

8/11 draft

Arks and Islands

FSEM 100. 36 (CRN 4986)
Fall 2011 MW 2:30-3:45—Flagler Hall 213
Professor Mary Pollock

Dr. Pollock's Office Flagler Hall 210

Office hours, beginning 8/29:

Monday & Wednesday 11-12

Tuesday 5-6

Thursday 1:30-2:30

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Office hour:

Tuesday 12-1

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What's it all about?

We live in an age some call “the sixth great extinction”—the first extinction which has been brought about mostly by human beings. So, what can we do about it? What should we do about it? As members of a global community, how can each of us participate in the important processes of decision making that affect life forms other than our own human species (and our own life as a species) on the planet? How can these trends affect our lives as individuals?

This seminar will be an experience in thinking deeply about one topic—speciation and extinction—from several different perspectives. Since extinction and speciation are most obvious on islands, islands can serve as scientific laboratories and thought experiments. Islands can also be arks—places set aside to preserve animals. There are many kinds of arks, including zoos, reserves, and sanctuaries. We will study those, too. A first glance at the readings shows that we will mix up fiction and non-fiction, science, and, philosophy. The best answers to complex questions are often pieced together from many kinds of insights.

In real life, we need to think outside the boxes without throwing the boxes away, so let's try to think between the boxes! It's a good habit to carry throughout your work at Stetson and beyond.

Here are some other habits to cultivate in this class:

- (1) Consider what it means to think like a college student instead of a high school student.
- (2) Be mindful: pay attention to the details.
- (3) When in class, be present in the moment instead of thinking about what happened before you came, or what might happen when you leave.
- (4) Consider yourself a significant part of a thinking community.

The Syllabus

This syllabus is a roadmap for the semester in this course. Although there may be slight changes, the syllabus will help you plan ahead. Please notice test dates, due dates for written assignments, and uneven spots in the reading assignments.

Consult the syllabus regularly, and keep it with the course materials that you bring to class. It is not posted online, so if you lose it, ask for another copy.

Texts

With the exception of the course pack, the texts listed below may be purchased from the Stetson University Bookstore. Some may be available for rental, and e-reader versions are also acceptable in this class.

The first and most challenging book we will study this semester is *Song of the Dodo* by David Quammen. Buy this book immediately. Purchase all the other books by mid-term, when bookstore managers start to return unpurchased books to the warehouse!

Course pack
Ellsworth & Higgins. *English Simplified*
French. *Zoo Story*
Quammen. *The Song of the Dodo*
Strier. *Faces in the Forest*
Woods. *Bonobo Handshake*

Be prepared to take notes in and on your reading. If you plan to purchase the books, annotations in them are ideal! If you have a rental with use restrictions, use sticky notes to record your questions and reactions. If you have an e-reader, use the note-taking feature!

Assignments and Grading

(1) "Idea and Quotation" papers	40%
(2) Major seminar project (presentation, bibliography, & written version)	20%
(3) Short papers written outside class: personal essay and zoo response	10%
(4) Tests: Mid-term exam & final exams	10%
(5) Attendance, participation, spontaneous in-class assignments	20%

A little more on assignments

1. An **"Idea and Quotation" paper is required for each reading assignment marked with an asterisk (*)**, and must be written before class and printed before class—two copies, one for the professor and one for yourself. If you have to be absent, the paper can be accepted before class time, but not after—in hard copy only. Here's what you do:

Identify an intriguing, important, or difficult idea from the reading, and explain it in writing so that you can share it with the class. This part should be at least half a page, or 300 words. The second item in the "idea and quotation" paper is a copied quotation (with the page number) that might lead to some good class discussion. Near the end of the semester, you will select, expand, and edit the best five of these short papers.

2. The class will develop ideas for the major project, which will include a 10-15-minute oral presentation, a bibliography, and a paper of about 2000 words. You will receive an assignment sheet for the project well before the completion date.

3. The short papers include an essay written and revised during the first week of class and a zoo exercise/essay. **Floating assignments and activity:** Before mid-term, the class will visit the Santa Fe Teaching Zoo in Gainesville. Before we go, read "The Tucson Zoo" and "No RMS, Jungle Vu."

4. The exams will consist of take-home written portions and participation in a scored conversation.

5. A 20% component of your overall grade is based on a combination of everything you do in class. It is the only part of your course grade based on a curve, rather than an average of individual assignments.

Class Policies and Protocols

1. Working with your professor.

You do not need an appointment if you wish to drop by during posted office hours, but I'll be happy to set up an appointment if your schedule conflicts with mine—or if you want to make sure you have priority. In fact, you are welcome to drop in at any time. If I'm not busy, I'll be glad to talk.

Please note that I have noon classes on Monday and Wednesday and an evening class on Tuesday—so, on those days, we can't take care of any complicated business within the last fifteen minutes of my office hours.

If you have problems with the class, or if you need special consideration, please bring them up after class, or make a point of coming to my office.

If you have ongoing or diagnosed special needs, please contact the Academic Resource Office (second floor, Carlton Union Building) so that we can work together to accommodate you.

Brittany Knipp, the apprentice teacher in this class, is a senior at Stetson. She will be involved in many of our class discussions as a leader and participant; she is available during her office hour for informal discussions about your academic work in this class or even another class. She can advise you about where to find help and how to navigate your way through the semester.

Part of Brittany's work related to this class is writing her own papers and planning assignments for you. She is not available for such services as proofreading your work—so go to the Writing Center for that.

2. Deadlines.

If major work done outside class is late, you will receive partial credit—no more than 90%. You cannot make up a test unless you have an agreement with the professor ahead of the date it is scheduled.

Unless otherwise communicated, all written assignments are due in hard copy at the beginning of class or to the main English Department office.

Some assignments are due on Friday, when our class does not meet. If it's more convenient, you may turn in those assignments early.

Just remember, your assignments are due in hard copy, whenever they are submitted.

3. Attendance, punctuality, and work done in class.

Everyone is allowed three absences, to be used at your discretion. A doctor's note is not required and will not help you in this class. Practically speaking, it's better to use your absences for true emergencies.

If you miss more than three classes, your attendance/participation grade will be lowered. If you have a pattern of tardiness, your attendance/participation grade will be lowered; in fact, if you are very late, you may be considered absent. Work of any kind that is done in class cannot be made up for a grade, no matter what the reason for your absence may be.

Your grade for attendance, participation, and class participation is based on accumulated points. This grade component is based on a curve.

Moral of the story: always be prepared, save excused absences for when you need them, and come to class on time.

Special note: In case of a serious illness or family emergency, please work with your RA and the Academic Resource Center, which keeps your professors notified about your situation and therefore minimizes the impact on your coursework.

4. Being in the classroom.

Participating in class doesn't just mean talking. To participate fully, treat others with respect, add substance to the discussion, and keep your head in the classroom.

Sometimes, you will be able to use **phones, computers, and other technological devices** in class. At all other times, these devices must be stowed away: they should be invisible and inaudible! Finally, don't depend on your classmates to supply books or writing materials!

5. Academic honesty.

You have signed an honor pledge. That means no cheating collusion on tests or papers. If your professor discovers that you have done so, you may receive 0 for the assignment or be referred to the Honor Council.

A common (and sometimes accidental) form of cheating is *plagiarism*, that is, presenting someone else's language and/or ideas as your own. Sometimes people plagiarize whole papers (not by accident, of course); sometimes they just accidentally import a few quoted words without acknowledging the source. Either way, it's plagiarism. For more information on this problem, see *English Simplified*, section 508B.

6. The Writing Center in Flagler 209, which is staffed by tutors trained to help with student writing projects, is free and open to any Stetson student. Early in the semester, you can probably just drop in. Later, you may need to call for an appointment or make an appointment by visiting the website. The Writing Center is located in Flagler 209, right next to the elevator.

Calendar

Prepare these assignments before you come to class, and always bring the books!

Week I

August

- 22 Introduction, reading, and writing in class
Reading in class today:
Cole. "Ape House, Berlin Zoo"
Warner. "Noah's Ark"
- 23 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Wilson. "Krakatau"* [Always bring "Idea and Quotation" paper to class.]
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo* 11-13
Film: *Cast Away* (begin)
- 24 Discussion
Film: *Cast Away* (finish)
Writing for today:
Personal essay (600-750 words)

Week II

- 29 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo*, 117-194*
English Simplified. Sections 501-506 (pp. 60-63)
- 31 Reading and Discussion

Reading for today:
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo* 194-258*

Week III

September

- 5 Class does not meet. . . Labor Day Holiday
- 7 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo*, Chapter 4*
- 9 Not a class, but revisions of your first paper are due on or before this date.
Turn in a revised copy of the personal essay (with the original!) by 4 PM in the main English Office or in person to the professor.

Week IV

- 12 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo*, Chapter 6*
- 14 Film and Discussion
Darwin's Secret Notebooks (50 minutes)
(Recommended but not required: Go back and read Chapter 5 of *Song*. . . .)

Week V

- 19 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo*, Chapter 7*
- 21 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo*, Chapter 8

Week VI

- 26 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Quammen. *Song of the Dodo*, Chapters 9 & 10*
- 28 Class does not meet. . . Individual conferences

<p>Floating assignments and activity: Before mid-term, the class will visit the Santa Fe Teaching Zoo in Gainesville. Before we go, read "The Tucson Zoo" and "No RMS, Jungle Vu." There will be a writing assignment about your zoo experience.</p>

Week VII

October 3

Class does not meet. . . individual conferences

- 5 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Durrell. *The Mockery Bird*, Chapters 1-4*

Week VIII

- 10 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Durrell. *The Mockery Bird*, all the rest*
Bring to class *English Simplified*
- 12 Mid-term exam (oral)
Quammen. "The Beautiful and the Damned"*

Week IX

- 17 Film and discussion
"Lake Wales Ridge: Islands in Time" (20 minutes)
Mid-term exam (written) is due at class time.
- 19 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Gould. "Losing a Limpet"*
Matthiessen. "The Outlying Rocks"*
Goldberg. "The Hunted"*
English Simplified. 67-75
Just pick two out of three readings for the "Ideas and Quotations" paper.

Week X

- 24 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Strier. *Faces in the Forest*, Foreword, Introduction, & Chapters 1-5*
Bring to class *English Simplified*.
- 26 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Strier. *Faces in the Forest*, Chapters 6-8*
Bring to class *English Simplified*.
- 28 Bibliography for oral presentation is due to the professor in person or to the main English Department office.

Week XI

- 31 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Woods, *Bonobo Handshake*, 1-142*

November

- 2 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
Woods, *Bonobo Handshake*, 143-264*

Week XII

Recommendation: Get a head start on *Zoo Story*.

- 7 Class presentations
- 9 Class presentations
- 11 Written version of report due by 4 PM to the professor in person or in the main English Department office.

Week XIII

Recommendation: At the beginning of the week, read as much as possible in *Zoo Story*.

- 14 Individual conferences
Writing: Five best "Ideas and Quotations" are due at the time of your conference—edited and revised!
- 16 Reading and Discussion
Reading for today:
French. *Zoo Story*, 1-180 (at least!)*

Week XIV

- 21 Oral final exam
Reading for today:
French. *Zoo Story*, 181-238
Take-home written exam is due at class time.

