

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)
Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

ABSTRACTS:

“The Lively Creaturely World of *The Rape of Lucrece*”

Abstract

SAA 2015

Rebecca Ann Bach

Like so much of Shakespeare’s work, *The Rape of Lucrece* abounds with birds: bird imagery, bird tropes, symbolic bird, and references to “real” birds and bird parts in the poem’s world. Accompanying those birds are numerous beasts, including tigers, lambs, deer, rams, worms, serpents, mice, dogs, and mythological creatures. In addition, the non-living actants in *Lucrece*’s world seem especially lively. In this paper, I will look closely at *Lucrece*’s creaturely world, asking if the poem’s creaturely abundance and its lively non-living actants are related. The poem is about a human body and soul; I want to see how its bodily and spiritual concerns look when viewed as features of a larger lively creaturely world.

Frederika Bain

Can the Subhuman Speak?

Articulating Animals in Early Modern English Drama

In *Timber*, Ben Jonson gives the often-quoted pronouncement that speech is “the only benefit man hath to expresse his excellencie of mind above other creatures.” This paper looks at the intersection of animal studies and postcolonial theory in terms of the possibility of speaking animals on the early modern English stage. Building on Gayatri Spivak’s famous question concerning the subaltern, it joins a scholarly discourse suggesting that concerns articulated and assumptions questioned in subaltern studies may be used to look at the place of the animal within culture and history.

Little work, however, has been done on this intersection concerning the early modern period. Few animals speak, or speak much, in Shakespeare’s plays: the Cat in *Macbeth* and, perhaps, Posthumous’s imagined boar in *Cymbeline* comprise the only articulating animals in his canon. Among other early modern dramatists, Middleton directs in *The Witch* that a fiddle-playing “cat sing[...] a brave treble in her own language” (3.3.57-8), and in Peele’s *Old Wives Tale*, the dog Ball is likewise said to “bid[...] you all welcome in his own language” (1.45). The smith Clunch, who introduces Ball, participates in an extensive tradition of clown-and-dog pairings (Beadle 12-13) that sometimes includes the clown’s imputing to his dog fantastic abilities, including speech; the best examples of this tradition may be the duo of Launce and Crab in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

As Kathryn Perry argues, the beast fable is associated with “lowness” and baseness in the medieval and early modern period (20 and *passim*); in particular, those

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)

Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

who tell such tales are often abjected, but may be given a certain license thereby. Similarly, characters who prompt or imagine beasts' speech in Renaissance English drama are denigrated: whether fools, mountebanks, witches, or, in the case of Posthumous, insane with unwarranted jealousy. This may be because animals speaking human language are assumed to be neither possible nor worthy of consideration, one example of the broader process traced by Bruce Boehrer of "depriving [nonhumans] of any claim to sentience or conscious agency" (30) that supplants the earlier medieval romance tradition valorizing and anthropomorphizing exceptional animal characters. This paper questions in what ways this lessening of animal anthropomorphism, coupled with the representation of animals' imagined speech as ventriloquized by characters themselves disempowered, may work to create or negate views of animal agency.

Larry Bonds

"Ovidian Hunting and Royal Marital Politics in *Titus Andronicus*: John Stubbs' *The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf* as Source and Context for Shakespeare's Play."

In 1579, John Stubbs wrote a pamphlet titled *The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf*, in which he decries forty-six-year-old Queen Elizabeth's plans to marry twenty-four-year-old Francis, Duc D'Alençon, son of King Henry II of France. Besides saying the Queen is too old to marry and safely bear children, Stubbs condemns, in scurrilous terms, Alençon for his Catholicism and syphilis. Outraged, Elizabeth demanded Stubbs, his printer, and his pamphlet's distributor be hanged. Stubbs and his confederates could not be legally executed. Rather, Elizabeth's prosecutors resurrected a law for suppressing criticism of King Philip during Mary Tudor's reign and got Stubbs and the pamphlet's distributor sentenced to have their right hands cut off. The sentence was carried out against Stubbs and the distributor, a man named Page. Shakespeare alludes repeatedly to *The Gaping Gulf* incident in *Titus Andronicus*. In *Titus*, Shakespeare has Titus' daughter Lavinia have *both* of her hands cut off as well as her tongue cut out to keep her from revealing her rape by Chiron and Demetrius, sons of Tamora, Queen of Goths. Later Titus' hand is cut off in a manner explicitly recalling the amputation of Stubbs' and Page's hands. In these actions and others, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is explicitly and implicitly used and alluded to. This paper examines figurative metamorphosing of characters into animals and plants in *Titus* and argues that Shakespeare's play is a vehicle for speaking about dangers attendant on marriages by Protestant monarchs. In 1593, *The Gaping Gulf* and Protestant monarchical marital politics again became topical in England as Henry of Navarre teetered on the edge of converting to Catholicism to solidify his position as King of France.

Christopher Clary

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)
Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

Emory & Henry College

Unfamiliar Felines: Early Modern Cats and the Animal Unknown (may change)

In this essay I explore the early modern theatre's presentation of animal familiars in witchcraft plays. Specifically, I want to push back against the notion that as witches employ animal familiars, they disrupt a fundamental division between animal and human, thus corrupting the category of the human and revealing/enacting their own moral and religious corruption. I am wary of what has become a familiar line of contemporary interpretation that sees in instances of early modern animal/human hybridity an early modern anxiety about the permeability of the categories of "human" and "animal" and the unconscious and inevitable acknowledgement of mankind's own constructed exceptionalness. While I think that there is merit to this sort of argument, I worry that we as critics find it too easy to plug this conclusion into diverse scenes of animal/human combination. So, my investigation, focused primarily around dramatic presentations of feline and (perhaps) canine familiars, aims to explore other potential interpretative avenues, including outside of witchcraft discourses, for reading the early modern experience of animals that serve witches.

John W. Ellis-Etchison

Caliban's Hexameral Sovereignty: Terraqueous Topophilia and the Problem of Terra Nullius in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*

Caliban, from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610-11), utilizes his piscine hybridity and his topophilic love of the island he calls home to construct an ecosystemic form of sovereignty based on hexameral and matrilineal claims to challenge the Milanese Duke and magician Prospero's colonization of the island on the grounds of terra nullius, that it belonged to no one and was under no recognizable sovereign jurisdiction. Both Caliban's animalized-indigeneity and his intimate knowledge of and deep affection for the island's topography necessitate a reconsideration of Prospero's claims as well as our understanding of early modern parameters of sovereignty and the human relationship to place. A magnificent hybrid and figure of nonhuman-indistinction, Caliban is described by Trinculo and Prospero respectively as "half a fish and half a monster" "not honour'd with a human shape" (III.ii.29 and I.ii.283). Although such claims form the basis of Prospero's settlement of the island, I draw upon Laurie Shannon's work in *The Accommodated Animal* to articulate how Caliban's piscine status actually ratifies his claims to the island as necessarily prior to those of Prospero based on a consideration of the order of creation and attendant notion of animal entitlements in the *Genesis* account of the hexameron. Moreover, after exchanging barbs with Prospero, Caliban avers, "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, / Which thou tak'st from me," a prerogative he evinces through a deep ecological awareness of "all the qualities o'th' isle, / The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile" (I.ii.334-5, 340-1). As soon

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)
Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

as Caliban makes a claim to the island through his biological mother, he replaces her with a consideration of the environment in which he grew up. The island becomes the maternal figure that nourishes and shelters Caliban and all the island's inhabitants within the play. However, it also suggests a kind of reciprocal relationship whereby Caliban becomes an early natural historian and conservator, observing, recording, and caring for the island and its resources. This way of thinking about the human's place within and under the care of the world, as well as a steward of the world, elevates the natural environment in a way that throws into sharp relief early modern imperial consideration of land as a commodity to be objectified, colonized. Caliban's formulation dethrones the human as regal terraformer of the earth, depleting its resources, manipulating it for his purposes, and instead reimagines him as a shared stakeholder in the continued survival of his ecological milieu. Such a shift in thinking places the sovereign in intimate relation with his territory, not particularly in dominion above it, but rather as concerned with the cultivation and care of his land as with his subjects.

Dr. Sean Henry
University of Victoria, B.C.
s.g.henry73@gmail.com

“A cockatrice hast thou hatched to the world”: Gloucester, Tarquin, and the Natural History of the Basilisk

Scholars interested in animal studies demonstrate the material and intellectual uses made of animals in Renaissance culture, thereby showing how inexorably linked human and non-human animals lives were (and are) and offering new ways of looking at Shakespeare and other Renaissance texts. Yet fabulous animals pose a challenge in their immateriality: they exist only in the human imagination, even in faked specimens. In my paper, I consider the basilisk or cockatrice (the terms are largely interchangeable), taking the creature's appearances in three of Shakespeare's early works, *3 Henry VI* (3.2.182-90), *Richard III* (1.2.144-53 and 4.1.53-55), and *Lucrece* (540-46), and setting them against their literary natural history. Basilisks have a complex symbolic valence that developed from classical, biblical, and medieval texts, closely linked to sexual desire beyond their slang meaning in early modern English. Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky rightly argues for the particular association between the basilisk and threatening female beauty, desirability, and desire in early modern literature. But the creature's meaning encompasses more than female sexuality—as my three Shakespearean examples suggest, which link basilisks to threatening male characters.

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)
Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

Erin K. Kelly
15 December 2014
Shakespeare Association of America
April 2-4, 2014 Vancouver
Animal Encounters

Social Identity and the Animal-Human Divide in *Love's Labour's Lost*

Hunting is a particularly fraught and complex form of animal encounter. The ultimate goal of the encounter between hunter and hunted is death. Nonetheless, in aristocratic early modern venery, the human hunter must rely on the speed, strength, and superior senses of his horses and dogs. The very activity that allows the aristocratic hunter to demonstrate his dominance over the natural world and social order also requires him (usually him) to rely on the services of his lower class huntsmen and to effect what amounts to a human-animal hybrid of man-horse-dog. William Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* prominently features two kinds of aristocratic hunting: bow and stable and coursing. Throughout the play, Shakespeare plays with the convention of the hunt as love chase, using the language and procedures of the pastime to comment on the relationships between the four pairs of lovers. Through an examination of these moments, I will argue that love is presented as both a domination of one species by another and as interspecies miscegenation. The use of hunting in this play and in early modern imaginative literature more broadly also provides an opportunity to engage in our seminar's questions about narratives of historical change. On the one hand, Shakespeare continues to use the convention of the hunt as love chase that extends back through medieval into classical literature. On the other hand, contemporary changes in environmental and cultural conditions (the declining red deer population and the rise in popularity of ever more detailed hunting manuals) suggest change rather than continuity, a change that is reflected in the pedantic conversation about hunting between Nathaniel, Holofernes, and Dull. Finally, I hope that my paper also prompts questions about what constitutes an animal encounter in Shakespeare, for there are no real encounters with animals in this play. No actual hunting occurs onstage. Instead, animals are the subject of conversation and wordplay. Behind those words, however, lie real (dead) animals.

Catherine Lisak, University Bordeaux Montaigne
SAA 2015 A close encounter with Titus' "Poor harmless fly": early modern care ethics and the question of species Titus Andronicus, III. 2.:

The fly has just been smashed to smithereens for crossing Marcus's path – or dish. The lower animal, if anything an unsavory morsel, paradoxically brings out the sense of primacy in a man who would behave as the "king of beasts" in the presence of a bug. By

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)

Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

not only calling his brother a murderer, but by awakening him to the beauty of the beast and to its fundamental affiliations and relationships, akin to man's, Titus vividly addresses our own understanding of the ethics of care. The narrative that follows is spoken with that sense of "common compassion" which John Stubbs in *The Gaping Gulf* (1579) had already identified in men who feel pity for some overburdened beast. Titus' discourse will continue to resound well into the mid-seventeenth century. In 1654 John Hall will argue that "a man should no more kill a fly than a soldier without other engagement would kill a man." At stake is the question of motivation, and of management of interrelations between kind, rank, and species. Through Shakespeare's dialogue between Titus and his brother, we are made aware of the conflicting accounts that circulated in the early modern world upon the ideal of human ascendancy embodied in the dialogue between brothers. This paper offers an investigation into the narrative that emanated from the ideologically unorthodox expression of empathy for another species' sufferance, and indignation at man's sense of righteousness, impunity or indifference when inflicting pain or death upon another than himself (the concept of the reflexive self being revisited in such discourses), before "benevolence" and kindness towards non humans was to become an official ideal. Derrida, Jacques, *The Beast and the Sovereign*, Volumes 1 and 2, translated by Geoffrey Bennington, University of Chicago Press, 2009. -----, *The Animal that therefore I Am (More to Follow)*, edited by Marie-Louise Mallet, translated by David Willis, Fordham University Press, 2008. Bruckner, Lynne and Dan Brayton, eds., *Ecocritical Shakespeare*, Ashgate, 2011. Thomas, Keith, *Man and the Natural World, Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, Penguin, 1983. Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome, ed., *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral, Ethics and Objects*, Washington 2012

Elizabeth Mathie

University of Michigan

Abstract: Service and Love, Servants and Dogs in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

In the project from which this essay is excerpted, I put scholarship on service in the early modern period in conversation with early modern animal studies to consider how the changing place of servants in early modern English households afforded an opportunity for a critique of service in the era, particularly through interactions and comparisons across a variety of service relationships. In this essay, in particular, I will examine *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* for the way that human-human relationships and animal-human relationships are placed alongside one another and, I will argue, made to speak to one another. Specifically, I will track the servant Lance—who has received much attention in animal studies recently for Crab, his comical dog—through the play in order to put pressure on the comedic exchange between the two in Act 4 Scene 4 of the play. I will pursue answers toward the following questions: How might the work of animal

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)

Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

studies in conversation with scholarship on early modern service open up new possibilities for the source of the comedy in Lance's relationship with his dog? (Does the comedy of Lance's exchange with Crab hinge on Lance's inability to train the dog? Might his expectations of the training process been understood as comically unrealistic? Might his expectations of loyalty on Crab's part been likewise unrealistic?) How might those sources of comedy be further commented on and played out in human-human relationships throughout the play? Through such an analysis, I will propose that we consider how animal studies, with its interest in "real" animals, can speak to scholarship historically interested exclusively in the human.

"Animal Address," Tobias Menely, UC-Davis

In Book Seven of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the meddling god Juno encourages Aeneas's son, Ascanius, to shoot a stag who had been domesticated by the forest ranger Tyrrhus and his daughter Silvia. The injured creature finds his human benefactors and, in Dryden's translation, fills their "House with heavy Groans, / Implores their Pity, and his Pain bemoans [*Questuque cruentus, / Atque Imploranti similis*]." As indicated by the Latin *imploro* (to invoke with tears, to call upon, to beseech), the stag's moans do more than express an internal state. They are directed, sent forth; they address somebody, soliciting the attention of another, invoking a relation, anticipating a reception and response. My paper takes as its case study this figure of the hunted stag whose tears implore—its classical origins in Ovid and Virgil, its pervasive appearance in the early-modern period (in Drayton, Sidney, Shakespeare, Montaigne, and Cavendish)—in order to reflect on animal address and on the addressive quality of signification itself. I draw on Peirce's canonic definition of the sign: "something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign." Address implies an act of framing or facing, a kind of orienting in space, a bringing face to face that precedes and enables communicative exchange, the passage of a sign from one to another.

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)
Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

Brett Mizelle
Professor, History & Director, American Studies
California State University Long Beach
brett.mizelle@csulb.edu

Grizzly Adams, Antebellum American Culture, and the Making of Grizzly Bears

Largely forgotten today, James Capen "Grizzly" Adams was a cultural icon in the 1850s, famed for his ability to tame and train wild animals. Adams began regularly scheduled exhibitions of the animals in his California Menagerie in San Francisco in 1856 before taking his animals to New York City, where he established a partnership with P.T. Barnum that lasted until Adams' death in 1860 from an injury caused by his grizzly "General Fremont." Theodore Hittell's writings about Adams in San Francisco, along with Barnum's marketing of Adams and his menagerie, turned him into an international celebrity. Thousands of Americans were drawn to his exhibitions in California, New York City and the northeast, while countless others vicariously participated in "Grizzly" Adams' exploits through accounts in the press, his two ghost-written autobiographies, and scores of popular anecdotes and images.

This paper, which will eventually constitute the conclusion of a book-length project on the cultural work of encounters between human and nonhuman animals at exhibitions of exotic and performing animals in the early republic and antebellum America, will explicate the serious pleasures offered by the Mountaineer Museum and California Menagerie. I argue that Adams' life illuminates many significant developments in antebellum American culture. His constant search for the "main chance" was typical of many men of his generation, for example, even if his ultimate career as a cultural entrepreneur and animal trainer was not. His partnership with Hittell and his subsequent exploitation by Barnum also testify to the centrality of popular print and visual culture in the creation of the modern celebrity. These narratives helped create a new cultural figure—the "mountain man"—which defined both the newly acquired American west and Americans' understandings of wilderness.

The story of "Grizzly" Adams does more than just provide us with a well-documented tale of popular culture entrepreneurship, however, for Adams also enhanced knowledge about western wildlife, complicating the image of the grizzly bear by providing valuable information about its habits, habitats, and character while demonstrating how a "ferocious predator" could be made "susceptible of domestication." However, Adams' death from wounds inflicted by his "docile" companions reminds us that presumptions of human mastery over the natural world are premature, perhaps even wishful thinking. In another irony, Adams believed the grizzly "a fit companion for the mountains of the Sierras" while making his living through the hunting and subjugation of wild animals,

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)

Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

thereby participating in the destruction of the very way of life he lauded as a refuge from the "evils of civilization." Finally, by animalizing himself and celebrating his status between human and animal worlds, "Grizzly" Adams stands as one of the first figures in American popular culture to positively take on traits of the animal. This historical instance of "becoming animal" provides us with a way to challenge the status of the human, something increasingly important to our revisioning of our place in the world. It also raises important questions for cultural and literary scholars about how to incorporate nonhuman animals as material and symbolic agents in a history traditionally presumed to be solely about the human.

Jan Stirm

UW - Eau Claire

SAA 2015 - "Animal Encounters"

Abstract

"Enter the Dragon: Making Meaning in a *True and Wonderfull* Encounter"

In 1614, John Trundle printed a pamphlet subscribed by John Steele, Christopher Holder, and "a widdow woman dwelling near *Faygate*" reporting a "True and Wonderfull" encounter with a "monstrous Serpent (or dragon)" in Sussex. Using recent work on ecocriticism, my essay argues that this pamphlet creates a dragon/serpent as a "natural" phenomenon, which reveals a Christian God's intervention in both "natural" and human activities. The pamphlet produces readings of the dragon from a sort of natural history perspective as well as from historical and theological perspectives. In each case, these readings attempt to create and discover the "real" nature of dragons, and of this dragon attack specifically, exposing how desire to know nature works when nature is "already known" as a divine creation.

01. Animal Encounters Participants and Abstracts

Holly Dugan (George Washington University)
Karl Steel (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

Steven Swarbrick Ph.D. Candidate Brown University

Paper title: “‘Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago’: Race and Animal Encounters in Shakespeare’s Othello”

Abstract: Analyses of race in early modern criticism typically oscillate between claims of anachronism— race didn’t mean then what it means now, for instance—and assertions of radical alterity—not only was there a concept of race tethered to skin color, but it was levied for the purpose of positing “the other.” This essay looks to examine race within a wider field of bodies, namely animals. What kind of animal has Shakespeare studies become after the deconstruction of the general category “the animal” begun by Jacques Derrida? And what deconstructive force does this question hold for an analysis of race? Although critical animal studies has done much to trouble the human/animal divide, it has done so largely in isolation from critical analyses of race. We do well to recall, then, that the term “race,” in its early modern variants, was used synonymously with “species.” The first part of this essay considers the intellectual traffic between Shakespeare studies and animal studies, while the second part considers the overlap between animality and race in Shakespeare’s Othello. What would happen if these distinct species of theory (Shakespeare studies, animal studies, and critical race studies) were to meet? Suggested Readings: Altman, Joel B. “Were I the Moor, I Would Not Be Othello: Ligatures of Self and Stranger.” *The Improbability of Othello: Rhetorical Anthropology and Shakespearean Selfhood*. Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2010. Print. Derrida, Jacques. “The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow).” *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Trans. David Wills. New York: Fordham UP, 2008. 1-51. Print. Iyengar, Sujata. “Blackface and Blushface.” *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England*. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania UP, 2005. Print.