



THE FRENCH & ITALIAN DEPARTMENT LECTURE SERIES

THE STOCK IMAGE: MUYBRIDGE, MAREY, AND THE BIOPOLITICS OF CAPTURE

In the age of mass slaughter and human-engineered extinction, some animals have barely been able to reproduce fast enough to survive just as others were being made eminently reproducible. This was the case in the second half of the nineteenth century both materially, with the advancement of industrialized breeding and factory farming, and symbolically, in the deluge of images precipitated by the advent of photographic and cinematic reproduction. Much has been written about the coeval

development of cinematography and the relentless exploitation of animal life. What is often left out of the picture, however, is that the modern tangle of animal and technological reproducibility altered the nature of representation – conceived in this talk as a mode of capture – no less than the representation of nature. This talk will examine the chronophotographic work of Eadweard Muybridge and Etienne Jules Marey, who enlisted many animals for their stop-motion experiments, to argue that

the advent of technological reproducibility does not simply mark a transition in the way we perceive and conceive animals. My contention, rather, is that aesthetics and epistemology become the sites of a profound metamorphosis in the nature of animal knowledge and representation. I will ask what new animal figures emerge under capture – what becomes newly visible, and how this crisis in representation might “change everything” about the question of the animal.

ANTOINE TRAISNEL
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

FRIDAY, 4:00PM
FEBRUARY 23, 2018 KRESGE 2351