

Writing 139
Animal Subjects:
Philosophical, Scientific, and Literary Representations of Animality
Winter 2009, Section 25841
MWF 2:00 – 2:50, HH 251

Instructor: Michelle Neely

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Course Listserv: animals-W09@classes.uci.edu

Course Website: <https://eee.uci.edu/09w/25841>

Office Location: Anthill Pub

Office Hours: Wed 11:30 – 1:30, & by appt.

Required Texts

AUTHOR	TITLE	YEAR	EDITION
Jean-Jacques Rousseau	<i>Rousseau's Political Writings</i>	1755	Norton Critical Editions
Charles Darwin	<i>The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals</i>	1872	Filiquarian Publishing -or- Oxford University Press
J.M. Coetzee	<i>The Lives of Animals</i>	1999	Princeton University Press
Anna Sewell	<i>Black Beauty</i>	1877	Signet Classic

Please buy the editions I have selected for the class so that we can refer to the same text and page numbers in discussion and writing assignments. These editions are available at the UCI bookstore or can be ordered online using the ISBN's: *Rousseau's Political Writings* 0393956512, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* 1599869152 or 0195158067, *The Lives of Animals* 069107089X, *Black Beauty* 0451528654.

Course Description

Writing 139W: Writing 139W fulfills the upper-division writing breadth requirement for students in any major. Completing all ESL and lower-division writing requirements is prerequisite. The course carries four academic units and may be taken pass / no pass unless your department requires that you take it for a letter grade.

Animal Subjects: Our 139 course deals with the topic of how animals have been represented by different writers working in different generic registers in order to ask how—and why—the philosophical, biological, and literary animal gets constructed by each author we will be considering. Historically, claims about what it means to be human have often been constructed through claims about the differences (or similarities) between human beings and other animal species. Those wishing to claim an exceptional status for human beings have frequently emphasized the differences between humans and animals, while those wishing for various reasons to challenge the exceptional status of humans have tended to emphasize the similarities between humans and animals. Over the next ten weeks, we will look at how writers such as Rousseau, Darwin, Coetzee, and Anna Sewell have chosen to define the boundary between the human and the animal, and investigate the stakes of their definitions. I want to emphasize that this will not be a class concerned with discussing the ethical treatment of animals or their moral or legal status. Rather, our focus will be on rhetoric and representation. We will be examining the claims our different thinkers have made about the nature and specific attributes and capabilities of animals, in order to ask how such representations affect the way that societies view what it means to be an animal, and ultimately what it is to be human.

Course Requirements

Papers: Essay #1 (3-4 pages), Essay #2 (4-5 pages), Essay #3 (5-6 pages). You will receive specific prompts for each essay, so I will not go into detail about them here. In general, however, note that these papers are formal essays and must follow the conventions of academic essays. They must be printed in 12-point font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins. All formal essays, including drafts for peer editing, must be typed and should adhere to MLA format. (Please refer to the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.) Essays should have a proper heading, appropriate title, pagination, and, if appropriate, a Works Cited page. Your final drafts are due at the beginning of class on their respective due dates. Late work will not be accepted except in cases of documented emergencies.

In-class Presentation: In Week 7 I will ask you to prepare an approximately 5-minute presentation for the class that investigates J.M. Coetzee's protagonist's suggestions about how first-person-point-of-view representations of animals operate. You will need to collect a representation of an animal from popular culture (advertising, music, film, poetry, etc.) that purports to be a first-person account of an animal perspective, and then briefly analyze how the representation works for the class. We will discuss this presentation in greater detail as it grows closer.

Commonplace Book: Throughout the quarter, you will keep a commonplace book that focuses on representations of animals. A commonplace book is essentially the grandfather of the blog. Before and even through the twentieth century, many people (writers especially) kept commonplace books that they filled with important quotes from books they were reading, personal thoughts and reflections, newspaper articles, photographs, advertisements, and so on. You should focus your commonplace book on representations of animals, filling it with interesting quotes from the course reading, and analysis of those quotes, as well as material from newspapers, magazines, and pop culture that you find relevant to our topic and thought-provoking. I will also assign small homework assignments throughout the quarter that will go into your commonplace books. Ultimately, the material you generate for your commonplace book will provide the basis for your Essay #3, so it is doubly to your advantage to work hard on gathering material for your commonplace book. Certainly, you should expect to write at least 1.5 pages per week. Your final book should be 15-20 pages minimum by the end of the quarter. For the book itself, you may either buy an inexpensive notebook to use, or simply use ordinary sheets of paper that you place into a three-ring binder.

Attendance: Woody Allen once said, "Eighty percent of success is showing up." Attendance is important to me and my attendance policy requires that students regularly attend class; indeed, your success in this course largely depends upon it. I will take attendance at every class meeting. Lateness is very disruptive to a 50-minute class and so will not be tolerated. Everyone gets one excused tardy, but after that every two tardies will be considered equivalent to one absence. Missing more than 2 classes will negatively affect your participation grade. Not showing up for more than 4 classes will result in the lowering of your final grade and, if necessary, failure of the course.

Participation: Active participation in classroom dialogue is one of the single most educational experiences you can have here at UCI. You often learn from yourself as you speak, and you will frequently produce ideas and theories in class by building on and occasionally challenging each other's comments. Since this course will usually be conducted as a discussion rather than a lecture, you should commit yourself to speaking regularly and provocatively in class. Remember that the only way to steer the class discussion in a direction that interests you is to pipe up. Instant messaging or other disruptive and inattentive computer use will lower your participation grade by

a full letter grade and will result in the loss of computer privileges for the rest of the quarter.

To encourage you to speak, I require you to come to every class prepared with at least two thoughtful questions or comments about the text under discussion. Sometimes I will assign you discussion questions, and other times I will expect you to generate your own comments. I will frequently begin class discussion by asking students to share their questions or comments, so every student should come to class prepared to share their written responses. These questions/comments should be typed and I will collect them at the end of every class. Your participation grade will be based on these questions, but more especially on the additional comments you contribute during discussion.

Email and Course Website: I'll use the course listserv and website to disseminate important information throughout the quarter, for everything from posting handouts, to adjusting assignments and deadlines, to answering questions. You are responsible for checking your email before every class session. If you would like me to add an alternate (non-UCI) email address to our listserv, let me know.

Office Hours: I will hold regular office hours every week on Wednesdays from 11:30-1:30 and by appointment. If you are having difficulty with any aspect of the class, or have a question that needs a more detailed response than can be provided in class, office hours is the place to deal with it. Additionally, if you wish to discuss my written feedback on your working or final drafts of papers, or to get my input on the progress of your commonplace book, you should plan to meet with me during office hours.

Additional Help: UCI boasts both free, drop-in peer tutoring as well as a Learning and Academic Resources Center (LARC), each of which prove helpful for many students. I will have links to more information about both on the course website.

Acknowledgments: If you receive help (from a tutor, friend, parent, etc.) on any aspect of any written assignment for our class, you are required to include a written acknowledgment of that help at the end of the assignment. No one should ever generate the language of your paper.

Grading

Essay #1 (3-4 pages): 15%

Essay #2 (4-5 pages): 15%

In-class Presentation: 10%

Commonplace Book: 20%

Essay #3 (5-6 pages): 30%

Class Participation: 10%

Course Policies

Add/drop policy: Add/Drop Policy for all courses in the School of Humanities: A student may add or drop a course in the School of Humanities up to the end of the second week of classes with the instructor's signature. Requests to add or drop Writing 139 after the second week will be granted only in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Writing 139 course director. After the 6th week, students need the dean's permission to drop.

Second-day rule: The School of Humanities also has a "second-day" rule. If you are not in class on the second day of the quarter (and do not have an emergency to account for your

absence) you may lose your place to a student on the waiting list. You are still responsible for dropping the course through the usual procedures. If you know ahead of time that you will be unable to attend on the second day, you should notify your instructor.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism: All students are responsible for reading the UCI Academic Honesty Policy (<http://www.editor.uci.edu/catalogue/appx/appx.2.htm>). If you have specific questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask. Please turn in all final drafts to Turnitin.com. The process for doing this will be discussed in class.

Assignments: All written work should be typed (and printed out). All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the due date. Late work will not be accepted unless you have cleared it with me at least one class period prior to the due date. If you must miss class when a written assignment is due, turn in your assignment before the due date or have a friend bring it to class. Do not drop it off in the English Department unless you have made prior arrangements with me. Except in cases of emergency, do not email assignments to me.

Writing 139 Course Schedule

Please complete reading assignments before the beginning of the class period on the date for which they are assigned.

Note: All reading labeled “course handout” may be found on the class website listed at the top of this syllabus.

WEEK 1

M 01/05: Welcome and Introductions.

W 01/07: Read Rousseau’s *Discourse on Inequality*, pages 3-20

F 01/09: Read Rousseau’s *Discourse on Inequality*, pages 21-42

WEEK 2

M 01/12: Finish Rousseau’s *Discourse on Inequality*, pages 43-57

W 01/14: Continue discussing Rousseau; read the Introduction to Lynn Hunt’s *Inventing Human Rights* (course handout)

***F 01/16:** Writing: 3 copies of your working draft of paper 1 due

WEEK 3

(M 01/19): Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

W 01/21: Read Darwin’s *The Expression of Emotions*, pages 5-54 (Introduction & CH 1)

***F 01/23:** Read Darwin’s *The Expression of Emotions*, pages 55-64 (CH 2)

***Writing:** Final draft of paper 1 due in class and to Turnitin.com

WEEK 4

M 01/26: Read Darwin’s *The Expression of Emotions*, pages 65-82 (CH 3)

W 01/28: Read Darwin’s *The Expression of Emotions*, pages 83-114 (CH 4)

F 01/30: Read Darwin’s *The Expression of Emotions*, pages 115-141 (CH 5)

WEEK 5

***M 02/02:** Writing: 3 copies of your working draft of paper 2 due

W 02/04: Read Coetzee’s *The Lives of Animals*, pages 3-25

F 02/06: Read Coetzee’s *The Lives of Animals*, pages 26-50

WEEK 6

M 02/09: Read Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*, pages 51-69

***W 02/11:** Read Marjorie Garber and Barbara Smuts's responses to *The Lives of Animals*, pages 73-84 and 107-120

***Writing:** Final draft of paper 2 due in class and to Turnitin.com

F 02/13: Finish discussing Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*

WEEK 7

(M 02/16): Presidents' Day

W 02/18: Presentations

F 02/20: Presentations

WEEK 8

M 02/23: Presentations

W 02/25: Read Kafka's "A Report to an Academy" (course handout)

F 02/27: Continue discussing Kafka's "A Report to an Academy"

WEEK 9

M 03/02: Read Sewell's *Black Beauty*, pages 3-81

W 03/04: Read Sewell's *Black Beauty*, pages 85-123

***F 03/06:** Writing: Commonplace Books Due, plus 3 copies of your working draft of paper 3.

WEEK 10

M 03/09: Read Sewell's *Black Beauty*, pages 131-194

W 03/11: Read Sewell's *Black Beauty*, pages 197-213

***F 03/13:** Course wrap-up. Writing: Final draft of paper 3 due in class and to Turnitin.com

FINAL EXAM: There will be no final exam for this class.