

Chapman University
Spring 2019
honors 377: critical animal studies

Instructor Contact Information:

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"Now I ask: if we are capable of thinking our own death, why on earth should we not be capable of thinking our way into the life of a bat?" (Elizabeth Costello in J. M. Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*)

"However intelligent chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans are, there is no evidence that they possess the ability to commit crimes, and in this sense they are to be treated as children or mental incompetents." (Gary Francione, qtd. in J. M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*)

Catalog Course Description:

- How and when did animals come to be distinguished from humans? What other kinds of relationship to/with animals might we develop? What does the representation of animals in cultural productions suggest about the world views of the producers and consumers of those productions? This course engages with these and other related questions through in-depth study of the interdisciplinary field of Critical Animal Studies. Students engage with key articles, films, and books in Critical Animal Studies, and produce their own creative and critical projects in response. Discussion-based seminar. (Offered as needed.) 3 credits. Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor.

Student Learning Outcomes for This Course:
you will

- understand what the most significant issues, texts, and authors are in the interdisciplinary field of Critical Animal Studies, in keeping with Honors Program Learning Outcome 1's call for developing a starting point for intellectual exploration (see below)
- learn to engage multimodally with scholarly and creative work in Critical Animal Studies, in keeping with Honors Program Learning Outcome 4's emphasis on the development of effective communication skills (see below)

- develop nuanced critical and creative interdisciplinary analyses of a variety of cultural artifacts through the **application** of terminology, perspectives, and texts from the field of Critical Animal Studies, in keeping with Honors Program Learning Outcome 2's on focus on analysis and synthesis and Honors Program Learning Outcome 3's attention to the application of interdisciplinary understandings (see below)

Honors Program Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have

- 1) Obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
- 2) Sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
- 3) Understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
- 4) Developed effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.

GE Learning Outcomes:

- Ethical/Values Inquiry: Articulates how values and ethics inform human understanding, structures, and behavior
- Written Inquiry: Provides students an intensive course in academic writing at the first-year or intermediate level according to demonstrated competence, with attention to media-based composing and delivery. All GE WI courses are rhetorically based, focusing on the ways language is used to negotiate social, educational and intellectual relationships in various contexts, to a range of audiences.

Required Texts:

* = on reserve in the Leatherby Libraries

- [Albee, Edward. *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?*](#)
- [DeMello, Margo. *Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human-Animal Studies*](#)
- [Despret, Vinciane. *What Would Animals Say If We Asked the Right Questions?*](#)
- [Haraway, Donna. *The Companion Species Manifesto*](#) *
- You will also need to purchase or otherwise get access to one comic or graphic novel from a list I provide for your Collaborative Comic Presentation.

- I will post additional articles on Blackboard for you to read. We'll also be watching the film [Jane](#) and you'll be reading drafts of your colleagues' final projects in order to give them feedback on their work. You should expect to conduct outside research for your individual presentation, collaborative comic presentation, and final project.

Grade Distribution:

- Collaborative Comic Presentation20%
- Lead Seminar Discussion of *What Would Animals Say If We Asked the Right Questions?*..... 10%
- *Individual Presentation on Humanimalia*.....10%
- Collaborative Performance From *The Goat*..... 10%
- Final Project.....30%
- Other Assignments.....20%

- Due to the highly interactive nature of this course and the emphasis on whole-class peer workshops and seminar-style discussions, I expect you to attend all class meetings and to be on time. You may miss four class meetings without penalty. If you miss more than four class meetings, I will lower your final course grade by 1/3 grade for each additional absence. Two tardies (arriving late or leaving early) count as one absence. I will also mark you tardy if you are unprepared for class.
- See percentage/letter grade equivalents at the bottom of this page

Graded Assignments:

- Collaborative Comic Presentation: You and one or two colleagues will give an oral presentation on one of the animal-centered comics/graphic novels from a list I provide. Remember that the other class members will not have read your text, so you will need to provide some context/summary. However, keep summary to a minimum, and focus on discussing aspects of your text that you find particularly interesting/problematic/revealing/perplexing in terms of the text's animal representation. You might want to consider some of these questions: what roles

do non-human animals play in your text? how are these animals constructed in the text? how are they represented visually? how do the roles of the animal characters impact the way readers engage the issues presented in the text? how might you connect your comic/graphic novel with the other issues and readings we have discussed so far in the course? Your presentation should include projection and detailed discussion of at least one frame from your comic/graphic novel and reference to at least one scholarly source that treats your comic/graphic novel. All presentations will be followed by questions from the class. The presentation should last no longer than 15 minutes (excluding questions). My evaluation of your presentation will be based on the quality of your research and analysis, how well you present your ideas, your ability to answer questions, how well your group members work together, and your adherence to the time limit. If you use PowerPoint or Prezi, do not read your slides! All group members will earn the same grade unless a group member fails to make a substantial contribution to the presentation. Your group is welcome to meet with me before the date of your presentation to discuss your presentation plans.

- Collaborative Performance From *The Goat*: Since plays are meant to be performed, not just read, you and your group members will perform a 10-15 minute excerpt from the play *The Goat! With your group members, you will select the excerpt you want to perform, and plan and practice your performance. I do not expect you to learn lines by heart--it's ok to read from your script during the performance. I will evaluate your performance based on your choice of excerpt, how polished the performance is, your interpretation of the play and the ideas you come up with for the performance, how well your performance demonstrates your understanding of the play and the issues we're addressing in this course, and how well your group members work together.* All group members will earn the same grade unless a group member fails to make a substantial contribution to the performance. If you have more group members than characters for your excerpt, not everyone has to act--some group members may contribute to the performance in other ways (e.g., director, getting props and costumes, blocking out scenes, providing music).
- Lead a Seminar Discussion: Each seminar member will lead a 15 minute discussion of one chapter (excluding "A") from the book *What Would Animals Say If We Asked the Right Questions?* Class members will read your chosen chapter ahead of time, so your job isn't to summarize the reading or give a lecture on it, but to generate discussion that includes as many class members as possible. It's up to you how you want to do this: you can have class members write something, you can ask questions, etc. You will need to read your chosen chapter carefully multiple times and look up unfamiliar references in order to prepare for the discussion. You don't have to understand everything in your chapter--it's ok to ask questions about points you find difficult to follow. I will evaluate you based on your preparation to lead the discussion, the quality of the discussion you generate, your ability to involve many class members, your leadership in ensuring that we address the issues in your chapter that are most

pertinent to the concerns of the course, and your adherence to the time limit. You are welcome to discuss your plans with me ahead of time if you like.

- *Humanimalia* Presentation: Each seminar member will give a 5 minute presentation on one issue of the online animal studies journal *Humanimalia*. You will be assigned a specific journal issue to cover. It's not necessary to read every article in your assigned issue, but you should get a sense of what the various articles are about and read one or two that interest you. Your presentation shouldn't just summarize the contents of the journal, but should also tell us what you find particularly interesting or troubling about your assigned issue, and how it might or might not be useful to seminar participants for their final projects. I will evaluate you based on your ability to summarize your issue and point out significant points it addresses, and your adherence to the time limit.
- Final Project: You will have the option of developing a collaborative or individual critical or creative final project. I will give you specific guidelines and suggested topics for the final project in class. You'll have the opportunity to get feedback from your colleagues on a draft of your project during a whole-class workshop before you post the final version (or a link to it) on Blackboard.
- Other Assignments: These include Blackboard posts in response to course readings, a draft of your Final Project, responses to colleagues' drafts and Blackboard posts, your whole-class workshop, facilitation of a colleague's whole-class workshop, and other in-class activities. I grade these assignments on a credit/no credit basis. In class we will discuss the criteria for earning credit for these assignments. You cannot make up a missed in-class assignment.

Course Policies:

- Citation of Sources: Plagiarism is a contested and context-specific topic. We'll discuss effective ways of using sources and issues around plagiarism in class.
- Email Protocol: I acknowledge all email messages within 48 hours. If you email me but don't get a response, I haven't received your email. Feel free to email me concerning any questions you have about the course or about your work. Do not email your work to me for feedback; I'd be happy to discuss your work with you in person. It's important to practice composing professional emails: be sure that your emails to me include appropriate subject lines, salutations, and closes.
- Classroom Dynamics: Honors seminar are discussion-oriented. I do not spend much time lecturing and expect you to participate vigorously in the many discussions around which the course is organized. We all teach and learn in this course--I do not believe in a one-way transmission of "knowledge" from instructor to students. I don't have all the answers, and I look forward to learning as much as teaching in this course. You should direct your questions and comments in class to your colleagues as much as to me. I encourage you to talk in class and to encourage your colleagues to do the same.
- Diversity: Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and [valuing diversity](#). Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in [Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#). Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the Dean of Students, and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.

- Students With Disabilities: Please see me early in the semester if you have a documented disability, so that we can discuss what accommodations I might make to help you to succeed in this class. Click [here](#) to read Chapman University's Policy Statement for Assisting Students with Disabilities.
 - Electronic Devices: Please bring your laptop to class meetings, but do not use electronic devices for non course-related work during class time.
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tentative schedule (Subject to change)

Readings marked * are on Blackboard

1/28/2019

- In-Class Activities: Introduction to the course; in-class reading and writing; introduction to *Animals and Society*
- Homework Assignments: Read Chapters 1-3 in *Animals and Society*

1/30/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading; discuss criteria for Blackboard posts
- Homework Assignments: Read Chapters 4-10 in *Animals and Society*; Blackboard Post #1 due by noon on 2/4

2/4/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading and Blackboard posts; discuss criteria for responses to Blackboard posts
- Homework Assignments: Read Chapters 11-14 and 16-20 in *Animals and Society*; respond to at least two colleagues' Blackboard Post #1 by noon on 2/6

2/6/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading and Blackboard responses; introduction to Haraway; discuss collaborative comic presentation
- Homework Assignments: Read *Companion Species Manifesto* pp. 1-54; bring your comic choices to class

2/11/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading; assign groups and dates for collaborative comic presentations
- Homework Assignments: Read *Companion Species Manifesto* pp. 55-100

2/13/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading; introduction to upcoming readings
- Homework Assignments: Read [Kim TallBear, "Why Interspecies Thinking Needs Indigenous Standpoints"](#); read Brian K. Hudson, "Introduction: First Beings in American Indian Literature" *; Blackboard Post #2 due by noon on 2/18
- Optional Homework Reading: Neel Ahuja, "Postcolonial Critique in a Multispecies World"*; Shannon Walters, "Unruly Rhetorics: Disability, Animality, and New Kinship Compositions" *

2/18/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading and Blackboard posts; how to read a comic
- Homework Assignments: Read Susan McHugh, "Queer (and) Animal Theories," * [Jon Mooallem, "Can Animals Be Gay?"](#) (free access to this *New York Times* article via the Leatherby Libraries), and *What Would Animals Say* up to p. 6; select the sections from the book you'd like to lead a seminar discussion of; respond to at least two colleagues' Blackboard posts by noon on 2/20 (respond to different colleagues from last time)
- Optional Homework Reading: Gabriel Rosenberg, "How Meat Changed Sex" *

2/20/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading and Blackboard responses; discuss protocol for leading seminar discussions; sign up to lead a discussion of *What Would Animals Say*
- Homework Assignments: Read assigned excerpts from *What Would Animals Say*

2/25/2019

- In-Class Activities: Student-led seminar discussions; meet with your comic presentation partner(s); workshop on scholarly sources
- Homework Assignments: Read assigned excerpts from *What Would Animals Say*

2/27/2019

- In-Class Activities; Student-led seminar discussions; meet with your comic presentation partner(s)
- Homework Assignments: Read assigned excerpts from *What Would Animals Say*

3/4/2019

- In-Class Activities: Student-led seminar discussions; meet with your comic presentation partner(s)
- Homework Assignments: Read assigned excerpts from *What Would Animals Say*

3/6/2019

- In-Class Activities: Student-led seminar discussions; meet with your comic presentation partner(s)
- Homework Assignments: Work on your comic presentation

3/11/2019

- In-Class Activities: Collaborative comic presentations; mid-semester course evaluations
- Homework Assignments: Work on your comic presentation

3/13/2019

- In-Class Activities: Collaborative comic presentations; introduction to *The Goat*; assign Final Project and *Humanimalia* presentations; discuss mid-semester course evaluations
- Homework Assignments: Read *The Goat*, browse issues of *Humanimalia*; come up with ideas for your final project

Spring Break

3/25/2019

- In-Class Activities: Discuss reading; assign performance groups; assign dates and issues for *Humanimalia* presentations; discuss ideas for final project
- Homework Assignments: Work on your performance and *Humanimalia* presentation

3/27/2019

- In-Class Activities: No class meeting; work on your performance
- Homework Assignments: Work on your performance and *Humanimalia* presentation

4/1/2019

- In-Class Activities: Performances from *The Goat*
- Homework Assignments: Work on your *Humanimalia* presentation

4/3/2019

- In-Class Activities: *Humanimalia* presentations
- Homework Assignments: Work on your *Humanimalia* presentation

4/8/2019

- In-Class Activities: *Humanimalia* presentations
- Homework Assignments: Work on your *Humanimalia* presentation

4/10/2019

- In-Class Activities: *Humanimalia* presentations; discuss protocol for whole-class workshops; draw workshop dates; discuss final project plans
- Homework Assignments: Work on your your final project

4/15/2019

- In-Class Activities: Continue discussion of protocol for whole-class workshops; discuss sample responses to workshop drafts; sign up to facilitate a workshop; introduction to *Jane*
- Homework Assignments: Work on your final project

4/17/2019

- In-Class Activities: Watch *Jane*
- Homework Assignments: Work on your final project; if you have a workshop on 4/24, post your draft on Blackboard by noon on 4/22

4/22/2019

- In-Class Activities: Finish watching *Jane*; discuss *Jane*; review workshops for 4/24
- Homework Assignments: If you have a workshop on 4/29, post your draft on Blackboard by noon on 4/24; post responses to workshop drafts on Blackboard by noon on 4/24 (follow guidelines on Blackboard)

4/24/2019

- In-Class Activities: Whole-Class Workshops; workshop debrief
- Homework Assignments: If you have a workshop on 5/1, post your draft on Blackboard by noon on 4/29; post responses to workshop drafts on Blackboard by noon on 4/29 (follow guidelines on Blackboard)

4/29/2019

- In-Class Activities: Whole-Class Workshops
- Homework Assignments: If you have a workshop on 5/6, post your draft on Blackboard by noon on 5/1; post responses to workshop drafts on Blackboard by noon on 5/1 (follow guidelines on Blackboard)

5/1/2019

- In-Class Activities: Whole-Class Workshops; course debrief
- Homework Assignments: If you have a workshop on 5/8, post your draft on Blackboard by noon on 5/26; post responses to workshop drafts on Blackboard by noon on 5/6 (follow guidelines on Blackboard)

5/6/2019

- In-Class Activities: Whole-Class Workshops; course evaluations
- Homework Assignments: Post responses to workshop drafts on Blackboard by noon on 5/8 (follow guidelines on Blackboard)

5/8/2019

- In-Class Activities: Whole-Class Workshops; party?
- Homework Assignments: Post your revised final project on Blackboard by noon on 5/15

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98-	93-	90-	87-	83-	80-	77-	73-	70-	67-	63-	60-	0-
100%	97%	92%	89%	86%	82%	79%	76%	72%	69%	66%	62%	59%