

Rabate English 2073 -- Spring 2023.

Modernist animals : How to rethink the human-animal divide.

The last century has witnessed a radical transformation in the way we perceive animals as differentiated from humans, a change that was announced and represented by novels, poems, films and philosophical discussions. We will begin by surveying theoretical controversies about animals, one including Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas and Giorgio Agamben (*The Animal that therefore I am*, « The Name of a dog », and *The Open*) on the one hand, the other J. M. Coetzee and Thomas Nagel (« What is it like to be a bat ? » and *Elizabeth Costello*). These discussions will serve as an introduction to the rich field of contemporary animal studies. We will limit our examples to works from the 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, a corpus that is extremely varied, ranging from the Japanese classic *I Am a Cat* by Natsume Soseki to animal poems by Marianne Moore, Elizabeth Bishop and Ted Hughes, and stories by Franz Kafka, Virginia Woolf and George Langelaan. Films will be discussed, including Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man*, David Cronenberg's *The Fly*, Paul and Sandra Fierlinger's *My Dog Tulip*, and Yorgos Lanthimos's *The Lobster*, along with Mick Jackson's biopic on *Temple Grandin*. We will conclude with imaginary animals sketched by Jorge Luis Borges in his book of fantastic zoology.

Requirements:

One oral presentation (20%).

Five film journals (40%).

One final paper (40%).

## Syllabus

Jan. 12 Introduction to animal studies

Jan. 17 Derrida : first questions

Jan. 19 Derrida vs. Levinas : « The Name of a dog »

Jan. 24 Derrida vs. Agamben (*The Open*)

Jan. 26 Temple Grandin -- watch Mick Jackson's biopic

Jan. 31 Thomas Nagel « What is it like to be a bat ? »

Feb. 2 J. M. Coetzee against Nagel in « Lives of animals »

Feb. 7 Coetzee : *Elizabeth Costello*

Feb. 9 Kafka : «Report to an Academy » and Coetzee's *Elizabeth Costello*

Feb. 14 Kafka : «Metamorphosis »

Feb. 16 Kafka : « The Village Schoolmaster (giant mole) » and « The Vulture »

Feb. 21 Kafka : « Josephine » and « Investigations of a dog »

Feb. 23 Kafka : «A crossbreed » and « The Burrow »

Feb. 28 Kafka : « Jackals and Arabs » and « A Little Fable »

March 2 Film journal 1: *The Fly* 1986 film (Cronenberg) and short story

Spring break

March 14 The « Fly » saga and animal horror films

March 16 Virginia Woolf : *Flush*

March 21 Film journal 2 : *My Dog Tulip*

March 23 Fragments from Natsume Soseki's *I Am a Cat*

March 28 Poems by Marianne Moore (1)  
March 30 Film journal 3 *The Birds*  
April 4 Poems by Marianne Moore (2)  
April 6 Poems by Elizabeth Bishop  
April 11 Film journal 4 : *Grizzly Man*  
April 13 Poems by Ted Hughes (1)  
April 18 Film journal 5 : *The Lobster*  
April 20 Poems by Ted Hughes (2)  
April 25 Borges and imaginary animals