

Course Title: Darwin's Legacy: (R)evolutionary Theory's Cultural Impact

Faculty Name: Dr. Amy R. Parish

Institution: USC - Depts. of Anthropology and Gender Studies

Semester Taught: Spring 2010

150 years after Darwin first published his theory of evolution, his ideas remain a source of passionate controversy - above all when those ideas are applied to humans and human behavior. This course will explore evolutionary theory's impact on political, philosophical, religious and literary thought through a critical examination of a broad spectrum of related works (including both scientific and nonscientific texts as well as works of fiction and film). We will study works reflecting traditions as diverse as social Darwinism, creationism, biological determinism and the animal rights movement. Equally important, during this course we will each grapple with our personal relationship to evolutionary theory's philosophical challenges. The texts we read will be used as a basis for working through issues such as the significance of humanity's purported demotion to the animal kingdom and whether "human nature" really exists.

Readings:

Darwin (3rd Edition), Appelman

The Beak of the Finch, Jonathon Weiner

Botany of Desire, Michael Pollan

The Mating Mind, G. Miller

Mother Nature, Sarah Hrdy

Next of Kin, Roger Fouts

The Immense Journey, Loren Eiseley

A Sand County Almanac, Leopold

Assorted Articles

Assessment:

Students will write one paper and complete a midterm and final examination. You will also keep a journal in which you analyze the portrayal of human behavior in literature, film, television, and print-media using a variety of perspectives, including an evolutionary perspective. There will be two in-class writing assignments.

Your final grade will be calculated in the following proportions:

Mid-term: 25%; Final: 25%; Paper: 20%; Journal: 20%; In-class writing assignments: 10%

Course Requirements and Policies:

The assigned readings complement, rather than replace the class lectures. Therefore, attendance is expected at class lectures each week. You are allowed two excused absences (however, 100% attendance is strongly recommended). Each additional absence will result in a

5% reduction in your grade. Please arrive for class on time. Two late arrivals (and/or early departures) will be counted as one absence. The readings are an extremely important component of the course. It will be impossible to do well without having read the assigned reading thoroughly. Please be sure to keep up with the reading and have it done by the beginning of the week in which it has been assigned. The lectures provide the background information that you will use to interpret and think critically about the readings.

Examinations can only be rescheduled in the case of extreme illness or emergency. Documentation will be required for a make-up exam. The make-up exam will ask different questions and may be in a different format. Any requests to have an exam question re-graded must be submitted in writing with thorough explication within one week of the return of the exams/assignments.

Writing assignment deadlines are firm. Please allow yourself enough time to compensate for any problems that would otherwise delay submission of your work. No work will be accepted after the due date. Assignments must be turned in at the start of class on the due date.

It is required that all university policies relating to academic honesty and integrity be followed. Please familiarize yourself with rules of academic integrity and student conduct as outlined in SCampus. Please also read the material at these two links: www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tio.pdf, www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tig.pdf.

Students with documented disabilities must report them to the professor at least two weeks before any scheduled exam in order to make alternative testing arrangements. It is best to discuss this at the beginning of term.

This syllabus is subject to change and updates will be posted on Blackboard.

Schedule:

Tuesday 1/12	Introduction
Thursday 1/14	Evolutionary Theory: Natural Selection
Reading	Appelman Part 1, 2 and 3 and pp. 65 -85 Weiner Chapters 1 - 4
Tuesday 1/19	Evolutionary Theory: Natural Selection continued
Thursday 1/21	Library Session (meet in Leavey Learning Room A)
Reading	Weiner Chapters 5 - 7 Appelman pp. 255 - 287 Article "Why Should Students Learn Evolution" Article "Hooke, Fossils, and the Anti-Evolutionists" Article "Darwin's Influence on Modern Thought" Web Link: Darwin – Natural History Museum Article "Evolution in Action"

	Web Link: "Aloha-Spider Style"
Tuesday 1/26	Evolution: Great Transformations
Thursday 1/28	What is a Species
Note:	1/30 last day to drop without "W" or to change P/NP option
Reading	Weiner 9 -12 Pollan Intro and Chapter 1 Appelman 95 - 158
Tuesday 2/2	Evolutionary Theory: Sexual Selection (Male-Male Competition)
Thursday 2/4	Evolutionary Theory: Sexual Selection (Female Choice)
Reading	Miller Chapters 1 – 6
Tuesday 2/9	Why Sex
Thursday 2/11	Darwinopoly
Reading	Miller Chapters 7 -11
Tuesday 2/16	Thoughts on the Human Animal: Lecture by Jonathan Kirsch
Thursday 2/18	First In-Class Writing Assignment
Reading	Pollan Chapter 2 and 3
Tuesday 2/23	Evolutionary Theory: Revised Sexual Selection
Thursday 2/25	Woman The Inside Story
Reading	Hrdy Chapters 1 - 7
Tuesday 3/2	Adding to Darwin's Legacy: Genetic Traits
Thursday 3/4	Midterm
Reading	Pollan Chapter 4 and Epilogue Hrdy Chapters 8 - 14
Tuesday 3/9	American Approaches to Evolution and Race: Guest Lecture by Dr. Varun Soni
Thursday 3/11	TBA
Reading	Appelman Part VIII Article "The Perimeter of Ignorance" Article "The Growth of Evolutionary Science" Article "15 Answers to Creationist Nonsense" Article "The Illusion of Design"
Tuesday 3/16	Spring Break: No classes
Thursday 3/18	Spring Break: No classes
Tuesday 3/23	Bonobo Social and Sexual Behavior
Thursday 3/25	Chimpanzee Politics

Reading	Fouts Part 1 and 2
Tuesday 3/30	Humanity's Relationship to Nature
Thursday 4/1	Humanity's Relationship to Nature continued
	Papers due at start of lecture 4/1
Reading	Appelman Part IX
	Leopold Foreword and Part I
	Weiner Chapter 20
Tuesday 4/6	Human Evolution
Thursday 4/8	The Evolutionary Arms Race
Note:	Friday 4/9 Last Day to Drop with "W"
Reading	Fouts Part 3
	Leopold Part III
Tuesday 4/13	Cooperation
Thursday 4/15	Cooperation
Reading	Appleman Part VI
	Eiseley pp 1 - 126
Tuesday 4/20	Extinction
Thursday 4/22	Second In-Class Writing Assignment
Reading	Weiner Chapter 18
	Eiseley pages 127 – end
Tuesday 4/27	The Human Animal
Thursday 4/29	The Human Animal
Reading	Hrdy Chapters 15 -22
Tuesday 5/11	Final Exam 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.