Animals, Culture, & Society

ENGL 3050-H06  HONORS 3700-H0
MW 3:30-4:45 pm - Fretwell 206

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Course Description:

This course will explore the ways that animals are both conceptualized and utilized in various cultures. The object of the course is to develop a fuller understanding not only of what animals “mean” to humans and how humans respond to animals, but how we address the “post-human condition.” Though this is NOT a biology class, we won’t shy away from zoology and physiology, as they are central to any approach to animals, whether ecological, historical, or behavioral. The course will draw on the cultural and metaphorical use of animals (in literature, art, and philosophy), the consumption of animals (as food and clothing), the scientific status of animals (in experiments and as objects of study), the recreational use of animals (in hunting, zoos, aquariums, safari parks, and as pets), and, in a broader context, the emblematic use of animals. The overarching issue in this course, however, will be animal cognition, a thorny philosophical and zoological topic that has been the subject of a great deal of discussion in cultural studies, psychology & neurobiology, and philosophy. How do we evaluate the quality of animal thinking or the nature of awareness, sense of self, or experiential process.

Animal Links
- World Wildlife Fund
- BBC Nature Wildlife
- NetVet & Electronic Zoo
- National Geographic
- Marine Mammal Center
- IUCN-Nature Conservation

The Code of Student Academic Integrity governs the responsibility of students to maintain integrity in academic work, defines violations of the standards, describes procedures for handling alleged violations of the standards, and lists applicable penalties. The following conduct is prohibited in that Code as violating those standards:
Assignments:

**Off-site Paper:** Visit an animal oriented “site” (Zoo/Raptor Center/Horse Protection Society/Exterminator/Veterinary Clinic/Pet Store) and develop a brief report on your observations (observation should last at least 5 hours). This brief report will then be developed into a fuller (10+ page) paper that analyses the issues you address in a fuller and more researched manner.

- Report: 10%
- Paper: 30%

**Animal Study & Presentation:** Drawing on your reading specifically from the book you ordered from the “Reaktion” series, develop an analytical presentation (10 minutes) and brief accompanying paper (3 pages) on “your” species.

- Presentation: 15%
- Paper: 5%

**Human-Animals Paper:** Develop a more philosophical/literary paper on some issue pertaining to human-animal relationships.

- Paper: 30%

**Participation/Animal News:** This is not merely class participation, but includes your efforts to bring animal issues/observations into class for casual discussion.

- Particip: 10%