

English 2110: Perspectives

Humans and Other Animals

Section 1: Spring 2005, MW 2:00-3:20

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Office hours:	MW 1:00-2:00, TR 11:30-12:00, and by appt.



Required Texts and Materials

Gowdy, Barbara. *The White Bone*. New York: Picador, 2000.

Hempel, Amy, and Jim Shepart. *Unleashed: Poems by Writers' Dogs*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1995.

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale*. New York: Modern Library, 2000.

Course packet of readings (purchase from English Department office).



Course Goals and Objectives

Almost all works of literature include animals, no doubt because of the many ways that human lives are intertwined with those of other animals. But we often don't pay close attention to how these animals are represented in the literature we read, particularly if they exist on the peripheries of the human story rather than serving as the focus. In this course, we will put what we might call "literary beasts" in the spotlight, reading a wide variety of fiction, poetry, and essays that somehow address the relationship between humans and other animals, whether the animals function as symbols, realistic "beasts," competitors or allies in the human struggle for existence, fellow creatures with acknowledged moral standing, or even the narrators of stories and the speakers of poems.

We will ask what these varied representations of animals can tell us about the different human cultures which produced them, what – if anything – we can learn from them about “real” animals, and how they might affect our own relationships with the animals who touch our lives in so many ways.



Assignments, Grades, and Policies

I will calculate your final grade using the percentages listed below:

Unit Papers	30%
Midterm Paper	20%
Final Paper	30%
Participation	10%~~~~~
Attendance	10%

Papers: As you can see in the daily schedule, our class will be divided into six thematic units. For each unit, you will write one short (2-3 page) paper, which will give you the opportunity to synthesize the ideas of the unit. You will also complete 2 longer papers, one half-way through the term and one near the end. I will provide more detailed assignment sheets for each paper as they come up.

Participation: One of the primary goals of this course is to improve your ability to understand literature and to express that understanding to others. Class meetings, which will stress discussion and the exchange of ideas, will be one of your major opportunities to refine this ability. In general, the more you participate, the more you will gain from the class – and the more everyone else will gain as well. But keep in mind that participation doesn’t mean simply being vocal. Just a few insightful comments or questions can go a long way. Conversely, if you are vocal but consistently detract from the quality of the course for others, it will hurt your participation grade. Your goal should be to help yourself and your classmates become better thinkers and to better understand the texts and topics under discussion, and your participation should be targeted towards that goal.

Attendance. In my experience, students learn best when they are actively engaged in the process of their own education. Therefore, I design my classes to encourage the communal creation of knowledge through discussions and other activities. This design means that when you miss class, you not only hurt yourself, but the class as a whole also misses out on your contributions. Thus, it is essential that you be present *at virtually every class*. *One or two unexcused absences will not affect your final grade. Three will translate into a B for attendance; four a C, five a D, and six an F.* If you feel you have a legitimate reason for missing class (such as illness or a death in the family), please contact me as soon as possible, and I will let you know whether or not it is excused.

If you miss more than 6 classes for any reason – even illness – and do not withdraw, you will fail the class. This policy is not intended as a punishment but rather as a way to preserve the integrity of the course, both for you and the other students. If you miss the equivalent of more than three weeks, you simply will not be able to gain from the class what you should; because so much of the class will depend on discussion and student contributions, there is just no way to make up large portions of the class on your own. Also, having even one or two students attend only sporadically detracts from the class atmosphere for those who do attend regularly. If you miss more than 6 classes before the university's deadline for withdrawal, I will be happy to sign a withdraw slip for you so you need not fail the course. *Also, repeated late arrivals to class will count as partial absences.*

Jobs and Other Commitments: I understand that many of you have part-time or even full-time jobs, and I can certainly sympathize with the need to earn money. I know many of you also have other important commitments outside of class: sports, families, Conservatory work, etc. However, you must make sure that these commitments **do not interfere** with attendance or with completing your assignments for this course.

Plagiarism: Don't do it!! Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas *as your own* (as opposed to citing someone else's words and ideas and giving that person credit, or getting someone to help you with your own work, which are both quite acceptable academic practices). *Plagiarism is a very serious offense, and I reserve the right to fail any student (for the assignment or for the course, depending on the circumstances) found guilty of plagiarism.* If you have any doubt about whether your use of someone else's work might count as plagiarism, please talk to me.

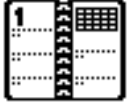


Extra Help

Help with Papers. The Writing Center is a great place to go for extra help with writing assignments for this class or others. The Writing Center is *not* a remedial writing lab. It serves all students, no matter what their skill level, who want individualized help in various areas such as topic development, organization, sentence structure, mechanics, or usage. It is also not an editing or proofreading service -- don't bring in a draft of one of your papers and expect a Writing Center coach to "fix it up" for you. Although coaches will help you with individual assignments, they want to concentrate on improving *your skills*. Although the Center accepts walk-ins, it is best to call or stop in to make an appointment. The Writing Center, located on the ground floor of Maria Hall, is open from 10 a.m. -

7 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Friday. To make an appointment or ask questions, call 968-7495.

Help with Learning Disabilities. If you know or suspect you have a learning disability which may have some impact on your work in this class, please contact Pat McLeese, Director of the Academic Resource Center, at 968-7495. If you need any special accommodations due to a learning disability, make sure that either you or Dr. McLeese let me know what they are.



Daily Schedule

•P = in course packet

Jan. 19 (W) Introduction to class and each other

Myths and Metamorphoses

Jan. 24 (M) Silko, Snyder, Harjo, Kinnell (P)

Jan. 26 (W) Lopez, Ch. 10-13; Carter, Le Guin (P)

Natural Histories and the Real Animal

Jan. 31 (M) Muir, London (P)

Feb. 2 (W) Hubbel (P); Lopez, Ch. 1-3

Feb. 7 (M) Dickey (P); Adams (P)

Animals as Symbols

Feb. 14 (M) Levertov, Coleridge

Feb. 16 (W) Frost, Bly, Bishop

Feb. 21 (M) Melville, *Moby-Dick*

Feb. 23 (W) Melville, cont'd.

Feb. 28 (M) Melville, cont'd.

March 2 (W) Melville, cont'd.

March 7 (M) Melville, cont'd.

March 9 (W) Melville, cont'd.; Leopold (P)

March 14 - 18 Spring Break

March 21 (M) Oliver, Dillard (P)

Human Relations to Animals

March 23 (W) Cowper, Whitman, Berry (P)

March 28 (M) Jewett, Lawrence, Abbey (P)

March 30 (W) Quammen, Williams, Bly (P)

April 4 (M) Walker, Nelson, Jeffers (P)
April 6 (W) Finkel, Rilke (P)

April 11 (M) Twitchell (P)
April 13 (W) Lopez, *Apologia* and "Renegotiating" (P)

Animal Voices

April 18 (M) Gowdy, *The White Bone*
April 20 (W) Gowdy, cont'd.
April 25 (M) Gowdy, cont'd.
April 27 (W) Levine (P), Murray (P)

Canine Companions

May 2 (M) Muir, "Stickeen" (P)
May 4 (W) Selections from Hempel and Shepard, *Unleashed*; Jeffers, Updike (P)
May 11 (W) Final exam period: 1-3

Armbruster
ENGL 2110.01
Spring 2005

Perspectives: Humans and Other Animals
Packet Contents

Myths and Metamorphoses

- 1) Silko, Leslie. "Landscape, History, and the Pueblo Imagination." *On Nature: Nature, Landscape, and Natural History*. Ed. Daniel Halpern. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1987.
- 2) Snyder, Gary. "The Woman Who Married a Bear." *The Practice of the Wild*. San Francisco: North Point, 1990.
- 3) Harjo, Joy. "Deer Dancer." <<http://www.poets.org/poems/poems.cfm?45442B7C000C07070074>>
- 4) Kinnell, Galway. "The Bear." From Poulin.
- 5) Carter, Angela. "The Tiger's Bride" and "The Company of Wolves." *The Bloody Chamber*. New York: Harper and Row, 1979.
- 6) Le Guin, Ursula K. "The White Donkey," "The Wife's Story" and "Horse Camp." *Buffalo Gals and Other Animal Presences*. New York: Penguin, 1987.

Natural Histories and the Real Animal

- 7) Muir, John. "The Water-Ouzel." From Finch and Elder.
- 8) London, Jack. "To Build a Fire." *The Call of the Wild and Selected Stories*. New York: New American Library, 1905.
- 9) Hubbel, Sue. Selections from *A Country Year: Living the Questions*. New York: Random House, 1986.
- 10) Dickey, James. "The Heaven of Animals." From Poulin.
- 11) Adams, Douglas, and Mark Carwardine. "Twig Technology" and "Here Be Chickens." *Last Chance to See*. New York: Ballantine, 1990.

Animals as Symbols

- 12) Levertov, Denise. "Come into Animal Presence." From Bly.
- 13) Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. 3rd ed. Ed. Alexander W. Allison, et al. New York: W. W. Norton, 1983.
- 14) Frost, Robert. "The Most of It" and "Sometimes." From Bly.
- 15) Bishop, Elizabeth. Selections from *The Complete Poems, 1927-1979*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1980.
- 16) Leopold, Aldo. "Thinking Like a Mountain." *A Sand County Almanac*. New York: Oxford UP, 1966. 137-141.

- 17) Oliver, Mary. Selections from *New and Selected Poems*. Boston: Beacon, 1992.
- 18) Oliver, Mary. "The Fish" and "Tasting the Wild Grapes." From Poulin.
- 19) Dillard, Annie. "Living Like Weasels." From Finch and Elder.

Human Relations to Animals

- 20) Cowper, William. "Epitaph on a Hare." *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. 3rd ed. Ed. Alexander W. Allison, et al. New York: W. W. Norton, 1983.
- 21) Whitman, Walt. From "Song of Myself." From Bly.
- 22) Berry, Wendell. "The Peace of Wild Things." From Bly.
- 23) Jewett, Sarah Orne. "A White Heron." *In Nature's Name: An Anthology of Women's Writing and Illustration, 1780-1930*. Ed. Barbara T. Gates. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2002.
- 24) Lawrence, D.H. "Snake." From Bly.
- 25) Abbey, Edward. "The Serpents of Paradise." From Finch and Elder.
- 26) Quammen, David. "The Face of a Spider." *Writing Nature: An Ecological Reader for Writers*. Ed. Carolyn Ross. New York: St. Martin's, 1995.
- 27) Williams, Joy. "The Inhumanity of the Animal People: Do Animals Have the Same Rights as We Do?" *Harpers Magazine* August 1997.
- 28) Bly, Carol. "The Tender Organizations." *Inheriting the Land: Contemporary Voices from the Midwest*. Ed. Mark Vinz and Thom Tamaro. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1993. 173-193.
- 29) Walker, Alice. "Am I Blue?" From Finch and Elder.
- 30) Nelson, Richard. "The Gifts." From Finch and Elder.
- 31) Jeffers, Robinson. "Hurt Hawks." <<http://www.ablunature.com/poetry/HurtHawks.shtml>>
- 32) Finkel, Donald. Selections from *What Manner of Beast*. New York: Atheneum, 1981.
- 33) Twitchell, Chase. Selections from *The Ghost of Eden: Poems*. Princeton, NJ: Ontario Review, 1995.
- 34) Rilke, Rainer Maria. "The Panther." From Bly.
- 35) Lopez, Barry. *Apologia*. Athens, GA: U of Georgia P, 1998.
- 36) ----. "Renegotiating the Contracts." *This Incomperable Land: A Book of American Nature Writing*. Ed. Thomas J. Lyon. New York: Penguin, 1989.

Animal Voices

- 37) Levine, Philip. "Animals Are Passing from Our Lives." From Poulin.
- 38) Murray, Les. Selections from *Translations from the Natural World*. New York Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1992.

Dogs

- 39) Muir, John. "Stickeen: The Story of a Dog." From the Sierra Club's John Muir Exhibit.

- 40) Jeffers, Robinson. "The House Dog's Grave." *Bark: Selected Poems About Dogs*. Ed. and Illustrator Ferris Cook. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1998.
- 41) Updike, John. "Dog's Death." Also in *Bark*.

Works Cited Above

- Bly, Robert, ed. *News of the Universe: poems of twofold consciousness*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1980.
- Finch, Robert, and John Elder, eds. *The Norton Book of Nature Writing*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2002.
- Poulin, A., Jr. *Contemporary American Poetry*. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.