Course Description
This course builds on the theoretical foundations established in Arts and Science 3B03: Technology and Society I to explore interactions between technology and society with particular attention to the transformative effects of new technologies and the ethical questions they raise. Our focus of inquiry will be the place of animals in past and present societies and the extent to which they have been affected by technology and understood as technologies in their own right.

Course Objectives
One of the objectives of this course is to explore the historical context of relationships and problems of contemporary concern. The chronological structure of the course reflects this central objective. Course readings, lectures and class discussions, however, adopt an interdisciplinary and inquiry-based approach, drawing insights and approaches from history, science and technology studies, cultural studies, and evolutionary biology among other disciplines.

By the end of this course, students will have a better appreciation of the intersections between animals and technology, and the historical roots of contemporary debates surrounding the ethics and social control of technology. Through class assignments, students will hone their critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, while also developing their oral communication skills through discussions and presentations.

Format
At least half of the class time each week will be devoted to discussion, either in small groups, a seminar setting, or discussion involving the whole class. We will also occasionally use more structured forms of discussion, such as a debate format.

In addition to regular meetings on Wednesday afternoons, we will meet for smaller, seminar-style discussions of course content every second Friday. To facilitate these discussions, I will divide the class into two groups, each of which will attend one one-hour Friday seminar session. See the class schedule, below, for clarification.

Required Texts


Courseware pack.

All other assigned readings will be available electronically through the library catalogue or posted on the ATL site for the course under “Resources/Links.”

**Assignments and Evaluation**

- **Attendance and participation** 20%
  - Reading reflections (3 or best of 5): 15%
  - Animal presentation (group assignment): 20%
  - Research presentation: 10%
  - Final paper: 35% (proposal 5%; paper 30%)

**Dates to remember:**
- Reading reflections: at least one (of 3-5) reflections due before mid-term recess
- Research paper proposal: due Wednesday January 28
- Research presentations: in class, March 25, April 1 and April 8
- Research paper: due Friday April 10

- **Attendance and Participation (20%)**
  Regular attendance and participation in class discussions and activities are essential for success in this course. You are expected to arrive in class each week having completed the required readings and prepared to comment on them and discuss them with other students. Your participation in our discussions will be evaluated based on your ability to engage with the course material in an informed, creative and critical manner.

As part of your participation grade, students are expected to make regular contributions to discussion boards for the course set up on Avenue to Learn (ATL). There is no length requirement, but you should aim for one short contribution each week. Your contributions can take the form of opening a new discussion, adding to a discussion that’s already underway, or making a shorter comment on what someone else has written. Think of the discussion boards as a way to continue the conversation outside the timeframe of the class. You might ask questions about things that puzzle you, explore remarks or thoughts that struck you, bring in ideas and material that weren’t assigned, or start brainstorming and trying out ideas for your final paper. Any contribution that is pertinent to the general themes of the course is welcome. You will be evaluated basis of how you contribute to and spark interesting discussion, not on how brilliant your individual contribution is, so use this as an opportunity to experiment.

- **Reading Reflections (15%)**
  500 words, maximum. Students must complete a minimum of three reading reflections (or best 3 out of 5 reflections) over the course of the term. Students may choose which of the nine sets of weekly readings they wish to comment upon. Reading reflections should place the readings of a
particular week “in conversation” with each other, or, for weeks where we are reviewing an entire book, relate the book’s insights and arguments to larger course themes. Reflections should demonstrate a clear engagement with the text(s) in question by identifying the work’s central and supporting arguments, its main sources of evidence, and its significance in contributing to our understanding of the topic. Consider too, what surprised you about this work? What did you find particularly insightful? How did the works (if more than one) contribute to and inform each other? How might it shed light on contemporary debates about technology and society? Reflections should be submitted via ATL dropbox. At least one reflection must be submitted by the mid-term recess. All reflections must be submitted by the last day of classes, April 8.

Animal Presentations (group assignment, 20%)
One week during term, 10-20 minutes
Beginning in week 3, we will begin most classes with one or two animal presentations. In groups of three to four, choose an animal (ideally one not already covered in the syllabus), and put together a presentation on the animal and its (changing) role in human society, and society-technology interactions. For instance, a presentation on pigs would give a brief overview of their physiology and behaviour, and then might consider the history of their domestication and changing physiology/behaviour as a result of human influences, the various ways they are used in food and other products (not just ham and bacon, but gelatin, leather, etc.), their role in children’s literature, pop culture, idioms and insults, etc, and so on. (Reaktion Books’ Animal Series—listed in Resources at the end of this syllabus— is an excellent starting point; the entire series is available at Thode library). Because this is a group presentation, you will be graded on the quality of the overall presentation, not your individual contribution: every member of the group will receive the same grade.

Research Presentations (10%)
In the last three classes of the term each student will give a brief “elevator pitch” presentation of his or her final research paper topic, followed by a brief question and answer session. “Elevator pitches” should encompass no more than five minutes, and provide an engaging overview of the paper’s topic, problem, argument, main evidence, and significance.

Research Paper (Proposals, 5%, due Jan 28; Papers, 30%, due April 10)
Word limit: 2500 words. This assignment gives you the opportunity to research and articulate a position on any aspect of the historical relationship between animals, technology, and human society. Proposals, due January 28th, should include the paper topic, a working title, a one page outline, and a brief list of potential sources. The final paper should not take up the same topic as your Animal presentation. Your essay will be evaluated based on the evident quality of your research, the originality and substance of your ideas and insights, and the effectiveness with which those ideas are convincingly proposed and argued. Further details will be distributed in class.

University Policies

McMaster Policy on Academic Integrity:
You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic
integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences—e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at: http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty: 1) Plagiarism—e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained. 2) Improper collaboration in group work. 3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):
This is an on-line, self-reporting tool for students to report absences due to minor medical situations that last up to 5 days and to request accommodation for any missed academic work that is worth less than 30% of the final grade. Please note that this tool cannot be used during any final examination period. It is the prerogative of the instructor to determine the appropriate relief for missed term work. You may submit a maximum of one request per term. The form should be filled out immediately when you are about to return to class after your absence. It is your responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately (within two working days) about the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent for more than 5 days, have missed academic work worth 30% or more, or exceed one request per term, you must see Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program office (C-105). You will be required to provide supporting documentation.

Please Note:
The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes. Announcements will be made in class and by using the course email distribution list.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:
Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or email sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

Course Policies

Submission of Course Work
All assignments must be submitted electronically via ATL Dropbox by 11:59pm on the deadline day. All written assignments must be double-spaced and typed in a clear, 12-point font. Please adopt a consistent citation style throughout. Students are advised to retain a digital copy of each essay they submit, and to keep all research notes for their essays.

Your essay will be evaluated based on the evident quality of your research, for the originality and substance of your ideas and insights, and for the effectiveness with which those ideas are convincingly proposed and argued.

Assignments must be original pieces of work, produced by you for this course alone. An essay prepared for or used in another course will not be accepted. If you are drawing from assignments you have done or are currently completing for other courses, please see me as soon as possible.

**Late papers policy**
Permission to submit a late assignment is at the discretion of the instructor and, except in exceptional instances, a penalty will be imposed for late submission without prior discussion with me (3% per day, including weekends and holidays). Assignments submitted more than seven days late, without prior permission from the instructor, will not be graded.

**On MSAF**
Only the instructor can grant extensions and other accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to follow up with me as soon as possible after an illness or absence to see if an extension or other accommodation is possible, and what form it will take. There are NO automatic extensions or accommodations.

**Provisional Class Schedule & Readings**
*the professor reserves the right to make changes to readings and/or class topics if need be

Week 1. Wednesday January 7: Introductions

Week 1. Friday January 9. Animals and Technology, Animals *as* Technology

Readings:


Activity: Animal presentations sign-up and planning.

Readings:


Week 3. Wednesday January 21. Living Machines and Animal Ethics: The Horse in the Nineteenth-Century City

Readings (for weeks 3 and 4):


Activities: Animal presentations (2); planning for debate, February 6th

Week 3. Friday January 23. Discussion of readings for weeks 3 and 4

Group A: 3:30-4:20
Group B: 4:30-5:20


Group B: 3:30-4:20
Group A: 4:30-5:20

Week 5. Wednesday February 4. Industrializing Animals: The Stockyard and Technologies of Mass Production

Readings:


Activity: Animal presentations (2)
Week 5. Friday Feb 6. Discussion of readings: *Fast Food Nation*

- Group A 3:30-4:20
- Group B: 4:30-5:20

Week 6. Wednesday February 11. Animal Engineering and Co-Evolutionary History

*Video lecture in class:* Selections from Edmund Russell. “Coevolutionary History.” Lecture, Environmental History and Sustainability Speakers Series, University of Kansas, 14 October 2014.

*Readings:*


*Activity: Animal presentations (1)*

Week 7: Mid-term recess, no classes

Week 8. Wednesday Feb 25. Technologies of Annihilation: Insects and Post-War Agriculture

*Film in class:* *Rachel Carson's Silent Spring* (PBS *American Experience*, 60 mins)

*Readings:*


Week 9. Wednesday March 4. Animals, Technology, and Design

*Readings:*


Activity: Animal presentations (2); debate preparation


    Group B 3:30-4:20
    Group A: 4:30-5:20


Readings:


And two short articles of your choice at http://www.theguardian.com/science/cloning

Activity: Animal presentations (2)


Activity: Animal presentations (2)

Week 11. Friday March 20. Discussion of readings: Nikiforuk, Empire of the Beetle

    Group B 3:30-4:20
    Group A: 4:30-5:20
Week 12. Wed March 25. Research presentations

Week 13. Wed April 1. Research presentations

Week 14. Wed April 8. Research presentations

Additional Resources

Animal Studies Bibliography: http://www.animalstudies.msu.edu/bibliography.php

Envirotech website: Bridging the Histories of Environment and Technology
http://www.envirotechweb.org/

Reaktion Books “Animal” series
http://www.reaktionbooks.co.uk/browse/series/-/*/Series. The full series is available at Thode Library.

Animal is a pioneering series from Reaktion Books. The first of its kind to explore the historical significance and impact on humans of a wide range of animals, each book in the series takes a different animal and examines its role in history around the world. The importance of mythology, religion and science are described as is the history of food, the trade in animals and their products, pets, exhibition, film and photography, and their roles in the artistic and literary imagination.