

University of Western Ontario
Department of English and Writing Studies, Winter 2018
English 9155B: Animals and the Environment in Early Modern Literature
Monday, 9:30-12:30, LWH 2210

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This course will take up the current critical interest in animal studies and ecocriticism to investigate the poetry, prose, and drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Possible texts include Shakespeare's *King Lear* or *Macbeth*, country house poems such as Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst," and Margaret Cavendish's anti-hunting poems or her early sci-fi prose work, *The Blazing World*, which depicts a land peopled with human-animal hybrids. Living through the era of climate change known as the Little Ice Age, the early moderns, like us, confronted ecological challenges such as war, population growth, famine, and early industrialization, all of which likewise affected human-animal relationships. To help us draw analogies between past and present experience, this course will integrate critical, historical (e.g. agricultural and hunting manuals, forestry tracts, pamphlets on urban pollution), and contemporary theoretical approaches.

Texts (available in the bookstore):

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Simon and Schuster, 2013)
 John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (Penguin, 2000)
 Virgil, *Georgics* (Oxford World's Classics, 2009)

Broadview bundle, which includes the four books below:
 Margaret Cavendish, *A Description of the Blazing World* (Broadview, 2016)
 William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (Broadview, 2012)
 Thomas More, *Utopia* (Broadview, 2010)
 Thomas Deloney, *Jack of Newbury* (Broadview, 2015)

All secondary readings and shorter poems will be available on OWL.

Assignments

Participation: 20%

Response papers: 20%

Seminar: 20%

Final Paper: 40%

Participation 20%

This grade evaluates ongoing participation in class discussions. Your contributions are what will make this class successful! When reading, take notes, record questions, and come prepared to discuss and examine both primary and secondary texts in detail. Please be sure to bring your primary texts, and either print off the OWL material (encouraged) or bring your laptop.

This grade also includes attendance at and participation in the draft essay workshop on the last day of classes. Please be sure to bring your drafts and come prepared to give feedback to others. (We'll discuss this further closer to the date.)

Note: Repeated absences (i.e., more than 3 missed classes without legitimate medical or personal reasons) means that you will forfeit this portion of your grade.

Response Papers 20% (1000 words)**Due Date:**

These short papers are designed to get you engaged with and thinking about some of the foundational material in the class. These are response papers, so they don't require any research. Plan on discussing a primary text in relation to the theoretical/critical readings for the allotted day. Please come to class prepared to read your response. I will collect your papers at the end of each class.

Seminar Presentation 20%**Due Date:** Sign up

Each of you will sign up for one seminar presentation. This will consist of a well-organized presentation and the managing of a less-formal discussion. Your presentation should be approximately 20 minutes long. For the seminar, plan to present initial research (e.g. provide critical overviews, theoretical frameworks) and pursue a focused analysis in order to suggest and work through an initial argument. You should plan to read beyond the syllabus for the seminar. Please provide each member of the class with a handout that includes a brief synopsis of your argument, your bibliography, and three discussion questions. If you wish, you can include significant quotes and/or images.

Your three questions might try to get the class to assess or further your arguments and suggestions; they might address topics you didn't have time to discuss during your presentation. The presenter will be responsible for moderating the discussion (approx. 30-40 minutes) following the presentation. I will take into account both the presentation and moderation of discussion when grading.

Research Paper 40% (4500-5000 words: 15-18 pages)**Due Date:** April 16th

This paper will explore a topic of your choosing in relation to one or more primary texts from our syllabus. It should be based on substantial research (at least 10 secondary sources), and make a clear, well-developed, and well-written argument. You may use your seminar and/or your response papers as a starting point. If you do, the final paper should considerably develop your ideas (especially in the case of a seminar), through a more in-depth analysis of the primary text, and through significant additional research. In other words, this paper should be a substantial investigation of a new idea and/or a process of active revision: please don't simply reiterate your seminar paper and build the rest of your paper around it.

I am always happy to meet and discuss assignments and ideas.**Notes on Extensions and Technology:**

No extensions will be granted for in-class presentations (response papers and seminar) except when warranted by medical or personal circumstances.

Laptops may be used to assist presentations; they may also be used when we are looking at OWL material. Otherwise, you may not use laptops, phones, or other electronic devices during class time.

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

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Scrupulous accuracy in the quotation and citation of all sources and references is expected.

Mental Health

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Course Outline

Jan. 8: Introduction

Jan. 15: Ecocritical Thinking (all readings on OWL)

- Timothy Clark, from *The Cambridge Introduction of Literature and the Environment*, pp. 1-24.
- Keith Thomas, from *Man and the Natural World*, pp. 17-50, 92-120.
- “A reckoning for our species: the philosopher prophet of the Anthropocene” *The Guardian* June 15, 2017.
- Two poems: Andrew Marvell, “The Garden”; Margaret Cavendish, “The Hunting of the Hare.”

Jan. 22: Pastoral (all readings on OWL)

- Mary Wroth, *Love’s Victory*, from Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, eds.
- Greg Garrard, “Pastoral,” from *Ecocriticism*.
- Barbara Lewalski, “Mary Wroth’s *Love’s Victory* and Pastoral Tragicomedy,” from Miller and Waller, eds.

Jan. 29: Georgic

- Virgil. *Georgics*.
- Greg Garrard, “Dwelling,” from *Ecocriticism*, pp. 117-29. (OWL)
- Laura Sayre, “How/to Make Fields Fertile”: Ecocritical Lessons from the History of Virgil’s *Georgics* in Translation,” from Schliephake, ed. (OWL)
- Two poems: Robert Herrick, “The Hock-Cart”; Ben Jonson, “The Praises of a Country Life.” (OWL)

Feb. 5: Ecofeminism, Eating, and the Country-House (all readings on OWL)

- Ben Jonson, “To Penshurst.”
- Aemilia Lanyer, “Description of Cooke-ham.”
- Sylvia Bowerbank, “Introduction: Toward a Genealogy of Ecological Feminism,” from *Speaking for Nature*.
- Amy Tigner, “The Ecology of Eating in Jonson’s ‘To Penshurst,’” from Munroe et al.

Feb. 12: Bioregionalism

- Thomas Deloney. *Jack of Newbury*.
- Kirkpatrick Sale, from *Dwellers in the Land*, Ch. 4, 6, 8. (OWL)
- Michel Serres, from *The Natural Contract*, pp. 38-50. (OWL)

Feb. 19: Reading Week

Feb. 26: Animals

- Thomas More, *Utopia*.
- Christopher Burlinson, “Humans and Animals in Thomas More’s *Utopia*.” (OWL)
- Tobias Menely and Margaret Ronda, “Red,” from Cohen, ed. (OWL)

March 5: Reinventing Nature

- Margaret Cavendish, *The Blazing World*.
- Sylvia Bowerbank, “Nature as Trickster: The Philosophical Laughter of Margaret Cavendish,” from *Speaking for Nature*. (OWL)
- Giorgio Agamben, from *The Open: Man and Animal*, pp. 21-38. (OWL)

March 12: Forest and Field

- William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*.
- Randall Martin. “Land-Uses and Convertible Husbandry in *As You Like It*,” from *Shakespeare and Ecology*. (OWL)

March 19: The Un/natural

- William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*.
- Charlotte Scott, “Darkness Visible: *Macbeth* and the Poetics of the Unnatural,” from *Shakespeare’s Nature*. (OWL)
- Steve Mentz, “Shakespeare’s Beach House, or the Green and the Blue in *Macbeth*.” (OWL)

March 26: Air Pollution and the Garden

- John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Books 1-6.
- Ken Hiltner, “Representing Air Pollution in Early Modern London,” from *What Else Is Pastoral?* (OWL)
- Diane Kelsey McColley, from “Air, Water, Woods” in *Poetry and Ecology*, pp. 79-87. (OWL)

April 2: Manuring

- John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Books 7-12.
- David Goldstein, “Manuring Eden: Biological Conversions in *Paradise Lost*,” from Eklund, ed. (OWL)

April 9: Workshops and final conversation

- Bring your essay drafts for small group discussion and critique.