Subject Description

A historical survey of the ways that people have interacted with their closest animal relatives, for example: hunting, domestication of livestock, exploitation of animal labor, scientific study of animals, display of exotic and performing animals, and pet keeping. Themes include changing ideas about animal agency and intelligence, our moral obligations to animals, and the limits imposed on the use of animals.

Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore and from various online vendors:

- Karel Capek, War with the Newts (Catbird Press)
- Sarah Franklin, Dolly Mixtures (Duke University Press)
- Anita Guerrini, Experimenting with Humans and Animals (Johns Hopkins University Press)
- Vicki Hearne, Adam’s Task (Skyhorse Publishing)
- Anna Sewell, Black Beauty (Signet)
- Noelle Vialles, Animal to Edible (Cambridge University Press)
- H. G. Wells, The Island of Doctor Moreau (Penguin)

Other readings can be accessed via the class website.

Required readings for everyone are listed on the schedule below. Additional required readings for graduate students are listed on a separate schedule. (Of course, undergraduates are very welcome to read them too.) Suggestions for supplementary reading, as well as related websites, are listed on the class website.

Written Assignments

A research paper will be due at the end of the semester—12 pages for undergraduates, 25 pages for graduate students. A proposal, bibliography, and progress report will be due on October 5, November 2, and December 7, respectively. I will be happy to read and comment on drafts if they are submitted at least two weeks before the final paper is due.

In addition, each week students will hand in a brief (1-2 pages) response to the readings.
Non-written Assignments

Although most of the readings are historical, the issues they deal with are also contemporary. Therefore, on most weeks one student will introduce the class by linking its theme to current (or recent) events, institutions, and practices.

Students will give a brief oral report on the progress of their research on November 2 and a 15-minute presentation on December 7.

Schedule of Classes

September 14  Introduction

September 21  Hunting
AE, ch 6
Jim Corbett, Man-Eaters of Kumaon, introduction, ch. 1
George Orwell, “Shooting an Elephant”
Jane Carruthers, “Wilding the farm or farming the wild? The evolution of Scientific game ranching in South Africa from the 1960s to the present,” Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa, 2008

September 28  Domestication and Breeding
AE, ch.1
Sarah Franklin, Dolly Mixtures, chs. 2-3

October 5  Meat (or not)
Harriet Ritvo, The Platypus and the Mermaid, ch. 5
Noelie Vialles, Animal to Edible
Research paper proposal due

October 12  Pets
AE, ch. 2
Vicki Hearne, Adam’s Task, chs 2-4, 8-10
Konrad Lorenz, Man Meets Dog, chs. 4,6,17

To be scheduled: Field trip to Kendall Cinema to see My Dog Tulip

October 19  Animal Exploitation and Animal Protection
October 26  
**Animals, Environment, and the Columbian Exchange**


November 2  
**Animals and Infection**

AE, ch 4
Sarah Franklin, *Dolly Mixtures*, ch. 5

Research paper annotated bibliography due
Oral progress report due

November 9  
**Live Animals on Display**

AE Chapter 5
Nigel Rothfels, “Gardens of History” (*Savages and Beasts*, ch. 1)
Ian Miller, “The Great Zoo Massacre”
Etienne Benson, “Camera Traps,” slate.com

November 16  
**Dead Animals on Display**

AE, Introduction
Field trip to Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology

November 23  
**Studying Animals: Field Observation and Ethology**

Jane Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, chs. 1-3
Sara Hrdy, *The Woman That Never Evolved*, ch. 1
Biruté Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, chs. 1-4
Dian Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, chs. 1-3

November 20  
**Animals and Imagination**
H. G. Wells, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* and/or
Karel Capek, *War with the Newts*

December 7  
**Paper presentations**

**Things to Remember**

Written assignments should represent original and individual work. For a detailed discussion of what this means, see the “Academic Integrity at MIT” handbook, available online at: http://web.mit.edu/academicintegrity/

Assignments are to be handed in on time. If an extension becomes necessary it should be requested ahead of the due date. Otherwise, lateness will be penalized.

Attendance is important. Not all the material to be covered in class is included in the readings. Be sure to bring your copy of the readings to class.

Grading will be based on the three written assignments, the oral presentation, and class participation (including informal reflections), weighted as follows: research paper 1/2; oral presentation--1/6; class participation (including informal response papers)--1/3.