9:30-10:40 am, Kresge 325

TAs: Allison Athens, Dennis Brand, Juliana Leslie, Laurel Peacock, Bethany Sweeney, Sophia Magnone

Required Books (Bay Tree Bookstore):

1. Two-volume reader
2. J.M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*
3. Linda Kalof and Amy Fitzgerald, eds. *The Animals Reader: The Essential Classic and Contemporary Writings* (referred to below as *AR*)
4. Brian K. Vaughan, *Pride of Baghdad*

Recommended Book: Jean Henri Fabre, *Fabre's Book of Insects* (NY: Dover, 1998)

Assignments:

This course is reading and writing intensive. The readings are generally quite short and not difficult, but some are very difficult and some are long. You'll be expected to keep up with both. Extensions and absences must be approved in advance and only the Instructor may approve them. You will not receive an A for the course if you are absent more than 3 times; you will not receive a B if you do not submit all the written work.

- 1) Attendance and preparation (30%)
- 2) Reading (reading must be done by the date under which it appears) (30%)
- 3) One paper (almost every) week, for a total of 8 papers (most will be two pages; some will be longer; topics will be assigned) (40%; individual papers graded as follows: cover sheet-5%; argument-35%; clarity and style-25%; grammar-20%; spelling-10%; format-5%).

Cover sheet:

- 1) your name, date, and the name of your TA; 2) title of paper; 3) argument of paper; 4) conclusion; 5) what works best; 6) what could be improved; 7) what you would like feedback on.

Your name and page number should appear on each page as a header, except for the first page, which should contain the title and your name and your TA's name. Papers should be space-and-a-half, 12-point font, grammatically correct with correct spelling of words, and the pages should be stapled together (not paper-clipped). Papers are due on Tuesdays.

You may also receive up to 15% extra credit for doing all the recommended reading, based on argument summaries of the reading, due on the date under which they appear.

All readings not in one of the required books appear in the Reader for the course. You must bring the reader to class.

Schedule:

Week I: Animal Theory and the Humanities

T 3/29 Introduction

Th 3/31 Reader essays from *PMLA*: DeKoven, Shannon, Rothfels, Heise

Week II: Animal Theory (cont') and Origins

T 4/5 Reader essays from *PMLA*: Braidotti, Ahuja, Wolfe, Holsinger; Hearne, "By Way of Explanation"

PAPER 1: Pick one of the essays from *PMLA* and a) summarize the argument; b) describe how the essay links the humanities to the question of animals; and c) discuss the contributions and possible drawbacks of the approach (3 pages).

Th 4/7 The Epic of Gilgamesh (tablets I and II); LeGuin, "She Unnames Them;" Genesis I-III; Plutarch, "Eating Flesh," in *AR*; Sexton, "Creation Myth"

REC: Atwood, "The Animals Reject their Names and Things Return to their Origins"

Week III: Humans, Hybrids, Others

T 4/12 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book I; Homer, *Odyssey*, Book X; Hearne, "Calling Animals by their Name"; Aristotle, "History of Animals," in *AR*; La Fontaine, "Ulysses' Companions"

PAPER 2: Construct a two-page non-human-centered origin story; choose a format or genre from the available reading (can be a poem, prose, fiction, speculative fiction, non-fictional, etc.).

Th 4/14 Marie de France, "Bisclavret"; Seth, "Difference with a Difference"; La Fontaine, "Wolf and Lamb"

REC: Warner, "The Enchantments of Circe"; Bynum, "Shape and Story"

Week IV: Positions: Humanism and its Others

T 4/19 Montaigne, "Apology"; Darwin, "Chapter XV: Recapitulation and Conclusion"

Th 4/21 Descartes, *Discourse* part V; "Letters" in *AR*; La Fontaine, "Disquisition ...Mme de la Sablière"

REC: Cartmill, "A Fatal Disease"; Adams, "The Arrogant Eye"

Week V: Humanism and its Others

T 4/26 Kafka, "A Report to an Academy"; Levinas, "The Name of a Dog" and "Interview"; Singer, "All Animals are Equal"

PAPER 3: summarize an argument from one of the following readings: Darwin, Cartmill, Seth, Warner, Bynum, Kafka, Ritvo, or Singer

Th 4/28 Ritvo, "Border Trouble"; Walker, "Am I Blue?"; Spiegel, "In Defense of Slavery" in *AR*

REC: Atterton, "Ethical Cynicism"

Week VI: Comparisons, Symbols, Analogies

T 5/3 Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals* (Intro, "The Philosophers" "The Poets"); *Pride of Baghdad*

PAPER 4: Discuss how Walker and Spiegel, *Pride of Baghdad*, or Coetzee's character confront the issue/question of animal symbolism, analogy, or (more general) comparison (and explain which of these 3 terms you are talking about)

Th 5/5 Serpell, "Anthropomorphism"; Bekoff, "Representing and Misrepresenting"

REC: Midgley, "Is a Dolphin a Person?" in *AR*; Fudge, "Real and Symbolic: Questions of Difference"

Week VII: Thinking-With

T 5/10 Bekoff, “Animal Minds”; Heidegger, “The Animal is Poor in World”; Calvino, “The Gecko’s Belly”; Fischer, “Animal Communication”

Paper 5: Do a two-page summary and/or an interpretation/close reading of one of the other essays in *The Lives of Animals* (Garber, Singer, Doniger, or Smuts)

Th 5/12 Smuts, “Encounters with Animal Minds”; Grandin, “Thinking Like Animals,” “What Do Animals Need?”

REC: Fischer, ch. 2, “Talking Apes”; Smuts, “Reflections”

Week VIII: Feeling-With

T 5/17 Bekoff, “The Case for Animal Emotions”; Lorenz, “The Perennial Retainers”; Hearne, “The Sound of Kindness”; Cortazar, “Axolotl”

Paper 6: Do a two-page observation of an animal, in any genre. The animal should be a sentient non-human material being in the world.

Th 5/19 Fabre, “Cicada,” “The Grub-Worm,” “The Common Wasp”; Raffles, “A is for Air”; Deleuze and Guattari, “Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal” in *AR*

REC: Masson & McCarthy, “Grief, Sadness, and the Bones of Elephants” in *AR*

Week IX: Science and Sentience

T 5/24 Despret, “The Body We Care For”; Birke, “Who-or-What is the Laboratory Rat”; High, “Playing with Rats”; LeGuin, “Mazes”; Hayward, “Lessons from a Starfish”

Paper 7: A) Do a 3-5 page piece of “nature writing”; or write about an interaction with sentient beings in nature or in culture or in natureculture. You can, if you wish, elaborate and extend upon your animal observation paper from the week before; B) Animals in popular culture. Discuss an example of the use/representation/appearance of an animal or animals in popular culture (3-5 pages). Why is the animal there? What are its meanings and how are they linked to the medium in which it appears?

Th 5/26 Franklin, “Dolly’s Body” in *AR*; Haraway, “Cyborgs to Companion Species” in *AR*; Haraway, “Chicken”

REC: Kac, “GFP Bunny”; Haraway, “Foreword: Companion Species”; Grandin, “A Major Change”

Week X: Current Events and Encounters

T 5/31 McHugh, “Bitches from Brazil”; Rose, “What if the Angel of History were a Dog?”; Pollan, “Power Steer”; Siebert, “Elephant Crack-Up?”

Paper 8: Find a current event story having to do with science in a magazine or newspaper and report on it (2 pages). Please include the article stapled to your paper. Remember that the *NYT* has a science section every Tuesday.

Th 6/2 Thompson Cussins, “Confessions of a Bio-Terrorist”; Derrida and Roudinesco, “Violence Against Animals”; Hearne, “What’s Wrong with Animal Rights?”

REC: Bekoff, “Deep Ethology”; Hearne, “Rougher Magics”; Jones, “Mothers with Monkeywrenches”