

Meeting Times: Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30 pm Thursdays, 12:30-1:30pm

Place: SSC 2024

Professor: Adriana Premat, Office: SSC 3425

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Course Description

This course is designed to get students to reflect on the relationship urban dwellers in North America have with what we commonly call "nature" through a series of case studies primarily focused on Europe and the Americas. We begin with human centric analyses that take nature as a passive object of human actions and desires, considering case studies that show how parks, gardens, and non-human animals (from the domesticated to the wild) have been variously linked to human projects associated with political domination, class distinction, gentrification, identity politics, citizenship, counterhegemonic movements, and consumerism in "Western" cities. In the second part of the course we query hegemonic understandings of nature through a series of readings that get us to reflect on specific human-non human entanglements in the city, opening up new ways to envision sustainability and conviviality in the urban context.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the evolution of urban parks, gardens, zoos, aquariums, and pet keeping in our cities.
- Explain the basis of scholarly critiques of urban parks, gardens, zoos, etc.
- Identify and critically examine the hierarchies that frame our very different relationships with non-human animals in the city (from pets to pests to circus animals).
- Assess the importance of problematizing conventional definitions of nature.
- Develop an understanding of what can be gained through the application of emergent post-human approaches to the study of nature in the city.
- Work collaboratively with a group of peers to develop shared understandings of class readings.
- Integrate theoretical concepts into the analysis of empirical cases.
- Communicate insights gained via written tutorial assignments, class discussions, and film debates.

Prerequisites

Any Arts and Humanities or Social Science 0.5 or 1.0 Essay course.

Required Texts

- Davis, S. G. (1997) Spectacular Nature: Corporate Culture and the Sea World Experience. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Irvine, L. (2015) My Dog Always Eats First: Homeless People and Their Animals. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- Additional course readings will be made available through OWL.

Course Requirements

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| • In-class participation in 3 tutorials (2 points per tutorial) | 6% |
| • Attendance at <u>minimum</u> of 4 film debates (1 point per film up to 4) | 4% |
| • 3 Written tutorial assignments (15 points, 4-5 pages each) | 45% |
| • Term Exam | 30% |
| • Quiz | 15% |

