“Us and Them: Multispecies Anthropology”
Instructor: Amy Hanes
Syllabus Spring 2017
M, W 2-3:30pm

Course Description
What happens when humans live with, use, save, and destroy other species? What happens when other species protect, comfort, feed, and threaten humans? How are humans and other species made and re-made through our relationships with one another? What can anthropological tools help us learn about relationships that traverse species lines? Can we do participant observation with a chimp or interview a tree? This course will get at these questions by examining the literature and debates of multispecies anthropology, and analyzing current events and popular films that explore struggles between and about species. Important themes include examining how humans’ desires to know, communicate with, and conquer other species shape nation, race, and gender. Students will also examine how comparison (between humans and other species), and how other species themselves, blur the lines between “us” and “them.”

Course Objectives
1. Students’ will improve their ability to identify analytic claims and evaluate an author’s use of evidence to support those claims.

2. Students will have a deeper understanding of multispecies anthropology and be able to describe its historical trajectory, methods, and prominent themes. Students will articulate their own critiques of its usefulness and its limitations.

3. Students will have a deeper understanding of how race, gender, and nation have shaped and been shaped by humans’ engagement with non-human life.

4. Students’ ability to identify and analyze comparison-based political claims (ones asserting similarity or difference between individuals or groups) will improve over the course of the semester. Students will be capable of extrapolating their critiques to comparison-based claims in contexts outside of this course.

Class Preparation & Materials
Class materials (readings, documentaries, podcasts, films, and news articles) are the foundation of this course. Students are expected to come to class having already read, watched, and listened to all assigned pieces. Participation grades (earned through class discussions) will be based on students’ ability to refer to textual examples during class discussions. All materials will be available on LATTE.

Statement of Work
In order to succeed in this course, students should put in an average of 9 hours of work each week (outside of class) reading, watching assigned films, and completing written reading responses and other assignments.
Course Requirements

1. Attend Class and Participate
Students are required to attend all class sessions and be prepared to engage deeply with texts during class. Students are allowed one unexcused absence and one excused absence (accompanied by a note from a doctor or academic advisor) during the semester (two absences equals missing one week of class). Additional absences will negatively affect grades. *Participation points will automatically be deducted for students who are texting or are online during class.*

2. Submit Reading Notes Online
Students are required to submit reading notes on Latte by 9am BEFORE class. The instructor will provide a template for notes or question prompt to be answered. Notes are a key component of the course grade, and increase the likelihood that students will meet course goals.

3. Short Response Paper (2 pages)
Students are required to submit a two-page response paper on April 7st by 5pm. Students will engage critically with readings on multispecies methods. The instructor will post a prompt, tips for forming an argument, and a grading rubric on Latte prior to the start of Unit 5.

4. Final Assignment
Students may choose 1 of 3 possible final paper topics. Each student will submit a 1-page proposal on April 22nd by 5pm. The final paper (8-10 pages) is due on exam day by 5pm. The instructor will post descriptions of the requirements, paper options and grading rubric on Latte. (Students earn 5 bonus points for providing proof of visiting the Brandeis Writing Center for feedback on their final paper!)

- Option 1: Compare and contrast the themes of gender, race, and (neo)colonialism from Unit 2 with those in two documentaries: Ofir: A Wildlife Crime Documentary (2013) and Born to Be Wild (2011). Both films will be available on Latte.

- Option 2: Collect online data about the Harambe case (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Py_1aCt2cOs) (including news articles, debates, memes, and social media commentary) to analyze how comparison was deployed by different groups advocating for and against killing Harambe. Address how species, race, and gender function in these comparisons.

- Option 3: Conduct original multispecies research to re-explore one course author’s research questions. The student will work with the instructor to design a simple methodology for their project that involves either participant observation and/or interviews with humans and at least one other species.
Basis for Evaluation
Participation 20%
Reading Notes 20%
Short Response Paper 20%
Proposal & Final Paper 40%

Pre-requisites
There are no prerequisites to taking this course.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
You are expected to know and follow the University’s policies on academic integrity (see http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai). **If any part of these policies is unclear to you, see the instructor immediately.** Instructors and faculty may refer any suspected instances of alleged dishonesty to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to, failing grades being issued, educational programs, and other consequences.

Accessibility
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see the instructor at the beginning of the term.

Communication and Extensions
The instructor will make course announcements through Latte and use email to communicate directly with students if they have questions. Any syllabus updates will be announced and updated through Latte. **Please read the syllabus closely before emailing the instructor with questions about the course.** Every effort will be made to respond to student email inquiries within 48 hours.

If you need to request a brief extension for an assignment you will need to do so more than 48 hours in advance of the due date, unless in the case of a documented emergency (documentation from a doctor or academic advisor). It is highly unlikely that a student will be granted more than one extension during the semester.

Office Hours
Office hours are a great place to discuss your ideas and questions! Office hours will be held in Brown 204 from 3:45-5pm on Mondays and Wednesday (or by appointment).

Technology in Class
Cell phone use is **prohibited** in class. If you have an emergency and need to plan to step out once during class to check messages you should arrange that with the instructor before class. Computers and other tablet devices are only allowed for the purpose of note taking. Being online is obvious to those around and distracts your peers and the instructor. Using electronic devices for chatting or going online during class will result in immediate deduction in participation points and **possibly a request for you to leave class.**
* Read materials for each class in the order they are listed (for maximum understanding).

**Unit I: Multispecies Anthropology**
This unit provides an introduction to multispecies anthropology and its key themes.

Jan 18<sup>th</sup> (Wed) 1.1 Introduction
• Syllabus (read before attending class)

Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> (Mon) 1.2 Anthropology & Non-Humans Then

Jan 25<sup>th</sup> (Wed) 1.3 Multispecies Anthropology Now

**Unit 2: Species and Power**
This unit takes an in-depth look at the species concept and the colonial imagination that popularized it. Readings explore how the colonial desire for discovery and nation-building drove the search for new species.

Jan 30<sup>th</sup> (Mon) 2.1 Doing Species

Feb 1<sup>st</sup> (Wed) 2.2 Species and Colonial Projects: Race, Gender (Masculinity) and Nation-Building

Feb 6<sup>th</sup> (Mon) 2.3 Species and Colonial Projects: Race, Gender (Femininity), and Science
Unit 3: Us and Them? Exploding the Lines
This unit provides students with the theoretical tools they will need to reconsider the concept of species and the Western nature/culture divide that has guided anthropology until now. Readings present new ways to imagine concepts like ‘culture’ and the ‘social,’ and introduce students to non-Western human-animal configurations.

Feb 8\textsuperscript{th} (Wed) 3.1 Doing Multispecies Anthropology (Possibility 1) Reimagine the ‘Social’

Feb 13\textsuperscript{th} (Mon) 3.2 Doing Multispecies Anthropology (Possibility 1) Reimagine the ‘Social’ (continued)

Feb 15\textsuperscript{th} (Wed) 3.3 Doing Multispecies Anthropology (Possibility 2) Non-Western Configurations

Feb. 20\textsuperscript{th} and 22\textsuperscript{nd} NO CLASS

Feb 27\textsuperscript{th} (Mon) 3.4 Doing Multispecies Anthropology (Possibility 3) Co-Becoming

March 1\textsuperscript{st} (Wed) 3.5 Doing Multispecies Anthropology (Possibility 3) Co-Becoming (continued)

Unit 4: Spheres of Engagement
This unit considers human/non-human engagement across different spheres, including: technology, hunting, conservation, veganism, and therapeutic interventions. Students will draw on new theoretical concepts mastered in the last unit to consider different ways humans and non-humans collaborate, kill, enable, and heal one another.

March 6\textsuperscript{th} (Mon) 4.1 Technological Collaboration with Them
March 8\textsuperscript{th} (Wed) 4.2 Hunting Them and Hunting with Them


March 13\textsuperscript{th} (Mon) 4.3 Conservation: Who’s the ‘Us’ and Who’s the ‘Them’?


March 15\textsuperscript{th} (Wed) 4.4 Veganism: Engagement through Non-Engagement


March 20\textsuperscript{th} (Mon) 4.5 Therapy: Dogs Rescuing and Being Rescued

- (40 min T.V. show) “Redeemed.” Pit Bulls and Parolees Season 8 Episode 2.

\textbf{Unit 5: Multispecies Methods}

This unit challenges students to consider how to formulate research questions around multispecies engagements, who each actor is (i.e. the anthropologist and the other species), ethical issues, and data collection from and with other species.

March 22\textsuperscript{nd} (Wed) 5.1 Positioning: The Non-Human as Research Subject


March 27\textsuperscript{th} (Mon) 5.2 Positioning: The Anthropologist as Spokesperson and as Imaginative Interviewer

- (1hr 5min video) Kirksey, Eben (2014) “The Multispecies Salon Presents: How to Interview a Plant.” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lwFG0N04rQ
March 29th (Wed) 5.3 Ethics, Consent, and Fiction as Ethnography

- (3 min) BBC (2013) “Scientist Speaks Chimp”. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYsyvq4GKDo

April 3rd (Mon) 5.4 Beyond Words: Art and Multispecies Worlds:

- Reeves, Matt (2014) *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*. Film.

**Unit 6: Our “Closest Relatives”: Human-Chimpanzee Relations and the Role of Comparison**

The final unit delves into one set of multispecies relationships—those between humans and chimpanzees. Scientists, environmentalists, animal-rights activists, poachers, and religious conservatives agree that chimpanzees are humans’ closest non-human relatives, but they disagree over what that means. Students will explore how humans compare themselves (and others) to chimpanzees, and the political implications of those comparisons.

April 5th (Wed) 6.1 Humans, Chimpanzees, and Comparisons

- (Review Website for Habitat and Population Information) IUCN Red List: Pan Troglodytes (chimpanzees) http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/15933/0
- (3 pgs) Notes on Comparisons (Latte)

April 7th SHORT RESPONSE PAPER DUE 5PM

April 10th, 12th, 17th NO CLASS

April 19th (Wed) 6.2 Alike and Different: The Case For and Against Eating Chimpanzees


- National Geographic (2011) *Ape Genius*

April 22th (SAT) Final Paper Proposal due 5pm
April 24th (Mon) 6.3 Chimpanzees & American Racism: Using Comparison to Divide Us


April 26th (Wed) 6.4 Can Similarity Be Sameness? Cross (Species)-Fostering


May 1st (BRANDEIS Mon) 6.5 Pets & The Problem of Cuteness

- Baby Chimpanzee Picture Compilation pdf.

May 3rd (Wed) 6.6 Legally Overlapping: Rights & Chimpanzees as “Persons, Not People”


May 4th (Thurs, Reading Day) Office hours (10am-3pm) to Discuss Final Papers

Exam Day (TBA): Final Papers Due by 5pm