

A Cultural History of Animals:

The Western Perception of Animals from Antiquity through the Present

Course Schedule

Jan. 21 Introduction: Animals before Antiquity

26 Animals in Antiquity: Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Pliny the Elder (excerpts on D2L); [Ovid](#) (excerpt: *Pythagoras*, Book 15, lines 60-175); [Plutarch](#), *Gryllus* (“Beasts Are Rational”)

28 Guest Speaker: Todd Giles

Feb. 2 **The First Fables:** [The Jatakas](#) (nos. 316, 385, 407) and Aesop, [Fables](#), nos. (Perry) 2, 15, 77, 91, 92, 124, 131, 138, 140, 142, 150, 180, 226, 237, 238, 263, 326, 339, 373, 390, 411, 426, 472, 480, 488, 490, 669

4 Christianity and the Bestiary: The Bible (any version), Gen 1:20-28 and 31a, 2:4b-7 and 18-20, 7:1-4, and 9:8-11; Augustine (excerpts on D2L); [St. Thomas Aquinas](#), Part I, Question 96, Articles 1 and 2; [Physiologus](#) (nos. 1, 4-6, 8-9, 12-13, 15-16, 18, 20, 27, 30-31, 36-37, 39, 42-43, 45-46); [Leonardo da Vinci](#), “Bestiary”

9 A Picaresque Dialogue: Miguel de Cervantes, *The Dialogue of the Dogs*

11 Animals and Reason in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment: Michel de Montaigne, “[Man Is No Better Than the Beasts](#)”; René Descartes (excerpts on D2L)

16 Reason and Bestiality: Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels* (Part IV)

18 Guest Speaker: Mary Draper

Art Response Due

Project Proposal Due

23 The Satirical Romantic Cat: E.T.A. Hoffman, *The Adventures of Tomcat Murr* (pp. 1-13, 20-27, 46-47, 57-63, 110-13, 136-37, 152-56, 205-9, 244-55, 322)

Speaker Response Due

25 The Fantastic and the Sublime in Romanticism: Edgar Allan Poe, [“The Black Cat”](#) and [“Instinct vs. Reason”](#); Joyce Carol Oates, “The White Cat”; Herman Melville, [Moby-Dick](#) (“Moby Dick,” “The Whiteness of the Whale”)

Mar. 2 The Realist Horse: Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment* (excerpt); Anton Chekhov, “Heartache,” Leo Tolstoy, “Strider,” Vladimir Mayakovsky and Nikolai Zabolotsky, horse poems (all on D2L)

4 Darwinism: Charles Darwin (excerpts); H.G. Wells, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, pp. 71-118 and 198-210

Annotated Bibliography Due

9-14 Spring Break

16 Wells, pp. 118-174

18 Wilderness vs. Civilization: Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*

23 A Modernist Menagerie: Fyodor Sologub, “On the Other Side of the River Mairure”; Rainer Maria Rilke, selected poems (both on D2L)

25 Kafka’s Animals: [Franz Kafka](#), “A Report to the Academy,” “Investigations of a Dog,” “The Burrow”

30 Woman’s Best Friend: Virginia Woolf, [Flush](#); Elizabeth Browning, [“To Flush, My Dog”](#)

Apr. 1 Racism and Speciesism: Art Spiegelman, *Maus*

6 Animal Ethics: Lori Gruen: *Ethics and Animals: An Introduction*, ch. 1, 2, & 4

8 Gruen, ch. 5-6

Guest Speaker: Dr. Williams

13 Gruen, ch. 3 & 7

Speaker Response Due

15 Modern Animal Philosophy and Ethics: Peter Singer, [“All Animals Are Equal”](#) (*Animal Liberation*); Jacques Derrida, [“The Animal That Therefore I Am \(More to Follow\)”](#)

Paper Outline Due

20 Animal Rights: J. M. Coetzee, [The Lives of Animals](#)

22 Past, Present, and Future Farms: Leo Tolstoy, “The First Step” (on D2L); Vladimir Makanin, “The Long Road Ahead”

Post Draft for Peer Review

27 Don LePan, *Animal*

29 The Postmodern Animal: Julio Cortázar, “[Axolotl](#)”; Italo Calvino, *Mr. Palomar* (pp. 19-28, 51-66, 76-78, on D2L); Eric Chevillard, *Palafox* (ch. 4, on D2L)

Peer Review Due

May 4 A Recent Bestseller: André Alexis, *15 Dogs*, ch. 1-2

Rough Draft Due

6 Alexis, ch. 3-5

12 Final Paper Due