

California State University, Long Beach
History 510, Section 03 (Schedule Number 5697)
The Literature of U.S. History: Human-Animal Relationships in Historical Perspective
Dr. Brett Mizelle

Spring Semester 2006
Thursdays, 6:30 - 9:15 p.m.
Room FO2-101a

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Course Description:

This seminar on the literature of history is designed to engage with a wide-range of scholarship on the history of the relationships between human and non-human animals. This literature, sometimes grouped under the rubric "animal studies" (a term that, as we will see, comes with its own problems), emerged as a subset of social, cultural, and environmental history, although parallel inquiries into the human use and "thinkability" of non-human animals were occurring in anthropology, literary studies, and the biological sciences. Much of the work in this emergent interdisciplinary field has been, like the social and cultural history before it, connected to larger social movements, many of relatively recent vintage. The term "speciesism"—used to connote prejudice against non-human animals similar in kind to racism and sexism—was only coined in 1970, for example, when there was a renewed interest in the idea of animal protection and animal rights. In this seminar we will trace the rise of interest in the welfare of animals and the subsequent shift toward the idea that non-human animals may deserve some of the same moral and legal considerations typically extended to humans. In the process, we will necessarily interrogate the relationship between the past and the present, which explains why several of our readings and texts are not traditional historical monographs.

It is my hope as a researcher active in the field of "animal studies" that we will be able to use this seminar to address some of the problems and possibilities of studying the relationship between human and non-human animals from a historical perspective. As you will see from the course schedule, we will address some of the key issues in the study of human-animal relationships, starting with recent work that has proposed that we first need to reconceptualize the human relationship with nature. We will also examine theoretical and historical questions about the way we live with animals before turning to explore selected histories of human-animal relationships in Britain and the United States. After looking at the ways animals have been used as a point of entry into more traditional historical inquiries we will historicize several of the major ways western societies have utilized and thought about non-human animals, addressing pet-keeping, meat consumption, animal exhibitions, animal rights, and the representations of animals in art, film, and literature. Throughout the semester we will consider some key questions, including:

- How have animals helped define the human and the human relationship with the natural world?
- What do changing ideas about animals, or changing relationships with animals, reveal about larger historical transformations?
- To what extent are animals historical agents? How might we represent animal agency?
- Why might it be worth understanding the contradictory ways in which we live and have lived with animals?

Required Books:

The following books are required for this course and may be purchased at the University Bookstore, even though you can probably find them elsewhere at a lower price (hint, hint):

- William Cronon, ed., Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature (Norton, 1996).
 Erica Fudge, Animal (Reaktion, 2004).
 Nigel Rothfels, ed. Representing Animals (Indiana, 2002).
 Harriet Ritvo, The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in Victorian England (Harvard, 1989).
 Donna Haraway, The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness (Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003).
 J.M Coetzee, The Lives of Animals (Princeton, 2001).
 Jonathan Burt, Animals in Film (Reaktion, 2003).

Additional required readings are available electronically via J-Stor, Project Muse, BeachBoard, and E-Reserve. Students are responsible for downloading and reading these materials. All students will also need to obtain a) one of the volumes in the Reaktion Books "Animal" Series and b) a recent fictional narrative about animals and/or human-animal relationships. All students should already possess both a quality dictionary and a well-worn style manual.

Course Requirements:

1. Weekly reading journal (30%)
2. Two papers, topics and due dates to be decided (15% of course grade each)
3. Two presentations (5% of course grade each)
4. Prolegomenon for a hypothetical research project, due May 18th (20% of course grade)
5. Attendance and participation (10% of course grade)

Additional information about these assignments will be distributed electronically and discussed in class. Grades will be given in ten percentage increments, with students in the top 10% of the course receiving an A, the next 10% receiving a B, and so on. There will be ample opportunity for extra credit through short reaction papers on field trips related to the course.

Course Policies:

Attendance: Because we cover a great deal of material in this interactive seminar, prompt and regular attendance is a necessity. Students who miss classes run the risk of receiving a lower grade than the student might have secured with regular attendance. Excused absences must be documented by a doctor's note, a note from the Dean, or advance notice from the Athletic Director. Absences for religious observances are excused; please let me know of dates in advance.

Classroom Environment: You are strongly urged to ask questions and express opinions in this course, approaching readings and ideas actively and critically. As you do so, however, please strive to be courteous to your fellow students. To create a respectful and productive environment please avoid unnecessary distractions (such as ringing cell phones, beeping pagers, and conspicuous food consumption) during class meetings.

Course Readings: You are expected to have completed the day's readings prior to coming to class and to be prepared to participate in discussions. Always bring the texts we will be discussing to class.

Disability Accommodation: Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation for any sort of disability should make an appointment to see me during my office hours so we can make arrangements for you to complete the requirements of the class.

Papers: All work written outside the classroom, with a few exceptions to be described later, must be typed or word-processed in a standard 10 or 12 point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Your papers should, at a minimum, both present and critically analyze the main theoretical and historical arguments in your reading. All quotations must be cited by using parenthetical references, footnotes, or endnotes. All papers should have your name, the course title and number, the due date, and an appropriate title or label for the assignment at the top. I strongly recommend that you keep copies of all your work, either on paper or on disk, for your protection.

Your work will be evaluated for earnest effort and, more importantly, thoughtful, coherent content. Remember to clearly state your thesis and support your arguments with examples. Usage and grammar are not major concerns of grading, but I expect much more than just a minimum mechanical competence (or basic "readability") from students who are hoping to get a graduate degree in history. I fully expect that you will proofread your assignments before handing them in. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day assigned unless otherwise noted. If you know you are going to miss class on dates assignments are due you must be proactive and request an extension in advance. Late assignments will be penalized and will not be accepted more than one week past their due date without a previously agreed to extension.

Plagiarism & Academic Integrity: Students in this class will be held to a high standard of academic integrity, which is defined as "the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. If I suspect all or part of an assignment may not be your own intellectual work I will ask to see your notes or drafts. I also may require electronic submission of the paper to facilitate running the paper through plagiarism-detecting databases. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please talk with me. I can and will fail a student for major infractions.

Technology: The CSULB Technology Help Desk is available for students. Help is available on a wide range of computer issues including: BeachBoard, Windows and Mac OS, CSULB Internet Accounts, Remote Connectivity, Microsoft Desktop Applications, Anti-Virus, Internet and Web related topics. Visit them on the web at <http://helpdesk.csulb.edu> or contact the THD by phone at 562-985-4959 or send Email to helpdesk@csulb.edu.

Course Schedule:

Note: This syllabus is a work in progress and may be changed during the semester as necessary and appropriate. So please pay attention, friends...

Week 1: January 26 Introduction and Seminar Organization

Week 2: February 2 Reconceptualizing Our Relationship with Nature

Required: William Cronon, ed., Uncommon Ground, pp. 19-113, 161-229, 321-375; Andrew C. Isenberg, "The Moral Economy of Wildlife," in Representing Animals.

Week 3: February 9 Our Paradoxical Relationships with Animals

Required: Erica Fudge, Animal; Nigel Rothfels, "Introduction" in Representing Animals.

Week 4: February 16 The History of Animals and Human-Animal Relationships

Required: Erica Fudge, "A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals," in Representing Animals, 3-18; John Berger, "Why Look at Animals?" in About Looking [E-Reserve]; David Premack and Ann James Premack. "Why Animals Have Neither Culture nor History," in Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology [E-Reserve]; Frans de Waal, "The Whole Animal," in The Ape and the Sushi Master: Cultural Reflections by a Primatologist [E-Reserve]; Richard W. Bulliet, "Postdomesticity: Our Lives with Animals," in Hunters, Herders, and Hamburgers: The Past and Future of Human-Animal Relationships [TBA].

Week 5: February 23 Humans and Animals in Victorian England

Required: Harriet Ritvo, The Animal Estate, all except chapter 5; Garry Marvin, "Unspeakability, Inedibility, and the Structures of Pursuit in the English Foxhunt," in Representing Animals.

Week 6: March 2 Animals & American History

Required: Virginia DeJohn Anderson, "King Philip's Herds: Indians, Colonists, and the Problem of Livestock in Early New England," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser. 51.4 (Oct., 1994), 601-624 [J-Stor]; Clay McShane, "Gilded Age Boston," New England Quarterly 74.2 (June 2001), 274-302. [J-STOR]; Richard White, "Animals and Enterprise," in The Oxford History of the American West [E-Reserve]; Andrew C. Isenberg, "The Wild and the Tamed," in The Destruction of the Bison: An Environmental History, 1750-1920 [E-Reserve]; Brett Mizelle, "I Have Brought My Pig to a Fine Market": Animals, their Exhibitors, and Market Culture in the Early Republic" in Cultural Change and the Market Revolution in America, 1789-1860 [TBA]; Katherine C. Grier, "'The Eden of Home': Changing Understandings of Cruelty and Kindness to Animals in Middle-Class American Households, 1820-1900," in Animals in Human Histories: The Mirror of Nature and Culture [TBA].

Week 7: March 9 Companion Animals

Required: Donna Haraway, The Companion Species Manifesto; Marc Shell, "The Family Pet," Representations 15 (Summer 1986), 121-153 [J-STOR]; Susan McHugh, "Bitches From Brazil: Cloning and Owning Dogs Through the Missyplicity Project," in Representing Animals; E.B. White, "Death of A Pig," in Essays of E.B. White [E-Reserve]; Teresa Mangum, "Dog Years, Human Fears," in Representing Animals. Also examine the material on the "Pets in America" exhibition website, located at: <http://www.petsinamerica.org/>.

Week 8: March 16 Animal Protection and Animal Rights

Required: M.B. McMullan, "The Day the Dogs Died in London," London Journal 23.1 (1998), 32-40 [TBA]; Kathleen Kete, "Animals and Ideology: The Politics of Animal Protection in Europe," in Representing Animals; J.M Coetzee, The Lives of Animals; Arnold Arluke and Boria Sax, "Understanding Nazi Animal Protection and the Holocaust," Anthrozoös 5.1 (1992), 6-31 [TBA].

Week 9: March 23 No Class Meeting (ACLA, Princeton)

Week 10: March 30 Representing Animals

Required: Jonathan Burt, Animals in Film; Steve Baker, "What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?" in Representing Animals; Akira Mizuta Lippit, "From Wild Technology to Electric Animal," in Representing Animals; Jane Desmond, "Displaying Death, Animating Life: Changing Fictions of 'Liveness' from Taxidermy to Animatronics," in Representing Animals; Gregg Mitman, "Domesticating Nature on the Television Set," in Reel Nature: America's Romance with Wildlife on Film [E-Reserve].

Week 11: April 6 Meat

Required: William Cronon, "Annihilating Space: Meat," in Nature's Metropolis [E-Reserve]; Alexander Cockburn, "A Short, Meat-Oriented History of the World," [via Counterpunch.org]; Sue Coe, Porkopolis [via graphicwitness.org]; Charlie LeDuff, "At the Slaughterhouse, Some Things Never Die," in Zoologies: The Question of the Animal [E-Reserve]; Carol J. Adams, "The Sexual Politics of Meat," in The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory [E-Reserve]. Also see the Chicago Historical Society site: <http://www.chicagohs.org/history/stock.html>.

SPRING BREAK

Week 12: April 20 No Class Meeting (WSSA, Phoenix)**Week 13:** April 27 Specific Animals in History

Required: Jonathan Burt, "An Obsession with Boundaries: Animal Studies in its Own Right," [TBA]. Also read one of the volumes in the Reaktion Books "Animal" series that charts the historical significance and impact on humans of a particular species. Your choices include Charlotte Sleigh, Ant; Robert E. Bieder, Bear; Claire Preston, Bee; Marion Copeland, Cockroach; Boria Sax, Crow; Susan McHugh, Dog; Helen McDonald, Falcon; Rebecca Stott, Oyster; Paul Carter, Parrot; Jonathan Burt, Rat; Drake Stutesman, Snake; Peter Young, Tortoise; Joe Roman, Whale. Students will make presentations on the book and animal they have chosen at this class meeting.

Week 14 May 4 Animal Exhibitions

Required: Harriet Ritvo, "Exotic Captives," in The Animal Estate; Nigel Rothfels, "Immersed in Animals," in Representing Animals; Jeffrey Hyson, "Jungles of Eden: The Design of American Zoos," in Environmentalism in Landscape Architecture [TBA]; Susan G. Davis, "Routine Surprises: Producing Entertainment," in Spectacular Nature: Corporate Culture and the Sea World Experience [E-Reserve]; Randy Malamud, "Zoo Stories," in Reading Zoos: Representations of Animals and Captivity [TBA]; Bismarck, The Wonderful Educated Pig, the Most Extraordinary Animal in the World [TBA]. Students are also invited to join the instructor on field trips to the Los Angeles Zoo and the Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific.

Week 15: May 11 Animals and Literature

Required: Marcus Bullock, "Watching Eyes, Seeing Dreams, Knowing Eyes," in Representing Animals; Kenneth Shapiro and Marion W. Copeland, "Toward a Critical Theory of Animal Issues in Fiction," Society and Animals 13.4 (2005), 343-346 [TBA] Also read a book of your choice, selected with my approval, that imaginatively seeks to understand animals and/or human-animal relationships. Some suggestions include, but are not limited to, Kirsten Bakis, Lives of the Monster Dogs; Paul Auster, Timbuktu: A Novel; H.G. Wells, The Island of Dr. Moreau; Barbara Gowdy, The White Bone: A Novel;

George Orwell, Animal Farm; Will Self, Great Apes. Students will make presentations on the book they have chosen at this class meeting.

Exam: May 18th
Final papers due from 7:30pm at Limerick's Pub, 5734 E. 2nd St.

Reading Journals

All students in History 510 will keep a weekly reading journal. For each week of the course you will need to write down your reactions to our course readings. Sometimes I will ask you to speak about specific issues or will provide you with some questions to consider about the readings, but for the most part, I would like to see you "grapple with" the issues raised by our study of American cultural history.

Each entry in your reading journal should aim to display your own independent thinking about our texts. You can assume that we already know what's in the reading. That means you don't have to reproduce the content. Instead, shape a commentary on the reading or readings, starting from your own line of questioning. This can be a particular insight or an analysis of something interesting or unusual. You may also sketch a broader, more synthetic picture that makes a connection to other readings, other course material, or other historically- or culturally-relevant knowledge. You can choose any one of a number of strategies, as long as you show your own thinking.

I would prefer that these reading journals be typed and contain at least two to three paragraphs of analysis and reflection per week. Unlike your formal papers, these do not need to be double-spaced. They also will not be held to the high standards I expect from formal written assignments—they are journals, after all. Please limit your weekly reflection on our readings and cultural texts to no more than one single-spaced page, including the following heading:

Your Name
510s06 Reading Journal—Week ____
Date

Please make sure that you make it clear which readings you are reflecting upon in your journal, as most weeks you'll have several to choose from. You should complete your journal entry for a given week prior to coming to class so that we can use them to help structure our discussion. You will find that they also will help you organize your thoughts and develop topics for our formal papers.

I will collect these reading journals weekly to see what you are thinking about. To provide you with a bit of flexibility, however, over the course of our shortened semester, you may use two "get-out-of-the-journal-free" passes. This will mean that, at a minimum, you should have ten journal entries to re-submit at the end of the semester. Weekly journals will be assessed on a three-tiered system: $\sqrt{+}$ (excellent), $\sqrt{}$ (satisfactory), $\sqrt{-}$ (unsatisfactory). I'll provide a standard letter grade for your journal as a whole at the end of the semester.

Don't hesitate to try out new thoughts or write about something you are still thinking through in these journal entries. I hope that you will find them to be an important part of how you learn—and a useful demonstration of how you think—by the end of the semester.