

Anthropology of Life
M, W 1-4:00 Social Science 2, Room 71

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Office hours: M, W 4-5:00, Social Sciences 1, Room 408

The Semi-Domesticated World

How do humans and other species come together in transformative connection? This course takes up this question in a study of domestication. Domestication is conventionally understood as the process by which humans, through intentional and unintentional selection, transform plants and animals into tools, foodstuff, and pets. This course builds on and departs from this convention by exploring domestication as co-constitutive events. Instead of a one-way flow of designs from human to nonhuman, domestication is a process in which humans and other species pull each other into their respective orbits, ecologies, and transformative grips. The result is a human but also more-than-human life unit. How does this unit change in time? What are the conditions of life, death, landscape, and power that domestications create? How do domestications transform the non-domesticated world in which they are immersed?

Reading Responses: For most sessions you will submit a short piece of writing responding to the assigned readings and writing prompt. Each reading response is due at the beginning of class. You are required to bring two printed copies. Responses should be 250 words (give or take) and single-spaced. Please print your name, date, reading response number, and email in the upper left hand corner. Please provide a word count at the end of your response. These responses will be used to spark class discussion and can be shared with the group at random. Take care to write with clarity and to seriously engage the reading.

Final Exam: Rather than write papers, you will be evaluated by your reading responses and a take-home exam at the end of the quarter.

Class Policies: Repeated absences will not be tolerated. Each student is allowed to miss one class period (the equivalent of two regular class periods). Students who miss two classes will have his/her baseline grade reduced to a C. Three absences will result in a failing grade.

Plagiarism will also result in a failing grade. Be sure to cite all text that is not your own.

Evaluation: Participation 25%; Reading Responses 35%; Final Exam 40%.

Required Books: All books are available at the Literary Guillotine.

Crosby, A.W. 2004. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge University Press.

Haraway, D.J. 2003. *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*. Prickly Paradigm Press.

Lien, Marianne. 2015. *Becoming Salmon: Aquaculture and the Domestication of a Fish*. University of California Press.

Schedule: M July 27 — Introduction

Domestication and Conquest

W July 29 — James Scott, “Four Domestications”

M Aug 3 — Anna Tsing, “Unruly Edges”; Charles Darwin, “Variation Under Domestication” from the Origin of the Species

W Aug 5 — Columbian Exchange: Chapters 1-4

M Aug 10 — Columbian Exchange: Chapters 5-9

W Aug 12 — Columbian Exchange: Chapters 10-12

Symbiogenesis

M Aug 17 — Evans-Pritchard, “Interest in Cattle” from The Nuer; Gilbert et al. “A Symbiotic View of Life”

W Aug 19 — Companion Species Manifesto

Life in an Industrial Mode

M Aug 24 — Becoming Salmon: Chapters 1-4

M Aug 26 — Becoming Salmon: Chapters 5-8