

History 401R (Historical Methodologies)

UNNATURAL HISTORY: Fact and Evidence in Cryptobiology

Professor Carla Nappi
Class Hours Thursday 3.10-6.00 PM Wilson 1116
Office Hours Tuesday 10-12 and by appt, Wilson 2-168
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The Course

This is a research seminar with two primary and interrelated goals.

On the one hand, we will be exploring one of the most fascinating fields in the history of modern science: the study of cryptozoology and related hidden organisms. This entire course will push you to think critically about the construction of knowledge and the roles played by notions of evidence, proof, and belief therein. At the same time, it will help us develop our collective skills in working with interdisciplinary resources; each week will find us navigating new interdisciplinary waters as we explore ways to engage with fields such as anthropology, philosophy, literature, olfaction, and visual art in our work.

On the other hand, this is an opportunity to compose a significant research project that speaks to your own interests and passions as scholars, gives you an opportunity to develop your skills in research and writing, and ultimately leads to your composing a piece of work that showcases your talent as historians.

Also, there will be giant squids.

The Numbers

The final grades for the course will be determined as follows:

40%	Seminar participation (including attendance and your week of being the discussion leader) & weekly thinkpieces/responses
20%	Midterm research reports
40%	Final research papers

You must complete all course requirements to pass the seminar.

Be sure to hand in all assignments on time. Late papers will be penalized a grade for each day late: an A becomes an A-, a B- becomes a C+, etc.

Course Requirements

1. Do the assigned reading for each week BEFORE our class meeting

2. Post **weekly thinkpieces and responses** on time
3. Submit paper topics, midterm research reports
4. Complete final research paper

Required Texts

The required readings for the course will take two forms:

1. Books for purchase

Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa*

Tim Gallagher, *The Grail Bird*

Richard Ellis, *The Search for the Giant Squid*

Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*

Josh Howard, *Josh Howard Presents: Sasquatch*

2. Articles and shorter works for download on WebCT under “Readings”

Thinkpieces

You are required to post a thinkpiece **AND** respond to one other student’s post every week. Thinkpieces and responses must be posted each week by **WEDNESDAY at 5 PM**. These are meant for you to have a space to think about the week’s readings and issues before you come to discussion. They are individually ungraded, but together they will form a significant part of your participation grade.

I will assign a particular question for some thinkpiece assignments, but for the most part they are completely free-form. There is no minimum required length, and you should feel free to use the space as creatively as you’d like: raise questions, work through something in the readings that particularly interested or troubled you, post a drawing inspired by one of the assigned paintings for the week, etc. The important thing is to demonstrate that you are engaging with the readings. This is a chance for you to be as creative as you’d like.

Remember that you are also required to respond to another student’s post each week. Be respectful of each other! This response does not need to be lengthy. It’s intended to encourage you to begin discussion before you get to class, and to start forming an intellectual community with each other.

The Course Website

We will be using the website every week to discuss the material via thinkpieces and responses. Make friends with it!

<http://webct.montana.edu/>

Log in with your WebCT ID. You all should be signed up for the course website already – if not, let me know ASAP.

To post thinkpieces and responses:

1. Log in to WebCT
2. Click on Tab for **HIST401R01f07 Historical Methodologies**
3. Click the link to **Thinkpieces** on the Course Menu
4. Click the thread for the appropriate week (e.g., **Week 2**)
5. To post a thinkpiece: Click the bar for **Compose Message** and follow the directions.
6. To reply to another person's thinkpiece: Click on the icon next to the thinkpiece you'd like to respond to, and hit **Reply** to post your response.

And so on, and so on. Lather, rinse, repeat.

Important Dates

Paper topics are due **September 20**

Midterm research reports (Abstract & working Biblio) are due **October 25**

First drafts are due **November 15**

Final papers are due in my office by 3 pm on **December 10** (or earlier!)



SEMESTER OVERVIEW

Week One (Aug 30)

Week Two (Sept 06)

Week Three (Sept 13)

Week Four (Sept 20)

Week Five (Sept 27)

Week Six (Oct 04)

Week Seven (Oct 11)

Week Eight (Oct 18)

Week Nine (Oct 25)

Week Ten (Nov 01)

Week Eleven (Nov 08)

Week Twelve (Nov 15)

Week Thirteen (Nov 22)

Week Fourteen (Nov 29)

Week Fifteen (Dec 06)

WELCOME

THE UNKNOWN: FOUNDATIONS

RED RAIN

LIVING FOSSILS

BIGFOOT

MARTIANS

IMPS OF DARKNESS

BLOODSUCKERS

LAKE MONSTERS

STINKERS

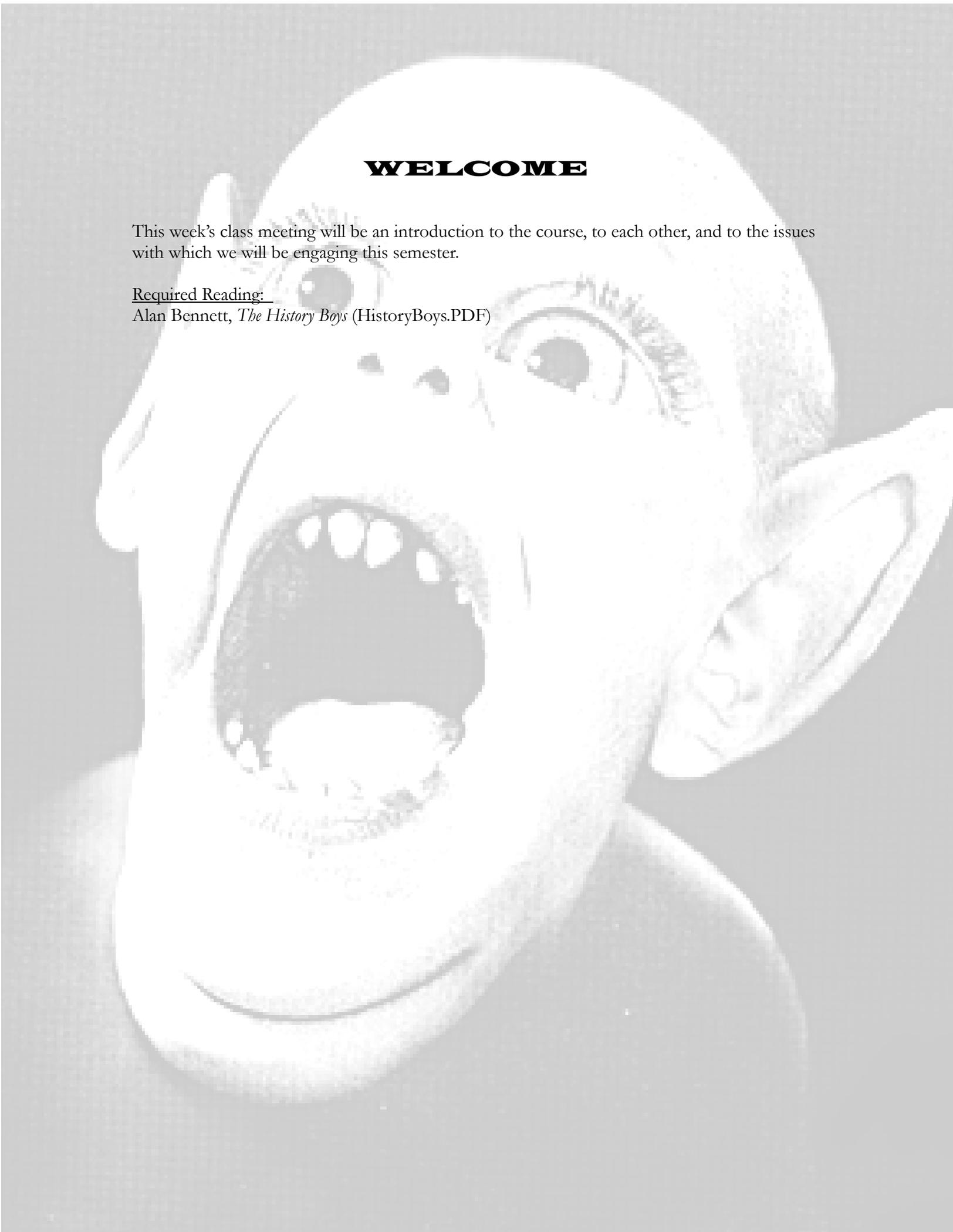
IVORY-BILL

KRAKEN

NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

DEATH WORM

BIGFOOT REVISITED



WELCOME

This week's class meeting will be an introduction to the course, to each other, and to the issues with which we will be engaging this semester.

Required Reading:

Alan Bennett, *The History Boys* (HistoryBoys.PDF)

THE UNKNOWN: FOUNDATIONS

Themes for the Week:

The connection between textual genre and proof/evidence

Comparing treatment of the unusual in histories and scholarly journals (How do we use these in our historical work?)

An introduction to the field of cryptozoology

Required Readings:

1. Herodotus (selections) (Herodotus Book 3)
2. Richard Strassberg, *A Chinese Bestiary* (selections) (Strassberg.pdf)
3. *Cryptozoology: Out of Time Place Scale*, "Cryptozoology as Art" (CryptoAsArt.PDF)
4. *Cryptozoology* Volume 1 (1982) [Browse] (Cryptozoology.pdf)

Also of Interest:

Lorraine Daston & Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature* (Great on cabinets of curiosities)

Francois Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* ("The Eye and the Ear," 260-306) (Hartog.PDF)

Take a visit to the Skeptiseum:

<http://www.skeptiseum.org/exhibits/cryptozoology/>

A great crypto-themed blog:

<http://www.cryptomundo.com/>

RED RAIN

Themes for the Week:

Using newspaper articles as a source

The treatment of the unusual in newspapers (“the prayer of a realist’s morning”)

Required Readings:

1. Charles Fort, *The Book of the Damned* (1919), 3-50, 144-160, 299-310 (CharlesFort.PDF)
2. Loren Coleman, *Mysterious America* (selection) (ColemanOnFort.PDF)
3. Check out the website for the Centre for Fortean Zoology: <http://www.cfz.org.uk/>
4. *Choose:*
 - Rania Huntington, “The Weird in the Newspaper” (Huntington.pdf) or
 - Anke te Heesen, “News, Paper, Scissors: Clippings in the Sciences and Arts Around 1920,” in Daston, ed., *Things That Talk* (Heesen.PDF)

mag·no·li·a

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THE WRITER AND DIRECTOR OF BOSSIE NIGHTS

LIVING FOSSILS

Themes for the Week:

Living fossils and lost worlds

Justification for the funding/support of cryptozoology by appeal to “living fossils”

The juxtaposition of evolution and history as historical endeavors: what is historical “evidence”? What are the stakes? What does this have to do with “historical epistemology”?

Important Events:

Paper Topic Duel!

Required Readings:

1. Bernard Heuvelmans (1955/1958 tr.; abridged edition 1965), *On the Track of Unknown Animals*, “Part One: The Great Days of Zoology are not Done” [This is the first book by the man widely acknowledged as the “father of cryptozoology,” and the whole thing is a wonderful, worthy read if you have the time. He is also the major bugbear in Simpson’s article below] (Heuvelmans-On-the-Track.PDF)
2. George Gaylord Simpson, “Mammals and Cryptozoology,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 128:1 (1984): 1-19. (Simpson.pdf)
3. Van Valen, Leigh, “Cryptozoology, paleontology, and evidence,” *Cryptozoology* 2 (1983): 155-157. (Van Valen.pdf)
4. Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer, “Reminiscences of the discovery of the coelacanth, *Latimeria chalumnae* Smith,” *Cryptozoology* 8 (1989): 1-11 (Courtenay-Latimer.pdf)
5. Lorraine Daston, “Marvelous Facts and Miraculous Evidence in Early Modern Europe” in Davidson et. al., eds., *Questions of Evidence* [You might also read James Chandler, “Proving a History of Evidence” and Daston’s rejoinder, “Historical Epistemology” if you have time] (Daston.PDF)

Also of Interest:

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Lost World* [Note: With prior approval, interested students may substitute this for readings 4 and 5. Come see me if you’d like to do this.]

See images of Heuvelmans’ library in Switzerland:

<http://www.cryptomundo.com/cryptozoo-news/heuvelmansfiles/>

Henry Gee, “Flores, God and cryptozoology,” *Nature* (Oct. 27 2004)

“Flores man” special in *Nature*:

<http://www.nature.com/news/specials/flores/index.html>

<http://www.nature.com/nature/focus/flores/index.html>

Roy P. Mackal, *A Living Dinosaur? In Search of Mokele-Mbembe*

BIGFOOT

Themes for the Week:

Signs, tracks, and traces
The history of Carlo Ginzburg

Required Readings:

1. Jeff Meldrum, *Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science* (selections) (Meldrum.pdf)
2. Loren Coleman, *Bigfoot!* (selections) (Coleman.pdf)
3. Carlo Ginzburg, "Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm," in *Clues, Myths and the Historical Method* (Ginzburg-Clues.PDF)
4. Browse: *Yeti Researcher*, Volume 24, No. 8 (August 2005) (YetiResearcher.PDF)

Also of Interest:

Loren Coleman, "Was the first 'Bigfoot' a hoax?" *The Anomalist* 2 (1995): 8-27.

Myra Shackley, *Wildmen* (For selections, see Shackley.PDF)

Chad Arment, *The Historical Bigfoot*

Ward, Michael. "Everest 1951: the footprints attributed to the Yeti – myth and reality," *Wilderness and Environmental Medicine* 8 (1997): 29-32.

Donald Baird, "Sasquatch footprints: a proposed method of fabrication," *Cryptozoology* 8 (1989): 43-46. (Sasquatch Footprints.pdf)

Winn, Edward B. "Physical and morphological analysis of fiber purported to be Sasquatch hair," *Cryptozoology* 10 (1991): 55-65. (Sasquatch Hair Samples.pdf)

S.J. Wiseman, "Hairy on the Inside: Metamorphosis and Civility in English Werewolf Texts," in Erica Fudge, ed., *Renaissance Beasts*

Bigfoot, *In Me Own Words* (for fun; graphic novella)

Rania Huntington, *Alien Kind: Foxes and Late Imperial Chinese Narrative*

Carlo Ginzburg, *History, Rhetoric, and Proof*

Carlo Ginzburg, "Checking the Evidence: The Judge and the Historian," in *Questions of Evidence* [If you have time, you might also look at Arnold Davidson, "Carlo Ginzburg and the Renewal of Historiography" and Ginzburg, "A Rejoinder to Arnold I. Davidson"] (Ginzburg.PDF)

MARTIANS

Themes for the Week:

Observation and evidence, I: What is it to “observe”?

Using scientific evidence and observations in historical work: what are the issues & problems involved?

What is an “objective fact”?

Required Readings:

1. Ian Hacking, “Rocks,” in *The Social Construction of What?* (Hacking-Rocks.PDF)
2. McKay et. al., “Search for Past Life on Mars: Possible Relic Biogenic Activity in Martian Meteorite ALH84001,” *Science*, 16 August 1996, 924-930 (McKaySearch.pdf)
3. Richard A. Kerr, “Requiem for Life on Mars?” *Science*, Vol 282, Issue 5393, 1398, 20 November 1998 (Requiem-Mars.pdf)
4. Edgar Allen Poe, “The Sphinx” (Poe-Sphinx.PDF)
5. Daston & Galison, “The Image of Objectivity,” *Representations* 40 (Fall, 1992) (Objectivity.pdf)

Also of Interest:

Joel Snyder, “Res Ipsa Loquitor,” in Daston, ed. *Things That Talk* [Photographs as evidence]

Peter Galison, “Judgment against Objectivity,” in Jones & Galison, eds., *Picturing Science, Producing Art*

Browse: Life on Mars? <http://www.marsnews.com/focus/life/>

Nasa: <http://rsd.gsfc.nasa.gov/marslife/marslif6.htm>

Lewontin/Wimsatt exchange in *Questions of Evidence* [How does an observation become a fact?]

Lorraine Daston, “Attention and the Values of Nature in the Enlightenment,” in Daston & Vidal, eds., *The Moral Authority of Nature* [Observation as a cultural concept]

See also collection of resources on Martian canals

IMPS OF DARKNESS

Themes for the Week:

- Visualizing the marginal and unclassifiable
- Dangerous cryptids and the intersection of folklore and natural history
- The use of folklore and folkloric natural history as historical sources

Required Readings:

1. "Shegong" from the *Bencao gangmu* (Nappi translation) (Shegong)
2. Akutagawa, *Kappa* (selections) (Akutagawa.PDF)
3. Michael Dylan Foster, "The Metamorphosis of the Kappa," *Asian Folklore Studies* 57:1 (1998), 1-24. (Learn the source of the kappa's injunction, "Eat people's anuses!") (Kappa Folklore.pdf)
4. Ian Hacking, "Observation" [& if you have time, "Microscopes"] in *Representing and Intervening* (Hacking Observation.PDF)

Also of Interest:

"He ren si" ode from the *Book of Songs*

Chen Jue, "Shooting Sand at People's Shadow: *Yingshe* as a Mode of Representation in Medieval Chinese Literature," *Monumenta Serica* XLVII (1999), 169-207.

Shapere, "The Concept of Observation in Science and Philosophy"

Churchland, "The Ontological Status of Observables"

Hanson, "Observation"

Barbara M. Stafford, *Visual Analogy*

Van Fraassen, "Arguments Concerning Scientific Realism"

K. Pomian, "Vision and Cognition," in *Picturing Science, Producing Art*

Elaine Scarry, *Dreaming by the Book*

BLOODSUCKERS

Themes for the Week:

Oral evidence and locally situated knowledges

The intersection of anthropology and history: how to use anthropology to inform historical work

Required Readings:

1. Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (esp. Part One: “Blood and Words,” p 3-55 and “Historicizing Rumor and Gossip,” p 56-88)
2. Read one or both vampire stories:
 - (1) “Carmilla” (1872) by J. Sheridan Le Fanu:
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/10007/10007-8.txt>
 - (2) “Dracula’s Guest” (1914) by Bram Stoker:
<http://www.literature.org/authors/stoker-bram/draculas-guest/>
3. Scott Corrales, *Chupacabras* (Read the Introduction, the rest is available for skimming) (Chupa.PDF)

Also of Interest:

Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

Bell, Michael, *Food for the Dead: On the Trail of New England’s Vampires*

Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*

Summers, Montague, *The Vampire in Lore and Legend*

Tania Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch’s Craft* (esp. Part 1 & 5, but the entire book is a fascinating read)

Charles Fort, *Wild Talents*, 881-887

LAKE MONSTERS

Themes for the Week:

Social authority and testimony
The social construction of truth and evidence

Important Events:

Abstract and Annotated Bibliography Due

Required Readings:

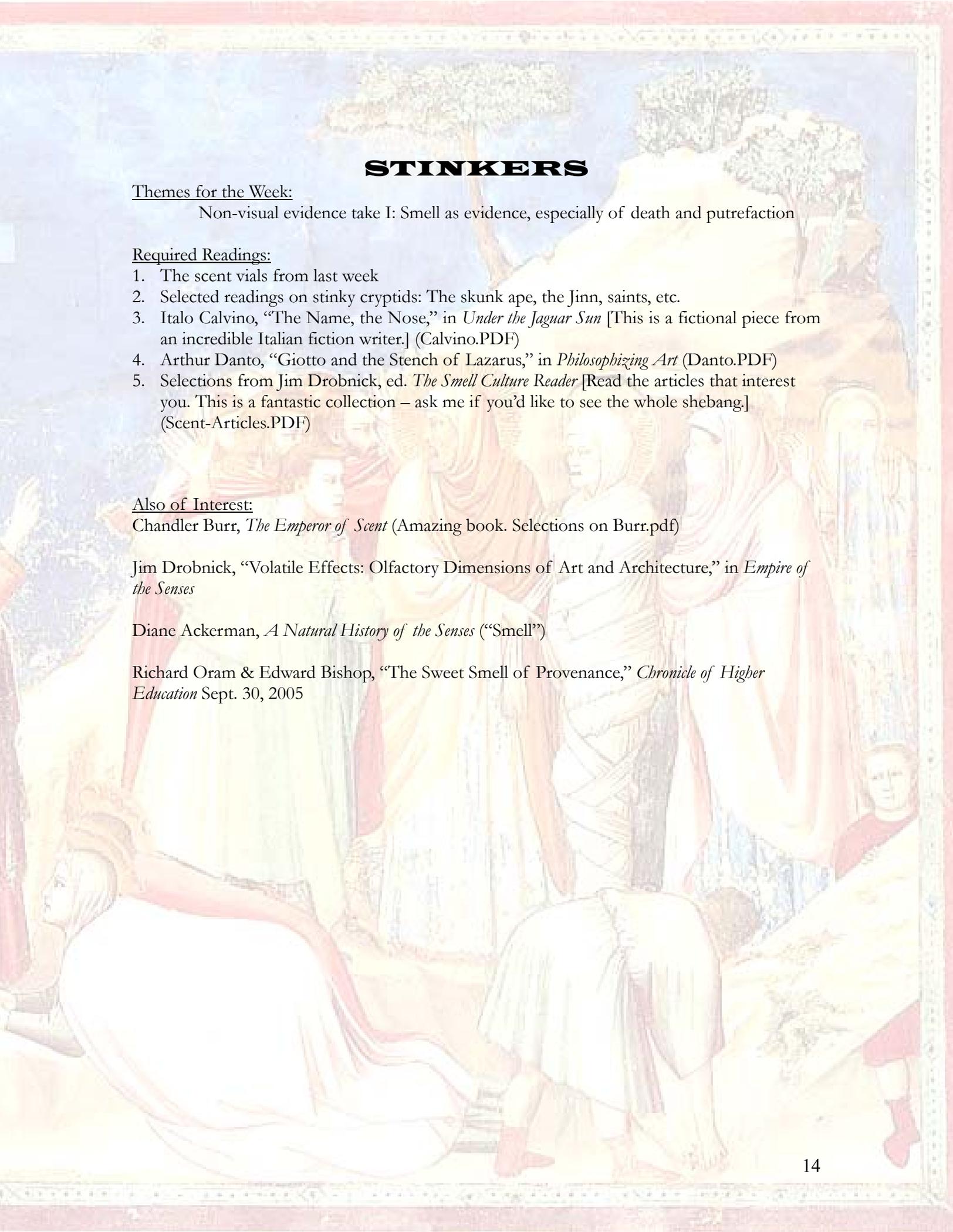
1. Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*
2. Selected papers from *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* on lake serpents
3. Browse Coleman & Huyghe, *The Field Guide to Lake Monsters, Sea Serpents and Other Mysterious Denizens of the Deep* (Field-Guide.PDF)
4. Chandos Michael Brown, "A Natural History of the Gloucester Sea Serpent: Knowledge, Power, and the Culture of Science in Antebellum America," *American Quarterly* 42:3 (Sept. 1990): 402-436. (BrownSerpent.pdf)

Also of Interest:

Shapin and Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air Pump*

For Next Week:

Handout of smelly assignment



STINKERS

Themes for the Week:

Non-visual evidence take I: Smell as evidence, especially of death and putrefaction

Required Readings:

1. The scent vials from last week
2. Selected readings on stinky cryptids: The skunk ape, the Jinn, saints, etc.
3. Italo Calvino, “The Name, the Nose,” in *Under the Jaguar Sun* [This is a fictional piece from an incredible Italian fiction writer.] (Calvino.PDF)
4. Arthur Danto, “Giotto and the Stench of Lazarus,” in *Philosophizing Art* (Danto.PDF)
5. Selections from Jim Drobnick, ed. *The Smell Culture Reader* [Read the articles that interest you. This is a fantastic collection – ask me if you’d like to see the whole shebang.] (Scent-Articles.PDF)

Also of Interest:

Chandler Burr, *The Emperor of Scent* (Amazing book. Selections on Burr.pdf)

Jim Drobnick, “Volatile Effects: Olfactory Dimensions of Art and Architecture,” in *Empire of the Senses*

Diane Ackerman, *A Natural History of the Senses* (“Smell”)

Richard Oram & Edward Bishop, “The Sweet Smell of Provenance,” *Chronicle of Higher Education* Sept. 30, 2005

IVORY-BILL

Themes for the Week:

Non-visual evidence take II: Sound as evidence
“Science in action, at its messy best,” esp. the use of non-visual evidence
More exploration of the epistemology of sensation

Required Readings:

1. Tim Gallagher, *The Grail Bird*
2. Listen to: Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds recording:
<http://www.animalbehaviorarchive.org/>
3. *The Auditory Culture Reader* (read “Introduction: Into Sound,” and “Ch. 1: Open Ears”)
(Auditory Culture.pdf)

Also of Interest:

Alain Corbin, “Charting the Cultural History of the Senses,” in *Empire of the Senses*

Handout: Collection of articles on the Ivory-Bill from my files, incl. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* and others

Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*

Steven Feld, “Places Sensed, Senses Placed: Toward a Sensuous Epistemology of Environments,” in *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*

KRAKEN

Themes for the Week:

Literary evidence and storytelling
“Fiction” as an historical source?

Important Events:

First Draft of Paper Due!!!

Required Readings:

1. Richard Ellis, *The Search for the Giant Squid*
2. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, “Atlantis and the Nations” in *Questions of Evidence* (also read Elizabeth Helsinger, “Using and Abusing Fiction,” and Vidal-Naquet’s rejoinder, “How to Get Beyond Myth?”) (Atlantis.pdf)
3. Choose:
 - (1) Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (selection); or
 - (2) Two Arthur C. Clarke stories (Clarke1.pdf and Clarke2.pdf)

Also of Interest:

Willy Ley, *The Lungfish, the Dodo and the Unicorn* (1948)

Willy Ley, *Exotic Zoology* (Part 3: “Oceanic Mysteries”; his treatment of giants/mastodon skulls is also of interest) (Oceanic.pdf)

Adrienne Mayor, “Paleocryptozoology: A call for collaboration between classicists and cryptozoologists,” *Cryptozoology* 8 (1989): 12-26. (Mayor.pdf)

Bernard Heuvelmans, *In the Wake of Sea Serpents* (1968; selections)

DEATH WORM

Themes for the Week:

- Evidence from the field
- The internet as a scientific and historical tool
- Field guides and travel accounts as evidence

Required Readings:

1. "Death Worm!" in *The Fortean Times*:
http://www.forteanimes.com/articles/182_deathworm1.shtml
2. Reports from the Centre for Fortean Zoology
<http://www.cfz.org.uk/dwrep.htm>
3. Further notes from the CFZ Death Worm expedition:
<http://www.cryptoworld.co.uk/projects/operation-deathworm-1/>
4. Robert Kohler, "Place and Practice in Field Biology," *Hist. Sci.* 2002 (Kohler.pdf)
5. Choose a popular crypto "field guide" to browse:
 - Revisit Coleman and Huyghe on lake and sea monsters
 - Loren Coleman, *Mysterious America*
 - Coleman and Huyghe, *The Field Guide to Bigfoot and Other Mystery Primates*

Also of Interest:

An interview with Mackerle on Czech TV:
<http://prague.tv/articles/zine/ivan-mackerle-interview>

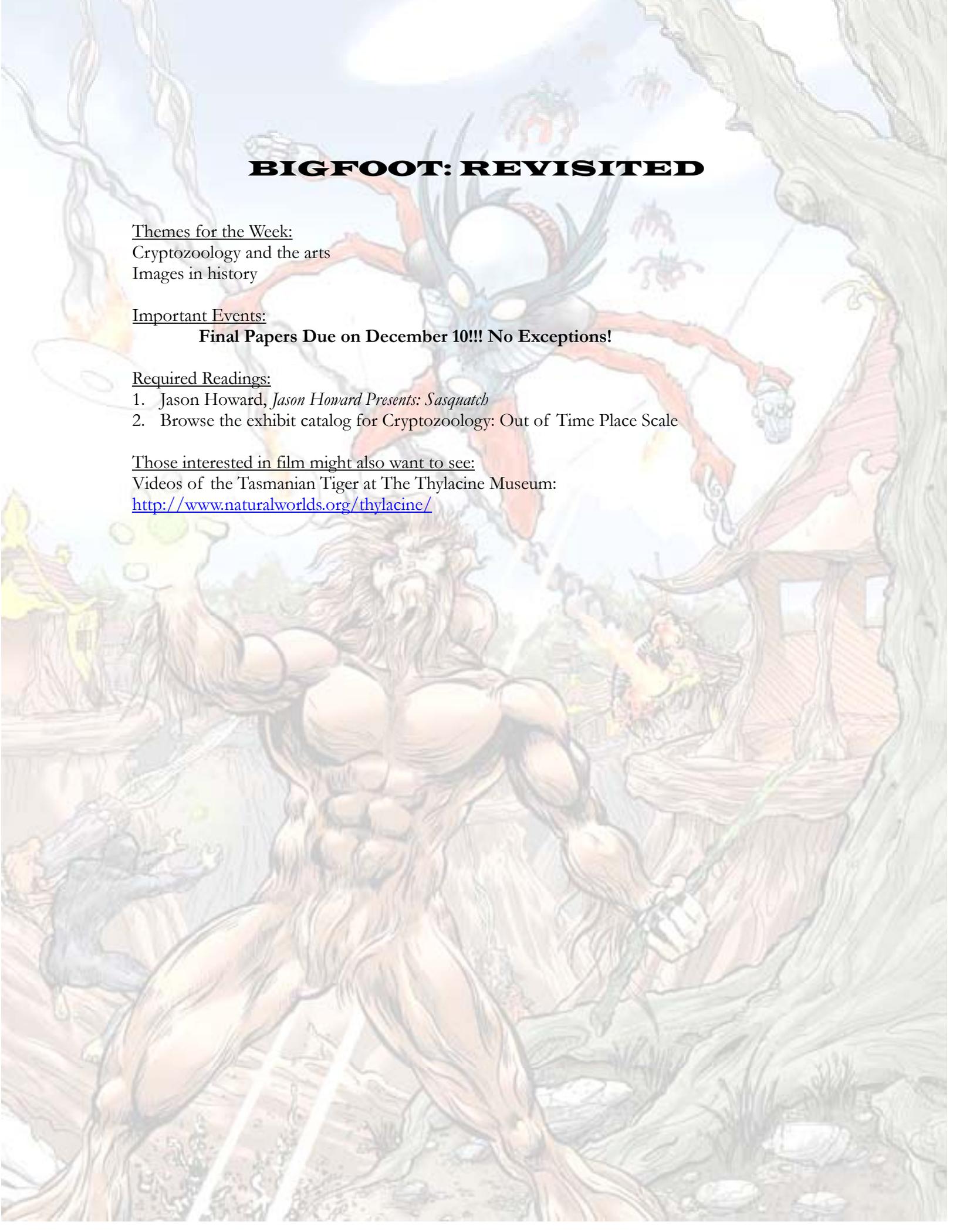
Anne Larsen, "Equipment for the Field," in Jardine et. al., eds., *Cultures of Natural History*

Yeti Researcher ads for field equipment

Henrika Kuklik and Robert Kohler, eds. *Osiris 11: Science in the Field* (U Chicago Press, 1996)

Michael Lynch and John Law, "Pictures, Texts, and Objects: The Literary Language Game of Bird-watching," in Biagioli, ed., *The Science Studies Reader*

CFZ Expedition Report: Gambia 2006



BIGFOOT: REVISITED

Themes for the Week:

Cryptozoology and the arts
Images in history

Important Events:

Final Papers Due on December 10!!! No Exceptions!

Required Readings:

1. Jason Howard, *Jason Howard Presents: Sasquatch*
2. Browse the exhibit catalog for Cryptozoology: Out of Time Place Scale

Those interested in film might also want to see:

Videos of the Tasmanian Tiger at The Thylacine Museum:

<http://www.naturalworlds.org/thylacine/>