



# HILR



## Schedule of Courses

Fall 2018

## Full Semester Courses

### September 11–December 12

Mondays..... Sept. 17–Dec. 10

Tuesdays ..... Sept. 11–Dec. 4

Wednesdays ..... Sept. 12–Dec. 12

Thursdays ..... Sept. 13–Dec. 6

### Monday 10 am–12 noon

#### 300 How Hemingway Became Hemingway

Susan Ebert

**Readings:** Leslie M.M. Blume, *Everybody Behaves Badly* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016); Ernest Hemingway, *The Complete Short Stories* (Scribner, 1987); Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (Scribner, 1954).

In 1924, Ernest Hemingway was an unknown writer. Five years later he was famous; he had added two novels as well as many stories and essays to his literary CV and was heralded as the new voice of American fiction. Driven by fierce ambition, a formidable work ethic, and a ruthless willingness to cast aside love, friendship, and decency in pursuit of fame, he had worked diligently, crafting spare, precise prose and producing an astonishing volume of work. At the same time, he shaped the public persona called Ernest Hemingway as well as the Hemingway hero of fiction. We will focus on his creative output in the years between 1924 and 1929 and the creation of the Hemingway legend. The class will include lecture, discussion, and visual material. Reading will average fifty pages a week. Class size limited to 20.

**Susan Ebert** worked with the Hemingway papers at the JFK library. She wishes she had transformed her dissertation on “Sun” into Blume’s book, which details both Hemingway’s achievements and the gossipy background of the novel.

#### 301 Love, Tragic and Comic: *Othello* and *Much Ado About Nothing*

Sharon Hamilton

**Readings:** Only these editions: William Shakespeare, *Othello*, Russ McDonald, ed. (Pelican, 2016); William Shakespeare, *Much Ado about Nothing*, Peter Holland, ed. (Pelican, 2017).

Two of Shakespeare’s plays, the tragedy *Othello* and the comedy *Much Ado about Nothing*, so different in tone, share some striking similarities in plot, theme, and characterization. We will compare the factors—emotional, familial, and

societal—that foster or undermine the love relationships. We will also consider such dichotomies as outsiders and insiders, loyalty and betrayal, empathy and egotism, public and private, darkness and light, and men and women. In the process, we will examine the aspects of Shakespeare’s language, psychological insight, and moral philosophy that have made these plays vivid and relevant for over four hundred years. Films and material on Shakespearean style and performance will supplement the texts. Format: close reading and open discussion. Preparation: about two hours per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Sharon Hamilton** has taught English at several colleges, Phillips Exeter Academy, and Buckingham, Browne & Nichols School. She is the author of *Shakespeare’s Daughters* and *Essential Literary Terms*.

### Monday 1 pm–3 pm

#### 302 Capturing Childhood: From Memory to Memoir

Francine Wacht

**Readings:** Only this edition: Francine Wacht, *I Remember: An Autobiography Text* (Copley Publishing Group, 1991). Available in class through the SGL. Any other printed material will be handed out in class.

Our memories are filled with childhood experiences, and this course will enable you to put one or more of these experiences into words. At home, you will spend two to three hours a week working on your childhood memory piece, while in class we will review writing elements such as perspective, tone, style, figurative language, sensory appeal, and use of narration, description, and dialogue. We will examine these elements as they appear in the memoirs of writers such as Maya Angelou, Eudora Welty, Elie Wiesel, and Richard Wright. Through peer editing we will share our work, and eventually you may choose to include your completed childhood memoir in our class booklet. Class size limited to 12.

**Francine Wacht** was a high school English teacher. She was awarded a Lucretia Crocker Fellowship to work with teachers and administrators throughout the Commonwealth.

#### 303 Harvard: Its History and Architecture

W. Easley Hamner

**Readings:** Douglass Shand Tucci, *Harvard University: An Architectural Tour—Campus Guide* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2001).

While HILR is a part of Harvard, what do we know of the university’s history? Harvard will celebrate its 400th year in 2036, so there is a great deal of fascinating history to explore through the experience of its twenty-eight presidents, including Drew Faust. Instead of poring over dusty

manuscripts, we will be looking at Harvard's buildings to see what they can reveal about its past. Each session we will explore a different chapter of that history and, weather permitting, we will look at the buildings. Thanks to Professor Jonathan Walton, all of our classes will meet in his seminar room on the ground level of Memorial Church in Harvard Yard. All of our walks will be within 1/4 mile of the church. This class will consist largely of richly-illustrated lecture presentations for the first hour, with the second hour for the walks. Preparation time will be one to two hours per class. This is a repeat of a course given in the fall of 2017. Class size limited to 25.

**W. Easley Hamner** is a retired architect whose practice was based in Cambridge. His firm was responsible for several Harvard buildings. He has taught many HILR courses on history and architecture.

### 304 How Your Brain Works

Penelope ReVelle and Phillip Stubblefield

**Readings:** Richard Passingham, *Cognitive Neuroscience: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP, 2016). The SGLs will provide either a course pack or postings on the course website of articles and excerpts from textbooks and scientific journals.

The human brain, made up of billions of cells that have trillions of connections with each other, is arguably the most complex structure on earth. We are endlessly fascinated with its ability to consider, to remember, and to plan. It is the very seat of our conscious apprehension of the world. Yet, despite its complexity, brain structure is finite. We can dissect it and do experiments on it, or on its equivalent in worms and rats. We will approach the problem of how the brain works from a scientific point of view, using Nova videos and a short book to introduce the abilities of the human brain. We will supplement these materials with lectures and discussion questions and readings from textbooks, journals, and the internet, aiming for about half lecture and half discussion. We welcome SGMs with little science background and members who are scientists to learn together about this intriguing subject. Approximately fifty pages of reading per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Penny ReVelle** was trained as a molecular biologist and taught biology and environmental science. She is spending her retirement learning about literature, music, poetry, and art but is also fascinated by the science of how we learn.

**Phillip Stubblefield** is a retired Boston University Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He enjoyed leading study groups on the historical fiction of Dorothy Dunnett and is now ready to tackle cognitive neuroscience.

### 305 Melville: *Moby Dick*

Pat Meaney and Bill Boone

**Readings:** Only this edition: Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, Hershel Parker, ed., Second Edition (Norton Critical Edition, 2002). In lieu of one class session, there will be a field trip to the New Bedford Whaling Museum.

"Call me Ishmael." These are the famous first words of Melville's masterpiece, *Moby Dick*. Our study group will emphasize close reading of the text and analysis of the stylistic features of Melville's writing. We will ponder the profound moral and philosophical questions this book raises. And we will study Melville's use of symbolism and reflect upon the importance of the nautical venue of the story. Our goal is to understand the writer and the world that this epic tale presents, as well as to learn how to read fiction with more understanding and enjoyment. The class will be conducted as a directed discussion based on a detailed set of study questions designed to lead SGMs to probe deeply in the reading. Some questions are very focused; some are very open. Preparation: Three hours reading per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Bill Boone** and **Pat Meaney** have collaborated on three previous study groups on *Moby Dick* and Melville.

### 306 The Roots of Gender

Annick Mansfield

**Readings:** Lise Eliot, *Pink Brain, Blue Brain: How Small Differences Grow Into Troublesome Gaps—And What We Can Do About It* (Mariner Books, 2010). The SGL will provide supplemental handouts, articles, and videos on the course website, particularly regarding recent research on biological differences and transgender identity.

To what extent are boys and girls inherently different? How might minor differences become amplified over time? Children participate actively in their own socialization into male and female roles. Preschoolers and grade school children are active categorizers; they look for rules, and they police themselves and others when they perceive departures from appropriate behavior. When do they first distinguish between males and females and align themselves with one or the other group? When do they understand that one cannot change one's gender at will (e.g., by cutting one's hair or letting it grow long, or dressing differently)? What clues do they get from parents, siblings, peers, teachers, and the media about how they should act and what they should like? What happens when a child is convinced that he or she has been born in the wrong kind of body? This course will explore such questions through active class discussion. Expect 35-50 pages of reading each week. Class size limited to 20.

**Annick Mansfield** was trained as an experimental psychologist. She taught a variety of college-level psychology courses over her career, but her primary interest was always in cognitive development.

## Tuesday 10 am–12 noon

### 307 Genes: The Inherited Code of Life

Barbara Smith Koff

**Readings:** Siddhartha Mukherjee, *The Gene: An Intimate History* (Scribner, 2016).

What are genes? How do genes work and how do they interact with the environment? In this study group, we will look at the history of scientific discoveries culminating in the ability to read and edit (modify) genes. This study group will weave the science and social history of this quest in order to understand human heredity and its astonishing complexity. We will also learn the ways in which genes interact with the environment. Our genetic heredity influences our lives, personalities, fates, and choices. What are the misconceptions and moral and ethical dilemmas created by genetic discoveries? For example, should we manipulate human genetics to accelerate evolution, cure diseases, or better mankind? The core of the study group will be discussion of the questions raised. Slides with background information will be presented to ensure that everyone understands the scientific and ethical issues. The text is written for a general audience. We will read about forty pages a week. Class size limited to 22.

**Barbara Smith Koff**, an Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry at Boston University, taught medical and graduate students molecular biology. She has had experience with cloning, molecular biology, and transgenic mice.

### 308 Modern Agriculture

William Eykamp

**Readings:** Paul K. Conkin, *A Revolution Down on the Farm* (UP Kentucky, 2009). Links to various sources of data will be posted on the website.

American agriculture has been called “the most successful sector in the recent economic history of the US.” Using only a tiny fraction of the population, we raise enough food to feed the nation and export some of our huge abundance. In our lifetime, agriculture has changed completely. The family farm is history. Ever larger farms are increasingly mechanized, monoculture, chemically dependent, and unsustainable. Not everyone is happy with the result. To see what is and what might be, we will look through some of the databanks of USDA, EPA, the commodities markets, and the National Academies of Sciences. We will have an active discussion of genetic modification, pesticides, subsidies, soil

conservation, agribusiness, and energy issues, among others. Our goal is to develop an informed vision of the future of farming. Participants may prepare a short report on a commodity of their choice. Class preparation: about two hours per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Bill Eykamp** does not know how to run a plow, but does own a Midwestern farm and has many relatives in agriculture. Locally, he raises corn, beans, and squash in Arlington and was once a beekeeper.

### 309 Prehistoric Cave Art

Ronald Ebert

**Readings:** Gregory Curtis, *The Cave Painters* (Anchor Books, 2006).

Neanderthals and Homo sapiens painted in caves in Spain and in southern France as long as 65,000 years ago. Some of the resulting art is remarkably sophisticated and contemporary. We will explore painted and etched images of humans, animals, and numerous as-yet-undeciphered signs, as well as sculpted objects. We will study four caves in detail and discuss archaeological theories and interpretations. Who were the painters? Were they depicting religious, hunting, or fertility rituals? Or something else? The goal of the course will be to try to arrive at our own theories and understandings. The class will be expected to read one text of 240 pages. Additional readings and short videos will be on the website, and two movies will be shown. The class format is a mix of lecture and discussion with many images and videos of the art. About two hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Ron Ebert**, a retired forensic psychologist, fell in love with cave art while visiting the Lascaux cave as a college student. He remains fascinated by this earliest art and enjoys converting others.

### 310 Proust's *In the Shadow of Young Girls in Flower*

Don Leopold and Jeff Greene

**Readings:** Marcel Proust, *In the Shadow of Young Girls in Flower: In Search of Lost Time* (Volume II), transl. James Grieve (Penguin Books, 2002). For members new to the HILR Proust study group: Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time* (Volume I), *Combray* section.

We will read and discuss *In the Shadow of Young Girls in Flower*, Volume II of Proust's monumental work, *In Search of Lost Time*. All of Proust's great themes—love, memory, society, vice, virtue, art, time, death—continue in this second volume. The class is modeled on the seminars at St. John's College (the “Great Books” program). It is a conversation about a text we have all read beforehand. The purpose of the conversation is to explore the ideas raised by the text. The study group members will pose and ponder together the

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important questions arising from each week's reading. Previous reading of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* is not essential, but new participants to the cycle will be expected to read the *Combray* section of Volume I. Participants should expect to spend three to four hours each week reading the assigned pages. Class size limited to 13.

**Don Leopold** earned an MA from the Graduate Institute at St. John's College. He has led prior study groups on Proust using the St. John's methodology.

**Jeff Greene** has led book discussion groups using the St. John's method, including Volume I of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. He and Don have thoroughly enjoyed continuing Barbara Carlson's tradition of exploring Proust's challenging and epic work at HILR.

### 311 Reading *The Christian Science Monitor*

Daniel Yetter

**Readings:** *The Christian Science Monitor Weekly* (current print edition, subscription \$14.95 for sixteen weeks).

Despite the title, this class is not about religion but rather about a rich newsmagazine in which multiple points of view are presented in the articles. Are these multiple viewpoints reconcilable? Reading the articles will help SGMs to see news events as starting points for constructive conversations. *The Christian Science Monitor*, an independent international news organization, does not promote any specific set of policies, actions, or ideologies. In this class we will read articles that focus on the progress of human endeavor, in which multiple perspectives challenge conventional thinking and allow readers to come to their own conclusions. Each week, we will select several articles for in-depth discussion, and members may research specific topics for discussion in class. As we discuss the week's articles, we will also consider the larger question of how reading a newspaper with a reputation for integrity and credibility helps people to think differently. Two hours reading each week. Class size limited to 18.

**Dan Yetter** became interested in reconciling differing points of view when he was a volunteer leader in a movement to add more wilderness protection to the White Mountains. He believes that discussing *CSM* articles with peers helps to keep one grounded.

### 312 *The Wire: Season One*

Peter Temin and Charlotte Temin

**Readings:** Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (The New Press, 2012); William J. Wilson, *More Than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City* (W. W. Norton, 2010). Relevant articles and critiques will be included on the course website.

*The Wire*, a TV series set in Baltimore MD, has won many awards since it ran from 2002 to 2008. We will show and discuss the first season of *The Wire*, which is about the illegal

drug scene. The acting is superb, the characters are brilliantly written, and the series is deeply gripping. We will discuss each episode along with written material from the course website. The author of the series, David Simon, said that despite being framed as a crime drama, the show is "really about the American city, and about how we live together. It's about how institutions have an effect on individuals. Whether one is a cop, a longshoreman, a drug dealer, a politician, a judge or a lawyer, all are ultimately compromised and must contend with whatever institution to which they are committed." Preparation time will be one to two hours per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Peter** and **Charlotte Temin** have led a study group on *The New Jim Crow*, and Peter has led other study groups on a variety of topics.

**Tuesday 1 pm-3 pm**

### 313 A Priest and a Rabbi Walk into a Bar: The Art and Science of Humor

Jane Hilburt-Davis

**Readings:** Peter McGraw and Joel Warner, *The Humor Code: A Global Search for What Makes Things Funny* (Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2014).

"Analyzing humor is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies," said humorist E.B. White. In this course, we will tell jokes, explore who and what is funny, and try to avoid killing any frogs. Through presentations and discussions, we will also explore the evolution and types of humor and concepts such as the "benign violation theory" of what makes things funny. Our text will be supplemented with website readings and videos. Note that we will discuss many types of humor, some of which could be seen as offensive. Following class guidelines, members' short presentations on humorous topics will be encouraged. Come, have fun, and learn something about humor. As a bonus, you will also learn the answer to the question, "If I tell a joke in an empty room, is it still funny?" Preparation time approximately two hours. Class size limited to 18.

**Jane Hilburt-Davis** has worked with, taught, and written about individuals, families, and organizations her entire professional life. She says that there is no better experience than working with people to understand and appreciate the role of humor in our lives.

### 314 Escaping Poverty: A Fading American Dream

John Strand

**Readings:** SGL will provide links or online extracts from papers and talks by Prof. Chetty and by others with contrasting perspectives.

How real is the American Dream of equal opportunity? We will look in depth at factors influencing the economic outcomes of lower-income children: What types of cities and neighborhoods have been most successful in promoting upward mobility? Does moving to a more nurturing neighborhood, having exceptional teachers, or attending certain colleges help? How are outcomes affected by gender, family structure, and race/racism? Our studies will draw heavily on recent work by MacArthur award winner Raj Chetty. These path-breaking studies, which are based on detailed information about millions of children, shed new light on long-held beliefs. They have been praised by figures as diverse as Paul Ryan and Bernie Sanders. No previous background in economics is needed but an ability to glean information from graphs will be a definite plus. Classes will mix discussion, lecture, and video. Two hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 12.

**John Strand** is an economist and mathematician who greatly enjoyed teaching an American history course at HILR. He welcomes the new pragmatic, reality-driven “empirical microeconomics” exemplified by Prof. Chetty.

### 315 Film Noir

Lester Adelman

**Readings:** Interviews and critical discussions of the films will be posted on the website.

Film Noir refers to a group of American black-and-white movies from 1940 to the mid-1950s that had dark themes and were also darkly lit. The term is French because these films, not shown in Europe until after the war, were highly praised by French film critics. We will focus on five of the best: *The Maltese Falcon*, *Casablanca*, *Laura*, *The Stranger*, and *Shadow of a Doubt*; our sixth film, *Miller's Crossing*, will be a neo-noir from 1990. Film is a collaborative effort, but we will try to parcel out the different contributions made by the director, producer, script writers, actors, and cinematographers to the completed work. I will introduce and screen each film in one session, and we will discuss and reconsider film clips of specific scenes and features in the following session. Study questions will be provided prior to the initial viewing. Preparation one to two hours per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Lester Adelman** has led film courses in Film Noir, Western movies, Orson Welles, and Alfred Hitchcock, and co-led a course on

silent comedies. He attended courses of a similar type led by Roger Ebert at the Charlottesville Film Festival.

### 316 Revolutionary Boston, 1763-1776

Douglas Mansfield

**Readings:** Brian Deming, *Boston and the Dawn of American Independence* (Westholme, 2013); David Hackett Fisher, *Paul Revere's Ride* (Oxford UP, 1994). Supplementary articles and primary source documents will be available on the course website.

Why did the fight for independence start in the Boston area? The study group will explore Boston's unique colonial environment, particularly economic and governmental, that underlay the events leading up to the Revolutionary War. The class will follow the back and forth of British provocations and colonial resistance that blossomed into the independence movement. We will trace the arguments and strategies of the movement's leaders, particularly the controversial John Adams. David Hackett Fisher's *Paul Revere's Ride*, contrasting myth with reality, presents the class with the gripping story of Lexington and Concord. Discussions will conclude with the siege of Boston, Henry Knox's mission to bring about the British evacuation of Boston, and the formation of an independent government of Massachusetts. This will be a discussion course. The readings, including additional articles and primary sources, will require three hours per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Doug Mansfield**, a native of the Boston area, began an independent study of the revolutionary period in Boston upon his retirement. This course, which is an enhanced revision of a course previously offered by this SGL, is based upon further research and study.

### 317 Unsettled American Arguments We Shouldn't Want to Settle

Ross Neisuler

**Readings:** Howard Fineman, *The Thirteen American Arguments: Enduring Debates that Define and Inspire Our Country* (Random House, 2009). The SGL will post links to articles, images, videos, and other materials on the course website.

Americans have always passionately disagreed about the same basic unresolved issues, which never can or should be papered over. Every generation confronts them. Drawing on Howard Fineman's national best seller, *Thirteen American Arguments*, we will take up a different issue each week. For example: Who is a person and who is entitled to American privileges and protections? What is the role of faith? What can we be permitted to know and to say? What should be the sphere of public action or private individualism? In our spirited discussions, we will steer clear of passions about current political figures and concentrate on eternal issues. For each issue, there will be companion readings, some from

history and some contemporary, as well as some topics for voluntary participant reports. Three hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 22.

**Ross Neisuler** has led many study groups. He loves American history, politics, and theories of government and has dived deeply into these topics. He believes study groups should be participatory, stimulating, and fun... and raise more questions than they answer.

### Wednesday 10 am–12 noon

#### 318 Breaking The Code: The Life and Times of Alan Turing

Richard Rubinstein

**Readings:** This edition only: Andrew Hodges, *Alan Turing: The Enigma: The Book That Inspired the Film The Imitation Game*, Updated edition (Princeton UP, 2014); Kindle recommended. The SGL will provide supplementary materials on the course website.

Alan Turing was a British mathematician, codebreaker, gay man, and, in modern terms, a geek and computer scientist. He pioneered computer design, artificial intelligence, and mathematical biology. As a member of the British upper middle class, he was entitled to a place in society that did not interest him. He loved ideas and solving problems, which led to his unique contribution to breaking the German military codes. We will use Andrew Hodges' superb biography, *Alan Turing: The Enigma*, which informed both a play and movie about Turing, to explore the complexity of the man, his times, and his work. Classes will mix demonstration, presentation, and discussion of Turing's life, research, codebreaking at Bletchley Park, post-war work, and his mistreatment by the British government. No prior knowledge of computer science, mathematics, or WWII history is needed to participate fully, but a willingness to dig into them is essential. Preparation: two hours per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Dick Rubinstein** has long been interested in the history of science and, in particular, Alan Turing, WWII codebreaking, and the underlying math and computer science. He has led study groups at HILR in science, technology, and cinema.

#### 319 Digital Photography

W. Easley Hamner and Robert Lurie

**Readings:** Michael Freeman, *The Photographer's Eye: Graphic Guide: Composition and Design for Better Digital Photos* (Focal Press, 2013).

Over the years, the SGLs have led a series of courses on varying aspects of photography. This class will focus primarily on composition and is intended for those who are interested in actively improving their work. Familiarity with your digital camera (or iPhone) and the editing of pho-

tos with software (such as Photoshop Elements or a similar program) is expected. Each week will require submission of one to three photographs, which can be from your personal library or taken for the purpose. As a class we will review them individually, searching for ways that each image might be improved. You will have a chance to show images you have taken again after they were critiqued in class (before and after images) as well as those for the new assignment. Class size limited to 12.

**Easley Hamner** is a retired architect and amateur photographer. His serious photography began with a 35mm Exakta and continues with a Nikon D800. He uses both Photoshop Elements and Adobe Lightroom in his editing process.

**Bob Lurie** is a retired engineer and avid amateur photographer. He has led several courses at HILR in photography, many in collaboration with Easley Hamner.

#### 320 How Power Defines the Other

John Morrel

**Readings:** Toni Morrison, *The Origin of Others* (Harvard UP, 2017); Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad: A Novel* (Doubleday, 2016); Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Sympathizer* (Grove Press, 2015). There will also be a course pack of additional material.

This course will consider works of fiction that wrestle with what Toni Morrison has recently called, "[a]n illusion of power through the process of inventing an Other." What drives a dominant culture to define a subordinate, collective Other? What contributes to maintaining the definition? When and why does the individual outsider come to accept the status thrust upon his or her community? Can fiction help us to expand our imagination about our own history of what Morrison calls Othering? We will read Pulitzer Prize-winning novels from 2016 and 2017, supplemented by masterful shorter stories that concern outsiders defined by power relationships. This course will be an opportunity to think about the ways we respond to current turmoil over immigration, race, community, and belonging. The class format will be primarily discussion based on careful reading of texts averaging 70-80 pages per week. Class size limited to 20.

**John Morrel** has led seven HILR courses on Bayard Rustin, James Baldwin, immigrant communities and class in mid-nineteenth century New York City, and literature published by lesbian and gay authors over the forty years following the 1969 Stonewall Riots.

### 321 Memoir Writing: It's Time!

Jeanne Speizer

**Readings:** Excerpts from the memoir works of William Zinsser, Anne Lamott, and Ray Bradbury will be posted on the course website.

Have you been telling stories about the “good old days” for years, but never found the time or the discipline to “tie yourself to the chair” and write those vignettes? Now is your chance to capture those stories in writing to bring to life the people, places, and incidents that make up your unique history. In a supportive environment with constructive feedback from peers, you will discover your writer’s voice and your style as you develop vivid vignettes. You will be bolstered and encouraged, as well, by our discussions of memoir stories by William Zinsser, Anne Lamott, and Ray Bradbury. Requirements include reading and critiquing members’ memoirs submitted for review each week while, at the same time, writing your own personal vignettes. Preparation time: three to four hours per week. Class size limited to 12.

**Jeanne Speizer** completed her memoir as a member of Suzanne Pemsler’s memoir study group. She has learned the importance of trust-building and the effectiveness of gentle editing. She has edited her teenage granddaughter’s second young adult novel.

### 322 The Vietnam War: A Look Back

Fred G. Davis

**Readings:** Mark Lawrence, *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History* (Oxford UP, 2010). Selected readings and other materials will be provided on the course website.

Vietnam was perhaps our most controversial war. It was a brutal, guerrilla war fought in the jungle mostly by young men who were drafted. How did a period of optimism and social progress turn into a time of mass anti-war demonstrations? Why did the war go on as long as it did? Could the US have adapted a military strategy to win a guerrilla war? What was the effect of seeing the war on TV on a nightly basis? The class will read Mark Lawrence’s book, see parts of Ken Burn’s video about the war, and read additional pieces. Bolstered by our memories and experiences of that time, we will debate and discuss this difficult period in our history. Two hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Fred Davis’s** interest in the Vietnam war stems from a year spent on active duty as a surgeon with the 25th Infantry Division. His experiences and memories stay with him and have encouraged him to continue to study and analyze this complicated experience.

### 323 The War on Drugs

Ollie Curme

**Readings:** The SGL will prepare a written presentation each week that summarizes information in current books and other literature. Links to additional scholarly journal articles, news items, YouTube videos, and other sources will be posted on the course website.

In 1969, 1,601 Americans died from drug overdoses. In 1971, President Nixon announced his war on drugs. In 2016, 64,070 Americans died from drug overdoses. How could our public policy have been so ineffectual or counterproductive? We will examine the history of drug use and prosecution in the United States, from the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in the 1930s to Nixon’s war on drugs, the dramatic increase in incarceration, the crack cocaine epidemic of the 1990s, and the opioid crisis of this century. Throughout the course, we will focus on the tension between the social, racial, political, and economic forces within society that support the drug trade versus those arrayed against it. We will finish with a debate about alternative solutions to the problem. The class will be half SGL presentation and videos and half discussion. All members must be able to access the class website to obtain the posted readings. At least two hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Ollie Curme** is interested in seemingly intractable social problems and social justice.

**Wednesday 1 pm–3 pm**

### 324 History, Mysteries, and Masters of Glass

David Rosen

**Readings:** All homework readings will be emailed weekly to participants. Slides and videos will be provided by the SGL online.

Did Phoenician traders accidentally discover glassmaking 5,000 years ago? Our journey through the history and artistry of glassmaking begins in Mesopotamia, moves through Europe, and arrives in colonial America. We will consider why and how, over centuries and across continents, techniques and styles constantly evolved. Sometimes, local politics and government policies influenced the artists’ environment. We will follow the development of glass art and explore Murano glass, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, the American Studio Glass movement, Dale Chihuly, hot glass, cold work, and more. Videos and photos will allow us to gain an understanding of how masters practice their craft. While this study group will be in a lecture format, questions and comments are encouraged. Online photos, videos, and articles will supplement a weekly packet of emailed readings on the history, techniques, and artistry of glassmaking. Expect about one hour of preparation weekly. Class size limited to 25.

**David Rosen** has collected Studio Glass for many years and led eight glass study groups at various ILRs. He comments, “Glass must be in my DNA. My grandfather and great-grandfather both worked in a glass factory in Russia over 100 years ago.”

### 325 The Moral Bankruptcy of American Capitalism

**Steve Stelovich**

**Readings:** Nicholas Phillipson, *Adam Smith: An Enlightened Life* (Yale UP, 2010). The SGL will provide additional readings on the course website.

What are the moral dimensions inherent in the American incarnation of capitalism? Adam Smith himself felt his book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* towered over his *Wealth of Nations* and raised serious questions regarding the latter. However, a widespread and predominantly neoliberal economic point of view regards American capitalism as the summum bonum of moral economic rectitude. Giving skeptical voice to such an attitude, the course will explore moral dimensions inherent in the American capitalist system. Nicholas Phillipson’s intellectual history of Adam Smith will be read; numerous classical, contemporary, and religious writers on the role of morality in human life will be reviewed with regard to their implications for capitalism. Segments of the recent Netflix documentary *Dirty Money* will be screened and discussed. Two to three hours preparation time. Class size limited to 22.

**Steve Stelovich** is a retired psychiatrist who has led several previous study groups exploring the basis of human understanding and motivation in individual and social settings. Studying the relationship of humans to capitalism and money continues this endeavor.

### 326 The Peloponnesian War: Why We Still Profit From Reading Thucydides

**John Willson**

**Readings:** Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Rex Warner trans. (Penguin Classics, 1972); Donald Kagan, *The Peloponnesian War* (Penguin Books, 2003). For certain weeks, the SGL will provide additional required readings on the course website.

Although Athens and Sparta fought the Peloponnesian War 2,500 years ago, Thucydides’ brilliant account of the conflict still provokes lively debate today regarding human nature, politics, alliances and international relations, the causes and conduct of war, strategy, and the writing and understanding of history. We will follow the war itself through a close reading of Thucydides’ *History* as well as Donald Kagan’s excellent book, *The Peloponnesian War*, as an accompanying text. Throughout we will also be looking for instances of Thucydides’ relevance, influence, and connections to other thinkers, times, and conflicts. To conclude the course, we will examine Graham Allison’s provocative thesis on the

“Thucydides Trap” and the future of today’s US-China relationship. Each week, the first hour will be lecture with the second hour devoted to a full and open discussion of that week’s reading and related topics. Expect two to three hours of reading per week. No prior familiarity with the period is required. Class size limited to 22.

**John Willson** has long enjoyed reading ancient Greek and Roman history and relating it to current issues. He has led courses on Thucydides and on the great historians of ancient Rome, as well as other history courses on de Tocqueville, Jefferson, and the early Massachusetts Puritans.

## Thursday, 10 am–12 noon

### 327 An Epic Battle to Gain Supremacy in the Middle East

**Sultan M. Zia**

**Readings:** Hooman Majid, *The Ayatollah Begs to Differ* (Random House, 2009); Karen Elliott House, *On Saudi Arabia* (Random House, 2013); Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan’s Nuclear Bomb: A Story of Defiance, Deterrence and Deviance* (C. Hurst & Co, 2017). The SGL will post additional required material on the course website.

Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Iran are engaged in proxy wars that have the potential to destabilize the entire Middle East region with consequences for the rest of the world. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, created respectively in 1935 and 1947, are two relatively new nations compared to Iran’s 600-year history. To better understand the nature of these conflicts, we will look at each of these countries in light of its culture, religious doctrine, and governance. What drives these countries to expand their sphere of influence? Why is Pakistan important in the age-old conflict between Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran? Are religious doctrinal differences primarily responsible for stoking intercommunal fear and hatred? What roles do the US and Russia have in all of this? The class members are expected to spend two to three hours per week preparing for the class. Class size limited to 25.

**Sultan Zia**, originally from Hyderabad, India, has led many courses during the past ten years at HILR. His previous courses have included “Radicalization in the Muslim Majority Countries” and “How the Battle over Islam is Reshaping the World.”

### 328 Postmodernism: What Was That All About?

Murray Smith

**Readings:** Readings, primarily essays by Stanley Fish and articles by Richard Rorty, will be posted on the course website and provided on paper.

The furor over postmodernism has now died down. What was it all about? Did anything useful come of it, or was it all just sound and fury? In this course we will be concerned with the philosophical side of postmodernism (including its impact on philosophy of science), rather than its aesthetic side. And we will focus on the American version, rather than on the European thinkers to whom the term was originally applied. Specifically, we will read and discuss the literary theorist Stanley Fish, who showed that the meaning of a text is created as much by the reader as by the writer, and the philosopher Richard Rorty, who showed what it would be like to do without the Aristotelian idea that things have essences and the Cartesian distinction between mind and body. Readings will not be lengthy but will be dense and challenging. Class size limited to 25.

**Murray Smith** has led a dozen and a half study groups on philosophy, science, and linguistics.

### 329 Schubert in Biedermeier Vienna

Virginia Newes

**Readings:** Course packet of selected readings on Schubert and his contemporaries. Includes listening charts and song texts with translations. Listening materials will be posted online or as YouTube links.

As Franz Schubert's fifteen-year composing career in and around Vienna began, the city was still reeling from the dire effects of the Napoleonic invasion. This course will follow the political, social, and cultural conditions that contributed to Schubert's intellectual and artistic development. Readings and discussions will explore issues of biography and historical context, performance practice, and musical style. Focusing primarily on Schubert's late chamber music, symphonies, and late songs, our goal will be to develop sharpened listening skills and critical understanding of the music as it unfolds. The format is a mix of lecture, guided listening, and discussion. In addition, the SGL will try to arrange live performances of some of the material being studied. Although some ability to read music is helpful, study group members with all levels of musical experience are welcomed. Expect two or three hours of reading and focused listening per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Virginia Newes** has taught music history at New England Conservatory, Boston University, and the Eastman School of Music, and now writes reviews for *The Boston Musical Intelligence*. At HILR, she has led a number of study groups on music history.

### 330 *The Master and Margarita: The Devil Comes to Moscow*

Katherine O'Connor

**Readings:** Only this edition: Mikhail Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita* (Vintage International, 1996). Background material and study questions will be provided on the course website.

Mikhail Bulgakov's comic-satirical masterpiece, *The Master and Margarita*, focuses on the stranglehold of Soviet bureaucracy on Moscow's literary and artistic life during Stalin's purges in the 1930s. Stalin, however, is never even alluded to in the novel, whereas the devil appears in the flesh (as a foreigner with a magic act!) and serves as a disruptive nuisance to the Soviet authorities. Parallel to the Moscow-of-the-1930s plot is the novel of a writer (the Master) who has been vilified by the censors; his novel is situated in 1st century CE Jerusalem and is told from the point of view of Pontius Pilate as he interacts with Yeshua (Jesus) prior to his crucifixion. What do power, authority, and dissent look like in 1st-century Jerusalem and in 20th-century Moscow? How does the Master's novel relate to the Bulgakov novel that contains it? This is a discussion course based on close reading. Two to three hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 22.

**Katherine O'Connor** taught Russian and Comparative Literature at Boston University and is the co-translator of the assigned *Master and Margarita* edition.

### 331 *The Story of Earth*

Gene Ferrari

**Readings:** Robert Hazen, *The Story of Earth* (Penguin Books, 2013); Andrew Knoll, *Life on a Young Planet* (Princeton UP, 2003). The SGL will provide other required materials on the course website.

The Earth is 4.5 billion years old. It was formed in the same process that formed our Sun and so, initially, the Earth was a hot, turbulent, waterless planet. Yet, within 300 million years by some accounts and 700 million by others, primitive, single-cell life had established itself. From that point on, life and the rocky materials making up the planet co-evolved into the water and life-filled planet we occupy. Earth underwent many traumas: volcanoes, plate tectonics, asteroid impacts, ice ages, and species extinctions. How did this amazing evolution occur? How did life begin and how did we evolve into the sentient beings we have become? Two books, Hazen's *The Story of Earth* and Knoll's *Life on a Young Planet*, will help us explore those processes and the implications about the possibility of life elsewhere. Join me in that exploration. Three hours of reading per week. SGMs may be asked to volunteer to lead a discussion on a relevant topic. This is a repeat of the Spring 2018 course. Class size limited to 22.

**Gene Ferrari** has led numerous courses on astronomy, cosmology, earth science, the history of WWII, and John le Carré.

### Thursday 1 pm–3 pm

#### 332 Courtroom Cinema: The Original

Marty Aronson and Lois Merrill

**Readings:** Recapitulations and questions prepared by the SGLs will be posted on a weekly basis.

Do movies about dramatic legal cases, fictional or real, convey the true nature of our criminal justice system? This study group will bring courtroom drama to the screen with the following films: *Twelve Angry Men*, *The Verdict*, *Kramer vs Kramer*, *The Accused*, *A Civil Action*, and *To Kill A Mockingbird*. We will collectively view and discuss these movies on alternate weeks. The films include trial scenes of varying length as well as the events leading up to the courtroom drama. Discussions will include: (1) social issues; (2) reality/unreality; (3) the working of our justice system; (4) the purpose of the film; (5) legal issues; (6) credibility. Caveat: **Because of the length of some of the movies, some film classes will begin at 12:30 or 12:45.** Class size limited to 25.

**Marty Aronson** is a trial lawyer and former adjunct professor at Boston College Law School. He is also past president of the Massachusetts chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates. He has presented this course multiple times.

**Lois Merrill** is a lawyer who has served as Associate General Counsel for Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Tufts Health Plan. She has taught at the Harvard Law School Program of Instruction for Lawyers and has led other courses at HILR.

#### 333 Our Imperfect Union under the Articles of Confederation

Brian Ditchek

**Readings:** All course reading materials and web links will be posted on the course website, with the Journal of the Continental Congress serving as a primary source.

Assembling for the first time in mid-1775, the Second Continental Congress began by preparing for war. But after winning the war and negotiating the peace, this new union government, operating under the Articles of Confederation, struggled to ensure domestic tranquility and address threats to the continuation of the union. We will journey through these turbulent times to understand how federal and state actions on currency, debt, trade, land disputes, and more created such dissatisfaction that political leaders felt the only solution was to start over from scratch. Rather than focusing primarily on the founding fathers themselves, we will use primary sources and a variety of readings to delve into how these actions and events impacted citizen farmers, sol-

diers, merchants, and speculators as they weighed whether to accept the new constitution. This class will be a mix of lecture and discussion with two hours per week of preparation time. Class presentations will be encouraged. Class size limited to 20.

**Brian Ditchek** is a scientist and business executive with a lifelong interest in history. A 1781 Boston paper at the Harvard Library spurred his interest in this topic. He previously led the course in Fall 2017.

#### 334 Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, *Band of Angels*, and Poems

Lee Sinai

**Readings:** Only these editions: Robert Penn Warren, *All the King's Men* (Mariner Books, 2002); Robert Penn Warren, *Band of Angels: A Novel* (Louisiana State UP, 1994). Poems will be provided by the SGL.

During this fraught political period, we will turn to another turbulent time, the South in the 1930s, via Robert Penn Warren's masterpiece, *All the King's Men*, to ascertain if politics actually has changed all that much. The male narrator of this novel will be compared to the female narrator of *A Band of Angels*, which examines the 19th-century culture of slavery and has been described as "one of the most searing and vivid fictional accounts of the Civil War era ever written." Warren, who writes of serious subjects in a style that is often poetic, was also a gifted poet and the only person to have received the Pulitzer Prize for both fiction and poetry. Therefore, we will also sample a selection of his poems written throughout his lifetime. Warren writes provocatively and with much depth, which should stimulate lively class discussion. Two to three hours preparation per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Lee Sinai**, the author of five books, appreciates fine writing and enjoys leading discussions that result in greater appreciation of an author's work.

#### 335 The Life and Work of Thomas Merton

Charles Swearingen

**Readings:** Thomas Merton, *The Seven Storey Mountain* (Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace & Company, 1998); Jim Forest, *Living with Wisdom* (Orbis Books, 1991); Thomas Merton, *The Intimate Merton, His Life from his Journals* (Harper, 1999).

Thomas Merton (1915-1968) was hailed as the conscience of the anti-war movement and censured for crossing over from religion to social activism. Orphaned in childhood, he studied at Cambridge and Columbia Universities, enjoyed wine, women, and song, and then became an ardent Roman Catholic. For many years as a Trappist monk, he became an eloquent spiritual writer and contemplative mystic as well as an anti-war advocate and witness to peace. He communicated with a wide range of people: Joan Baez, the Dalai

Lama, many rabbis, Hindus, and Buddhists. In this course, we will read *The Seven Storey Mountain*, his acclaimed autobiography, and selections from his later writings, letters, and journals. We will watch a documentary of his life and listen to recordings of some of his lectures. We will try to understand this man of many contradictions and explore the reasons for his enduring popularity. Two to three hours reading per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Charles Swearingen** is a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst with a long-standing interest in the psychology of religion and the spiritual life.

### **336 Understanding Apartheid Through Film** **Susan Gerstenfeld**

**Readings:** Course pack will be composed of selected materials and be available at the first session. SGMs are strongly advised to read Nelson Mandela's *The Long Walk to Freedom* prior to the start of class.

Well-reviewed films and documentaries will frame our exploration of critical questions about apartheid in South Africa. What were the colonial motivations for apartheid in South Africa? Why did it end so abruptly, even before Mandela became President? What impact did apartheid have in the broader African region? What roles did Russia, Cuba, and the US play? What has been the legacy of apartheid, Nelson Mandela, Presidents Botha and de Klerk, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the daily life and struggles of people of all races post-apartheid? **Classes will generally run 1-3:30** to allow time for viewing the films and having discussion on the same day. Each week, there will be readings to provide background for the films shown in class. Three hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Susan Vernon-Gerstenfeld** has worked and traveled widely in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and the Republic of South Africa in addition to teaching and establishing or doing the groundwork for applied research centers in those countries. Apartheid's historical and social impacts remain of great interest to her.

# First Half Six-Week Courses

## September 11–October 29

Mondays .....Sept. 17–Oct. 29

Tuesdays .....Sept. 11–Oct. 16

Wednesdays .....Sept. 12–Oct. 24

Thursdays .....Sept. 13–Oct. 18

### Monday, 10 am–12 noon

#### 340 *Agnès Varda: Social Documentary and Art*

Natalie Schorr

**Readings:** Alison Smith, *Agnès Varda* (Manchester UP, 1998). Additional readings, interviews, and film clips will be posted on the course website.

Agnès Varda has received critical recognition as one of the greatest contemporary filmmakers. She has also faced controversies and has had to struggle to finance her films and control the final cut. Varda's audacious movies blur the boundaries between fiction and documentary and between art and life with their distinctive experimental style. Our focus will be on the cluster of movies Varda made from 1980 to 1985: two very different feature-length movies, *Mur Murs* and *Vagabond*, and the shorts made between them, *Documenteur*, *Ulysse*, *Les Dites Cariatides*, and *7P*. We will study the movies both as art and for the significant social issues that are raised with characteristic empathy. The films will be shown in French with English subtitles. The in-class format is introduction, film, and discussion. Two hours preparation per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Natalie Schorr** has taught courses on French films, spoken at film conferences, and organized community film festivals.

#### 341 *Brideshead Revisited: Literary and Social Perspectives*

June Cuomo

**Readings:** Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (Back Bay Books, 2012). Additional readings and critiques will be available on the course website.

In 1945, Evelyn Waugh, the most successful writer of the “Brideshead Generation,” published the brilliant novel, *Brideshead Revisited*. It was and remains popular in both England and America, and has been successful as a TV series and a movie. In this study group, we will consider the

structure, prose style, and themes of the book. How do the characters resolve the tensions between duty and desire? In what ways might they be damaged? We will also examine how the social context of the 1940s (including World War II, economic unrest, and the British style of child rearing and boarding schools) shaped the characters' lives. The study group will be primarily discussion based on two to three hours of reading a week. Class size limited to 12.

**June Cuomo** has long admired English literature. Her graduate work in social psychology will be valuable in this course. She has led several study groups at HILR.

### Monday 1 pm–3 pm

#### 343 *Pablo Casals and Weapons for Peace*

Carol Sager

**Readings:** Pablo Casals and Albert E. Kahn, *Joys and Sorrows: Reflections by Pablo Casals* (Simon and Schuster, 1970).

Pablo Casals (1876–1973), one of the greatest cellists and conductors of all time, championed freedom in his native Spain and around the world. In an era of constant war and unrest, Casals could not separate himself or his music from injustice. He took the “welfare of my fellow men” as his first obligation. His cello and baton became his “weapons for peace.” This discussion-based class will examine the results of Casals' mission for justice and freedom and its effects on his life and music; look at the influences that shaped him as a humanitarian and an artist; listen to and discuss his music; and consider the impact of his legacy on contemporary artists who seek to improve the lives of others. A well-known cellist who studied with Casals will visit us and share his experiences. Approximately fifty pages of reading per class. No knowledge of music necessary. Class size limited to 22.

**Carol Sager** has had a decades-long interest in the cello. Her recent meetings with a student of Casals helped her develop this course.

#### 344 *Reading The New Yorker, Part 1*

Kate McGillicuddy and Irene Fairley

**Readings:** Current issues of *The New Yorker* magazine (print or online editions acceptable). Additional material related to the readings may be posted on the class page.

Enhance and deepen your experience of reading *The New Yorker* by engaging with other SGMs in weekly discussions of readings from this esteemed publication of fiction

and nonfiction articles. The primary goal of each class is to engage deeply with others in thoughtful, spirited discussions of important current issues. Readings are chosen by SGMs based on class interest and topical relevance, and each SGM is encouraged to facilitate the discussion on one or two articles. Updated each week, the class website will provide optional enrichment for our readings, including images, short articles, podcasts, reviews, YouTube clips, and maps. Since discussions are at the heart of our study group, each class member's participation is vital in contributing to the quality and depth of the class. Two to three hours of reading per week required. Class size limited to 20.

**Kate McGillicuddy** studied art history at Newton College of the Sacred Heart, and received a Master's degree from Boston College. She has led multiple study groups at HILR.

**Irene Fairley** majored in English at Queen's College, received a doctorate from Harvard University, and taught linguistics and literature at C.W. Post and Northeastern University. She has led or co-led over a dozen study groups at HILR.

### 345 Some Writer! E.B. White

Mary Robinson

**Readings:** E.B. White, *Essays of E.B. White* (Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2006); E.B. White, *Charlotte's Web* (Harper Collins, 2012). The SGL will provide additional required materials on the course website.

E.B. White lived at least nine lives—as an essayist for *The New Yorker* and *Harper* magazines, Manhattan dweller, Maine farmer, astute naturalist, poet, Oscar-nominated animator, political critic, sailor, co-author of the classic guide to writing in the English language, and, of course, author of three treasured children's books. Together, we will explore the remarkable diversity of his writings, from the satirical and humorous to the deeply profound. White's style continues to be appreciated by generations of readers of every age for its carefully crafted simplicity and beauty. Woven through his writing is an extraordinary sense of empathy for both mankind and animals. Essays, poems, letters, and a novel will provide ample opportunities for class discussion. Two to three hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Mary Robinson** summers down the road from E.B. White's Maine farm and would not miss the annual Blue Hill Fair, where Charlotte saved Wilbur's life. She has taught in diverse settings, enjoying the wonder of middle schoolers as well as the insights of healthcare providers and graduate students.

## Tuesday 10 am–12 noon

### 346 Russia: The Story of War

Anthony Pazzanita

**Readings:** Gregory Carleton, *Russia: The Story of War* (Harvard UP, 2017).

Many nations are no strangers to war but, for Russians, it is a part of their identity. While outsiders may see Russia as an aggressor, Russians see their country as encircled by enemies and believe they must always be in a defensive posture. This study group will attempt to understand how war shapes the self-image of the Russian people and their view of the world. Why is it that Russians see their country encircled by enemies, and how does this translate into policy and social behavior? What are some of the root causes that have produced a myth of exceptionalism through war in Russian society and politics for much of its history as a nation? This discussion-based course will encourage lively participation. Two hours of reading per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Tony Pazzanita** has led forty-three courses at HILR, many of them on Russia.

### 347 What Makes Good Fiction?

Susan LaDue

**Readings:** Members will buy a course pack of selected readings. Information about obtaining the readings will be posted on the website.

Have you ever wondered what makes a novel good or not so good? Or have you disliked a short story but nevertheless remained willing to acknowledge that it was a quality piece? In this study group, SGMs will read and analyze acclaimed fiction by writers of different styles: Gustave Flaubert, Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf, Ines Arredondo, and Dennis Lehane. We will read from a course pack that contains selections of these authors and, through guided discussion, we will discover the elements of craft that make good fiction. There is no pre-determined definition of taste in fiction. Class members will be given the opportunity to analyze passages from the selected readings and to report on the characteristics that contribute to quality writing. The class is intended for all, both writers and readers, who are interested in defining what makes good fiction. Two hours of preparation each week is expected. Class size limited to 12.

**Susan LaDue** has been a professor of French Language and Literature. She currently writes detective fiction. She has attended classes at Grub Street and the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center, and enjoys the craft of writing.

## Tuesday 1 pm–3 pm

### 348 The Craft and Appeal of William Trevor's Stories

Joanne Carlisle

**Readings:** Only these editions: William Trevor, *Cheating at Canasta* (Penguin Books, 2009); William Trevor, *Two Lives* (Penguin Books, 1992). Additional materials will be provided on the course website.

William Trevor is an Irish-Anglo writer whose stories and novels have been highly regarded worldwide; they have received literary awards since his first publications in the 1970s. Because his stories are so varied in topic, time, and place, we might wonder why they are so consistently appealing. Trevor's stories are about the lives of ordinary people. They reflect social, economic, and political upheaval in Ireland, conflicts of religious affiliation, and emotional or physical conditions, but they speak to all of us. To understand why his work has such universal appeal, our class will read, discuss, and listen to his stories. We will analyze the characteristics of his writing and share interpretations of characters, events, and overarching themes. Resources will include ten stories and a novella, as well as a video, interviews, and a podcast reading of one story. There will be 60-80 pages of reading for each class. Class size limited to 12.

**Joanne Carlisle** majored in English literature and earned graduate degrees in education. She has taught on the high school and graduate levels and is now a retired professor of education.

### 349 The Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918-1920

Martha Vicinus

**Readings:** Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918* (Cambridge UP, 1989 or 2003); Katherine Anne Porter, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (Penguin, 2011); William Maxwell, *They Came Like Swallows* (Vintage, 1997).

We will look at the American response to the world-wide influenza epidemic that killed an estimated 50 to 100 million people. Unlike most epidemics, young fit adults were most affected. In spite of significant advances in medicine over the previous generation, doctors could do nothing for patients; medical historians are still uncertain about where it originated or when it started. Only Spain, a neutral country, admitted that their king and thousands of citizens had come down with an especially virulent form of the flu. Overcrowding on troop ships ensured that many American soldiers never saw action in World War I; they died on the voyage to Europe or soon after from the flu. We will first examine the history of the epidemic, and then look at how it was remembered by its victims. A final session will consider our own more recent epidemics and what we might learn

from the world's worst modern pandemic. Two to three hours of preparation per week. Class size limited to 22.

**Martha Vicinus** has taught a wide range of courses combining literature, art and history. Her recent study group on World War I led naturally to a consideration of the flu pandemic. This is her thirteenth study group.

### 350 What Do Women Want?

Judith Elstein

**Readings:** Graham Swift, *Mothering Sunday: A Romance* (Vintage International, 2016); Shirley Hazzard, *The Transit of Venus* (Penguin Books, 1990). Some folk tales and news articles on relevant issues of female empowerment will be provided on the website.

Freud famously asked what a woman wants, saying that after thirty years of research into the feminine soul, he still did not know. But fiction offers persuasive insights about women's desires. Graham Swift's short, moving novella, *Mothering Sunday*, mixes the events of one transformative day in the life of a young English maid in 1924 with glimpses of her very different future. Shirley Hazzard's incisive and sensual novel, *The Transit of Venus*, moves from the 1950s through the 1970s exploring the different life decisions of two transplanted Australian sisters. Both prize-winning works are stylistic and intellectual tours-de-force that consider marriage and eros, morality, time, chance, class, and self-determination. Discussions will be framed by looking backward to traditional expectations for happiness in folk tales and forward to women's ongoing struggle for recognition and empowerment. Supplementary short articles and film clips will be posted on the website. Reading: about two hours weekly. Class size limited to 18.

**Judith Elstein** was a high school English teacher who also trained educators nationwide for the Folger Shakespeare Library. She enjoys leading study groups on authors and works that she loves.

## Wednesday 10 am–12 noon

### 351 Contentious Issues: Can We Talk?

Susan Hall Mygatt and Peg Senturia

**Readings:** Ken Stern, *Republican Like Me: How I Left the Liberal Bubble and Learned to Love the Right* (Harper, 2017). Additional readings will be posted on the class website.

Our goal is to increase our ability to have meaningful discussions with people with whom we may disagree. To deepen our understanding of conservative perspectives, we will read Ken Stern's account of his lively encounters with Republicans "of all types." We will explore the obstacles to substantive personal communication and compromise on difficult public issues. SGMs will be asked to participate in small group discussions of controversial topics chosen by

the class and are encouraged to bring passionate opinions and curiosity about other points of view. These topics might include gun control, school choice, legalized marijuana, the value of government benefits versus self-sufficiency, the role of religion in governmental policies, and the exercise of individual and corporate rights. Two hours of reading per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Susan Hall** Mygatt majored in government at college before attending law school. She sees the increasing crassness of public discourse as a threat to our democratic form of government.

**Peg Senturia** was an historian, psychotherapist, and organizational consultant. She has led numerous study groups involving moral frameworks and politics, human behavior, and reading fiction.

### 352 Wilde Women: Three Plays

**Mickey Zemon**

**Readings:** Only this edition: Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays*, Peter Raby, ed. (Oxford World's Classics paperback, 2008). Several reviews of the plays and related articles will be posted on the course website.

Oscar Wilde filled his stage with fallen women, femmes fatales, saintly wives, and stoical mothers. In *Lady Windermere's Fan*, an angelic spouse's world is shattered when a scandal-tainted vixen forces her way into it. In *A Woman of No Importance*, a single mother struggles to protect her son from his father, the man who seduced and abandoned her. In *An Ideal Husband*, a scheming lady with a mysterious past is determined to destroy a gentleman highly esteemed by his idealistic and naïve wife. How do the female characters in these plays suggest the changing roles of women in England in the 1890s? What do they reveal about Wilde's attitude toward women? What part do men—most particularly the dandy—play in his depiction of late Victorian society? Responses to such questions will be developed through careful reading as well as performing and viewing key scenes from these comedies. Two hours of preparation time per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Mickey Zemon** was delighted by many wonderful productions of Wilde's plays at the Shaw Festival over the past two decades. She was the Library Director at Emerson College for twenty-four years and has led fourteen study groups.

## Wednesday 1 pm–3 pm

### 353 Death of a President: An Assassin's Bullet or Medical Malpractice?

**Katie Feeks**

**Readings:** Candice Millard, *The Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine and the Murder of a President* (Anchor Books, 2012).

The class will study the New York Times best seller, *The Destiny of the Republic*, that chronicles a little-known but tumultuous time in our nation's history, the short presidency of James Garfield. A supporter of civil service reform, Garfield had no say on the choice of his running mate, Chester Arthur, a beneficiary of the spoils system. People were convinced Garfield was young and strong so the risk of Arthur becoming president seemed remote. Wrong! We will discuss Garfield's struggle to survive the assassination attempt and doctors' disagreements over the best medical treatments, including rejection of medical innovations that might have saved his life. We will look closely at continuing debates about reform and the assassin Charles Giteau. There will be no assigned reports or presentations. Required reading of seventy pages per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Katie Feeks**, an avid reader, particularly enjoys history books that include a social history in the telling of the main event. She previously led a class on the changing US/UK relationship in 1940-41 London.

### 354 How New York City Bounced Back from its Brush with Bankruptcy

**Steven Harvey**

**Readings:** Kim Phillips-Fein, *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics* (Picador, 2018). Contemporary accounts by political figures, financiers, union leaders, and observers of the urban arena will be posted on the course website.

In 1975, New York City's government ran out of money. After flirting with bankruptcy and spending the next decade as a ward of New York State, the city embarked on a remarkable comeback, ultimately reclaiming its identity as a great metropolis. Is New York's recovery a model for cities in trouble today? Many government reforms from the fiscal crisis era (1975-1978) put New York on a trajectory toward outsized economic and cultural gains. Those improvements, though, have been accompanied by new vexing problems: inequality, unaffordable housing, and the disappearance of middle-class residents. We will explore the history of this emblematic urban crisis and the ingredients of the rescue operations. We will also discuss current, sometimes opposing, viewpoints on the future of our cities. No financial or technical background is needed. Aficionados of urban life

are especially welcome. Two to three hours preparation per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Steven Harvey**, early in his career as a municipal finance analyst, had the good fortune to phone Mayor Ed Koch with the news that New York City had received its first S&P ratings upgrade since the fiscal crisis.

### 355 The Essays of George Orwell: “Writing Like a Windowpane”

Carla Coch

**Readings:** Only this edition: *Modern Classics Penguin Essays of George Orwell* (Penguin, June 2000).

George Orwell introduced the now infamous concept of “newspeak” in his essay, *Politics and the English Language*. “Political language... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.” He spent much of his life campaigning against the use of such language and in calling out its dangers to a healthy democratic society. His thoughtful and ruthless critique of the way language can be manipulated to simplify complex concepts and narrow the range of permissible political thought has great relevance today. We will trace Orwell’s evolving sense of justice, which was inextricably bound to his ideas about language, looking closely at Orwell’s essays about politics and language as applied to his own work and others. We will also view videos about his life and critiques by writers such as Christopher Hitchens and Noam Chomsky. Primarily discussion-based with two or three essays assigned per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Carla Coch**, a retired English literature and composition teacher at Alfred University, tries to avoid—not always successfully—the Orwellian abyss of euphemism, obfuscation, and pedantry in writing.

## Thursday 10 am–12 noon

### 356 Contemporary History: Selected Issues

Herbert Hershfang and Allan Roth

**Readings:** Stephen Kinzer, *The True Flag: Theodore Roosevelt, Mark Twain, and the Birth of American Empire* (Henry Holt and Company, 2017). Additional reading will be provided, mainly online.

This course aims to consider some of the rapid changes occurring in today’s world. Every subject is fair game but, given time constraints, the SGLs will select topics supplemented by those of interest to the majority of SGMs. We will use *The New York Times* as our primary but not exclusive source. Members, individually or jointly, are encouraged to report on specific, agreed-upon topics within time limits. As background for some issues considered, our first two classes will focus on *The True Flag*, Stephen Kinzer’s well-

researched account of what he identifies as the “birth of American Empire.” It quotes extensively from the articulate national debate among Theodore Roosevelt, Mark Twain, and other notables over whether contemplated US expansion reflects American ideals and values. Consequences of the outcome reverberate today. The book should be read before the semester begins. One to two hours of preparation weekly. Class size limited to 12.

**Herbert Hershfang** and **Allan Roth** were law school classmates. Herb is a retired trial court judge. Allan practiced and taught law and advised foreign governments on trade, investments and regulatory matters. Each has led a number of courses, together totaling about twenty.

### 357 Solving the Problem of Gun Violence

Carol Kunik

**Readings:** *Reducing Gun Violence in America: Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis*, Daniel Webster and Jon Vernick, eds. (Johns Hopkins UP, 2013). Other materials will be placed on the course website or will be contained in a hard copy course packet.

Over 30,000 Americans die annually from gunshots; this is ten times the rate of other developed countries. Despite the regular tragedy of mass shootings in the news, efforts to solve the problem are politically deadlocked. Together we will explore the history, sociology, and politics of gun violence and gun control in America, seeking to understand how we have gotten to the gridlock of the present. By examining progress made in other countries using models of public health and political reform, we will search for solutions that will work in America. Our book is the work of The Center for Gun Policy and Research at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Classes will be a combination of SGL presentation, discussion, lively debates, and videos. Two hours of reading per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Carol Kunik** has a Master’s Degree in Psychology and worked for twenty years as a clinical psychologist, and later as an executive coach. As a mother of two school professionals and grandmother of six school-aged children, she is interested in working collectively to find solutions to the problem of gun violence.

## Thursday 1 pm–3 pm

### 358 Our Digital Present: Promise, Benefits, Discontents

Cyrus Gibson and Lance Drane

**Readings:** Andrew McAfee and Erik Brynjolfsson, *Machine, Platform, Crowd: Harnessing our Digital Future* (W.W. Norton, 2017). Other readings and links will be provided.

The booming digital age has brought with it both beneficial innovations and serious unexpected consequences. But we still “ain’t seen nothing yet.” In this study group, the three elements of our text will give us a structure for understanding technology applications and business drivers. Our sessions will explore current outcomes and consequences of such cases as Uber, Facebook, and Bitcoin. Our aim is to provide the objective basics necessary for consumer choices, business decisions, and public policy and regulation. We will use lecture and interactive discussion. Comfort with the use of technology and previous encounters with cases will be welcomed but are not essential for participation. Preparation about two hours weekly. Class size limited to 20.

**Chuck Gibson** was most recently affiliated with the MIT Sloan School as a Senior Lecturer and member of the Initiative on the Digital Economy. His previous study group was “The Second Machine Age.”

**Lance Drane** spent his most recent engineering work on intensive digital signal processing applications that stretched computational abilities of the time.

### 359 Rembrandt Etchings at the Fogg

Susan Siris Wexler

**Readings:** Thomas Rassieur, *Rembrandt’s Journey, Painter, Draftsman, Etcher* (MFA Publications, 2003); Gary Schwartz, *The Complete Etchings of Rembrandt, Reproduced in Original Size* (Dover, 1988).

For the fourth time, we will be offering a study of Rembrandt’s etchings at the Fogg Museum. Rembrandt achieved an understanding of the human condition that was visually equivalent to the dramatic insights of Shakespeare. At each class, we will present twenty unframed examples of the Masters’ original etchings. We will study the development of his oeuvre in regard to images, techniques, compositions, themes, increasing insight into characterization, printing expertise, and quality of prints. In addition, a relevant painting by Rembrandt will be examined. Intense discussion will be encouraged. There will be about two hours of reading a week. Class size limited to 15.

**Susan Siris Wexler** has taught previous HILR classes on Rembrandt and Master Drawings. She is a practicing artist who has enjoyed a lifelong fascination with art history.

### 360 The Mexican-American War

Pete Funkhouser

**Readings:** Amy S. Greenberg, *A Wicked War: Polk, Clay, Lincoln, and the 1846 Invasion of Mexico* (Vintage Books, 2013).

This course will examine the causes and consequences of the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), a conflict little-known today. In addition to the military aspects of the war, we will discuss the profound social and political forces at work in the United States at that time. Was the Mexican War inevitable? Was it ethical? Could Mexico have avoided it? What role did Polk, Clay, and Lincoln play before, during, and after the conflict? How was slavery a cause of the war? Why were American racism and anti-Catholicism sentiments also factors? Did we learn anything from this experience, or was it a prelude to future mistakes? We will consider how such themes from the past echo in our world today and read several articles about how this dispute was and is viewed by the Mexicans. Brief video clips will add detail and variety to our discussions. About sixty pages of reading per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Pete Funkhouser** has a degree from the Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs at Princeton, has spent time in Mexico, and has a strong interest in the history of this war.

## Second Half Six-Week Courses

### October 23–December 12

Mondays .....	Nov. 5–Dec. 10
Tuesdays .....	Oct. 23–Dec. 4
Wednesdays .....	Oct. 31–Dec. 12
Thursdays .....	Oct. 25–Dec. 6

### Monday 10am–12 noon

#### 370 Smart People, Smart Camera: Photography with your Smartphone

Ron Goodman

**Readings:** Peter Cope, *The Smartphone Photography Guide* (Carlton Books, 2018). The SGL will provide all necessary and ancillary materials.

The best camera is the one with you, and many people today have a very capable still and video instrument as part of their smartphone and pad. You will learn to master the technical capabilities of these remarkable photographic instruments as you understand what makes a good photograph. You will learn how to edit, share, and print your pictures. Video and special effects will be examined as you study and view examples of the aesthetics of the art of photography. There will be readings, lectures, demonstrations, and class critiques. In addition to assigned reading, preparation will include shared assignments such as photographing portraits or panoramas to show in class. You should prepare to commit two to three hours per week. No prerequisites are necessary except a desire to learn the capabilities of the excellent camera that you have in your pocket while you come to understand the aesthetics of the photographic art form. Class size limited to 18.

**Ron Goodman** has been a college teacher of photography and communications, a photography judge, and an award-winning artist. His recent publication, *Boston's Downtown Movie Palaces*, received a Special Commendation from the Boston Society of Film Critics.

#### 371 The Dreyfus Affair

Daniel Friedlander

**Readings:** Margery Elfin, *A Nation on Trial: France and the Legacy of the Dreyfus Affair* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016). The SGL will provide other materials on the course website.

In October 1894, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a junior officer attached to the General Staff of the French army, was accused of and subsequently found guilty of treason as a spy for Germany. In January 1895, Dreyfus was publicly stripped of his military rank and sentenced to exile with solitary confinement on Devil's Island off the coast of French Guiana. Over the next decade, the validity of that conviction was increasingly and heatedly debated by the French populace. How that debate reflected divisions within French culture and society, including its connection to anti-Semitism, is the subject of this course. Those cultural differences, highlighted through the prism of the Dreyfus Affair, affected the political discourse of the French Third Republic. What did the case reveal about French society? What can we learn by studying this "affair" that is relevant today? Two to three hours of reading per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Daniel Friedlander** has been involved in teaching medical students and gastroenterology trainees for forty years. He has a special interest in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French history.

#### 372 Visions of the American West

Al Levin

**Readings:** Mary Street Alinder, *Ansel Adams: A Biography* (Bloomsbury, 2004). Links to additional readings will be posted on the course website.

Have you been hypnotized by Ansel Adams' sublime images of Yosemite or Albert Bierstadt's dramatic portrayals of the Rocky Mountains? This course will explore images created by artists who worked in the American West or were inspired by the western landscape. The images will be examined both as independent works of art and artifacts of their historical period. The artists will include, among others, William Henry Jackson, Ansel Adams, Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington, Georgia O'Keeffe, and various Native Americans. Slides will be used to present biographical material, historical background, and images. Selected works will be analyzed closely in class discussions. Preparation: one hour of reading per week and additional time for critical viewing of assigned images. Class size limited to 18.

**Al Levin** has long been fascinated by images, both professionally as an echocardiographer and privately as an amateur photographer.

## Monday 1 pm–3 pm

### 373 Challenges to Western Democracy

Alan Altshuler and Julie Altshuler

**Readings:** Robert Kuttner, *Can Democracy Survive Global Capitalism?* (W. W. Norton, 2018); Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die* (Crown, 2018).

Have both the global and US tides turned away from democratization, the apparent trend of the 1990s, toward more authoritarian rule? If so, how come? And what might be done to resist this trend? The study group, in addressing these questions, will draw on two recent books. The first, *Can Democracy Survive Global Capitalism?*, focuses on the political influence of increasingly concentrated wealth and its corollary, ever-growing inequality. The second, *How Democracies Die*, argues that modern transitions to authoritarian rule occur less often by coup d'état than as a result of victories by demagogues (from Hitler to Hugo Chavez) in democratic elections. The study group will seek, in discussion format, to consider the threats identified by these authors and how they can best be countered. Both books are US-centric, but in a global context. Readings: 50-75 pages per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Alan Altshuler**, a political scientist by training, is a Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor, Emeritus. He has previously led three study groups at HILR.

**Julie Altshuler**, whose career was in K-12 education and higher education administration, has led more than fifteen study groups at HILR.

### 374 Reading *The New Yorker*, Part 2

Kate McGillicuddy and Irene Fairley

**Readings:** Current issues of *The New Yorker* magazine (print or online editions acceptable). Additional material related to the readings may be posted on the class page.

Enhance and deepen your experience of reading *The New Yorker*. Engage with other SGMs in weekly discussions of readings from this esteemed publication of fiction and non-fiction articles. Readings are chosen by SGMs based on class interest and topical relevance, and typically require two to three hours of reading each week. Each SGM is encouraged to facilitate the discussion on one or two articles. Updated each week, the class page will provide optional enrichment for our readings, including images, short articles, podcasts, reviews, YouTube clips, and maps. The primary goal of each class is to engage deeply with others in thoughtful, spirited discussions of important current issues. Since discussions

are at the heart of our study group, each class member's participation is vital in contributing to their quality and depth. Class size limited to 20.

**Kate McGillicuddy** studied art history at Newton College, and received a Master's degree from Boston College. She was a Learning Disabilities Specialist and Project Read practitioner, and has been a long-time reader of *The New Yorker*. She has led multiple study groups at HILR.

**Irene Fairley** majored in English at Queen's College, received a doctorate from Harvard University, and taught linguistics and literature at C.W. Post and Northeastern University. She has led or co-led over a dozen study groups at HILR.

### 375 The Beatles: Their Music and Their Impact

Jon Small

**Readings:** This edition only: Philip Norman, *Shout: The Beatles in Their Generation*, Updated Ed. (Touchstone, 2005). The SGL will provide handouts of Beatles lyrics and other material.

What made the Beatles so phenomenally successful? How did Beatlemania have such an immediate and lasting impact? What makes their music unique and different? We will explore rock music's most influential band from its inception in Liverpool in 1960 through its breakup in 1970. The Beatles were surely the most significant group in the history of rock music. They influenced music, fashion, culture, and history. We will delve into these effects, as well as some of the controversies that the Beatles generated. We will listen to and analyze selected Beatles songs, review their lyrics, and watch videos of Beatles interviews. We will also briefly examine the post-Beatles careers of John, Paul, George and Ringo. Preparation will be about ninety pages of reading per week. Class size limited to 13.

**Jon Small** was Director of Programs for Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education (MCLE). He has led four previous study groups, including most recently one on Paul McCartney. Jon is a lifelong Beatles fan.

### 376 The Fruits of Monotheism

Beardsley Ruml

**Readings:** Readings will be posted on the course website.

The thesis of this study group in intellectual history is that the adoption of monotheism (replacing monolatry, the worship of one god while acknowledging others) by the Jews who returned from the Babylonian Exile (ca. 400s BCE) precipitated a crisis: if the only cosmic force is YHWH, the Jewish god, how can we explain evil? (See the Book of Job.) The solution of apocalypticism adopted by some Jews, which includes the belief in dual cosmic forces of good and evil, provided an entirely new understanding of the cosmos and

the human condition. Although Jewish apocalypticism was a sectarian minority movement, its views became the basis for most of what we call Western Civilization because they were held by John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul. Join us to explore the origins of the second antagonistic cosmic force (Satan), a consequential afterlife (heaven and hell), and universal resurrection. Readings are from the Hebrew Bible, Apocrypha, New Testament, and Roman Catholic Catechism. Three hours of preparation weekly. Class size limited to 25.

**B Ruml** has led five study groups concerned with the Bible and its likely history.

## Tuesday 10 am–12 noon

### 377 A Perspective on Greece through Contemporary Film

Mary Kelley

**Readings:** All reading materials will be either uploaded to the course website or put into a course pack. Videos will be posted to the course website.

Greece is one of the oldest democracies in the world and the first to elect a “populist” government. Greece now faces a crisis composed of economic depression, an influx of refugees escaping from war and poverty, the country’s staggering debt to the European Union, and the effect of EU-imposed reforms. What are the lessons to be learned from what Greece has been through in modern times? We will be viewing four contemporary, documentary, and independent Greek films. They will provide a basis for discussions about the effects of recent history. Films vary from twenty minutes to nearly two hours long. We will also watch some short pieces online and read articles about Greece. Reading and viewing outside of class will be one to two hours per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Mary Kelley** has been going to Greece annually since 1982. Last year, she attended the Greek Film Festival in Berlin. She believes that film provides an intriguing opportunity to understand another culture and how it views itself.

### 378 Surviving Stalin

Elise Forbes Tripp

**Readings:** Only these editions: Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Penguin Books, 2009); Olga Adamova-Sliozberg, *My Journey: How One Woman Survived Stalin’s Gulag* (Northwestern UP, 2011). Additional materials (e.g. trial transcripts) will be handed out in class.

Stalin created prison camps across Russia for those thought to represent a threat to the state. Arbitrary arrests, forced confessions, brutal conditions, overwork, and instant execution killed many millions and gave rise to a literature of

suffering and resistance by those who made it through the system. We will read two such accounts: Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s fictionalized account of his eight years in the Gulag for privately criticizing Stalin, and Olga Adamova-Sliozberg’s story of her twenty years in the Gulag. Olga, a Jewish economist, was arrested for being the wife of a professor who was shot the day after the secret police picked him up. How did the Communist Party support Stalin’s tyranny? How did Russian history and geography facilitate Stalin’s control? This study group will identify and investigate Stalin’s many instruments of political oppression and recognize the causes and effects of his tyranny. Preparation time: two to three hours a week. Class size limited to 12.

**Elise Forbes Tripp** has a PhD in International Studies and has taught at several community colleges. She has never forgotten her trip to the USSR in 1963.

## Tuesday 1 pm–3 pm

### 379 The Durants’ Lessons of History: Have They Held Up over the Years?

Jim Sloman

**Readings:** Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lessons of History* (Simon & Schuster, 2010). Supplemental materials will be posted on the course website.

From 1935 to 1975, Will and Ariel Durant wrote an eleven-volume work, *The Story of Civilization*, covering Western history for the general reader. In 1968, they wrote a summary text distilling the key themes and forces that shaped the course of civilization. *The Lessons of History* is a series of short, dense, and insightful essays about the relationship between human history and the topics of earth, biology, race, character, morals, religion, economics, socialism, government, and war. SGMs will use this text to evaluate lessons that the Pulitzer Prize-winning authors gained after a lifetime of thinking and writing about history. Through discussion, related articles, and online interviews, we will explore and challenge the Durants’ observations and views. Reflecting on their final chapters, we will debate their conclusions while asking if their ideas help us understand our own time. One to two hours of preparation weekly. Class size limited to 12.

**Jim Sloman** has attempted to draw upon history, with occasional success, while navigating financial markets as an equity investor professionally and privately.

### 380 Whodunnit? Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone: The First Detective Novel* Michael Bennett

**Readings:** Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone* (Oxford World's Classics, 2008). For background, frequent reference will be made to an online site, "The Victorian Web." Additional required readings will be posted on the course website.

A crime, a locked room, a bungling constabulary, a brilliant detective, multiple suspects, an abundance of red herrings, and a plot that twists and turns its way to a surprise ending: these are staples of the detective novel. What are its essential elements and lineage? Was it born with Poe's Dupin? Gaboriau's Lecoq? For aficionados, the grandfather of the genre is *The Moonstone*. Set in mid-19th century London and environs, Wilkie Collins' masterpiece was called by T.S. Eliot, "the first, the longest and the best of modern English detective novels," and by Dorothy Sayers, "the finest detective story ever written." But it is more. This epistolary novel touches on multiple nuances of Victorian culture: social hierarchies, racism, the status of women, British imperialism. Come study it. Bring your taste for Victorian sensationalism, your love of interactive discussion, and your nose for sleuthing. Three to four hours of reading per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Michael Bennett** is a retired psychiatrist who has led over twenty study groups on literature over thirteen years of self-indulgence at HILR.

### 381 Why Some Structures Fall Down: Learning From Failures Joseph Antebi

**Readings:** Matthys Levy and Mario Salvadori, *Why Buildings Fall Down* (Norton, 2002). The SGL will post other required materials on the class webpage.

Progress in structural design is made by pushing limits and understanding failures. Class topics will include the evolution of the pyramids of ancient Egypt; the destruction of Jamestown; the evolution of suspension bridges from the early 19th century to the Tacoma Narrows bridge collapse, and the design of today's bridges. The class will discuss the causes of failures including the Boston Molasses Tank, the walkways at the Kansas City Hyatt hotel, and the 300-foot diameter Green Bank radio telescope. Readings and discussions will examine how defects are found and remedied in the design of modern skyscrapers including Boston's John Hancock and simulations of the collapse of New York's World Trade Center Towers. The class format will be a combination of lectures and discussion based on the two hours of required readings per week. No technical background is needed. Class size limited to 18.

**Joseph Antebi** has had a lifelong interest in the behavior of structures. He designed and analyzed various structures including radio and optical telescopes. He also investigated structural failures and designed remedies.

## Wednesday 10 am–12 noon

### 382 Darwin's Influence in America David Bliss

**Readings:** Randall Fuller, *The Book that Changed America: How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Ignited a Nation* (Viking, 2017). Additional required readings will be posted on the class website.

Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* arrived in America just as the North and South were about to engage in a life-or-death struggle for survival. For abolitionists, the new theory of evolution vindicated their view that all humanity came from a single origin. But evolutionary theory also challenged the moral and religious views of the transcendentalists who were the core of the anti-slavery movement. Where was God? Writers like Asa Gray, Henry Thoreau, and Louisa May Alcott reflected favorably on Darwin's book in their writing, while others like Louis Agassiz and Bronson Alcott stormed against its heresy. The passion of this debate over science, religion, and racism is still with us today. We will study how Darwin's book changed America and stirred up the nation on the verge of the Civil War. We will read and discuss the Concord writers of the 1860s and a recently acclaimed book on Darwin's influence in America. Two hours of preparation weekly. Class size limited to 18.

**David Bliss**, a retired scientist, has a keen interest in how attitudes towards science and religion have evolved throughout history. He has led courses on science, history, and art.

### 383 Living in the West Bank Sara Freedman

**Readings:** Raja Shehadeh, *Palestinian Walks: Forays into a Vanishing Landscape* (Profile Books, 2007); Raja Shehadeh, *Where the Line is Drawn: A Tale of Crossings, Friendship and Fifty Years of Occupation in Israel Palestine* (New Press, 2017).

Raja Shehadeh is one of Palestine's most evocative and deeply humanistic writers, publishing books that bridge the gap between the personal and the political, while helping readers better understand the point of view of Palestinians living on the West Bank. The course will discuss two of his books, *Palestinian Walks* and *Where the Line is Drawn*. The first book is written from the experience of Shehadeh as a devoted hiker, providing a visceral and complex picture of his daily walks within the changing landscape of the West Bank. The second book chronicles his forty-year friendship with a Canadian-Israeli Jew whom he first meets in

Tel Aviv when they are both in their thirties. The book poignantly addresses the question of whether it is possible for a Palestinian and an Israeli Jew to sustain a committed friendship while also exploring the possibilities for and constraints upon relationships between their two communities. Classes will be discussion-based and focused on the readings, with all members encouraged to participate. Readings will be two hours per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Sara Freedman** has taught several courses at HILR that focus on issues of historical controversy. She enjoys leading members in discussing such topics.

### 384 The Allure of Detective Fiction

Addison Stone

**Readings:** Deane Mansfield-Kelley and Lois A. Marchino, eds., *The Longman Anthology of Detective Fiction* (New York: Pearson, 2005); Only this edition: Robin W. Winks, *Detective Fiction: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Revised edition) (Woodstock VT: Foul Play Press, 1988). Additional stories and essays will be posted on the course website.

Detective fiction has been a popular genre since the mid-19th century. What is it that draws us to these stories, and are they worth reading? We will explore these questions through close comparative analysis of classic detective stories and discussion of selected essays on the genre. Our goals will be to understand key features of effective stories, to appreciate how the genre has evolved over time, and to seek explanations for its continuing popularity. Discussions will focus on stylistic features as well as an examination of characterization, plot, and overarching themes as they relate to the broader historical and cultural context of each era. Each week, we will focus on one key period in the history of the genre, reading 2-3 short stories (by Poe, Doyle, Christie, Chandler, Mankell, and others) and 2-3 critical commentaries reflecting on the merits and limitations of the genre (approximately 75-100 pages each week). Class size limited to 13.

**Addison Stone** had a career of graduate teaching and research focused on social factors influencing children's learning and development. He has also had a long-term interest in the history of the detective genre.

**Wednesday 1 pm–3 pm**

### 385 Contemporary Poetry Across Cultures

Judith Steinbergh

**Readings:** SGL will provide a course pack consisting of weekly assignments of poetry and a poetry anthology. The course website will contain links to additional poems, essays, videos, and interviews. Members may also browse the SGL's collection of poetry books that will be reserved in the HILR library.

Would you like to expand your knowledge of contemporary poets and discover who has contributed to the rich diversity of modern American poetry? In this course, we will read aloud and discuss selected works by major American poets including Gwendolyn Brooks, Robert Hayden, Sandra Cisneros, Li-Young Lee, Naomi Shihab Nye, Derek Walcott, Linda Hogan, Yusef Komunyakaa, Claudia Rankine, and Kevin Young. We will examine themes that cross cultures and race: yearning, love and loss, identity, family, sense of place, human rights, and social change. Essays, videos, and interviews will illuminate how these poets drew on or transformed past traditions of poetry while redefining the American voice. You will come away with a new comfort and familiarity with the stunning poems of our time. Expect two hours of preparation each week, including assignments of twenty poems. Class size limited to 13.

**Judith Steinbergh** taught poetry in schools for over forty years and led poetry workshops for adult writers and seminars for teachers. She has authored or co-authored three text books and published five books of poetry.

### 386 From Innovation to Automation: The History and Future of the Automobile

Dan Roos

**Readings:** James P. Womack, Daniel T. Jones, Daniel Roos, *The Machine that Changed the World* (Free Press, 2007). Articles and excerpts from books on current issues will be posted on the course website.

Innovation in the auto industry has been marked by countless milestones: Ford's introduction of mass production, GM's putting a car in every driveway, Japan's success focusing on quality and lean production. As the automobile enters its second century, the most significant innovations are just now unfolding. The introduction of self-driving, electric, and shared-ride vehicles will seismically impact not only urban transportation but also foundations of everyday life, including urban development, traffic safety, employment, and the environment. New mobility business models offered by Apple, Google, Lyft and Uber, as well as by automotive companies, will provide the young, old, and disabled with unprecedented transportation options and may enable commuters to no longer own cars. But what are the major challenges and opportunities for development and deployment? How will our roads—and lives—be affected, and when? Will this be a net positive to our economy? This will primarily be a discussion course. Preparation: two hours per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Dan Roos** is the MIT Japan Steel Industry Professor Emeritus of Engineering Systems. He has studied urban transportation systems with a particular focus on the automobile.

### 387 The James Project: *The Portrait of a Lady*

Jo Ann Citron

**Readings:** Only this edition: Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady*, Philip Horne, Ed. (Penguin, 2011). The only acceptable Kindle version is *Portrait of a Lady (The Penguin English Library)*. The SGL will provide additional materials on the website.

Really, when we come to it, as we must, because it is, after all is said, still the central question, how did Isabel Archer become Mrs. Gilbert Osmond? Readers of Henry James will recognize not only the names but also the way in which that sentence twists its way towards them. Our novel is the culmination of the realist tradition that began with Jane Austen. Both writers take as their subject the relationship between the sexes; but where Austen situates her characters in a world of manners, James imagines his characters' interiors. In their psychological complexity, his characters recall George Eliot's; but James reaches beyond psychology to consciousness itself. His representation of consciousness distinguishes him from his predecessors and inaugurates the modernism that makes Virginia Woolf possible. This discussion course will assume a basic familiarity with the 19th-century realist novel. Expect three hours weekly preparation. Class size limited to 18.

**Jo Ann Citron** has had dual careers in college teaching and in law. She has led several groups on 19th-century British novels, which she much prefers to statutes and briefs.

### 388 Who Was Justice Harry Blackmun?

Sondra Shick and Jennifer Huntington

**Readings:** Linda Greenhouse, *Becoming Justice Blackmun* (Times Books, Henry Holt and Company, 2005). Additional required readings will be posted on the course website.

What is the legacy of Justice Harry Blackmun? What more can we learn about *Roe v. Wade*, the controversial Supreme Court decision for which Justice Blackmun is best remembered? Using our text, *Becoming Justice Blackmun*, we will discuss that decision in the context of his life story. We will debate some of the other significant opinions in which Blackmun participated including, among others, the death penalty, anti-trust and baseball, and sex discrimination. We will also discuss his relationship with Chief Justice Warren Burger. How did these two men, who went to kindergarten together, who were best men at each other's weddings, and who for many years relied on each other for advice, in the end allow their political differences to become so personal? No legal experience is necessary, just an interest in delving more deeply into some of the legal and social issues before the Supreme Court at that time, many of which still resonate today. Two hours of reading per week. Class size limited to 18.

**Sondra Shick**, an attorney, clerked for Judge A. David Mazzone in the U.S. District Court. She was also a member of the Newton City Council for twelve years.

**Jennifer Huntington** has a long-time interest in the intersection of social issues and the law. Her daughter served as Justice Blackmun's final law clerk.

## Thursday 10 am–12 noon

### 389 Love and Fidelity: Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*

Judy Uhl

**Readings:** Only this edition: Thomas Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd* (Wordsworth Classics, 1997). Other relevant materials will be on the course website.

In 1873, Thomas Hardy quit his day job to write *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Guardian readers recently ranked the novel among the greatest love stories of all time. Hardy dishes up passion, deceit, and integrity in equal measure. We will examine what makes a 19th-century love story memorable and use film clips to see how modern filmmakers bring the characters and plot to life. Thomas Hardy also thought of himself as a poet and produced nearly a thousand poems in his lifetime. Therefore, we will devote our last class to looking at a handful of his best love poems. During the course, we will also learn about the challenges for writers in the Victorian era when illustrated magazines were willing to pay for good stories, but writers had limited copyright protection. The study group will be primarily discussion. Reading: 75-100 pages per week. Class size limited to 20.

**Judy Uhl** occasionally wishes she had lived in the 19th century. She is a fiction writer and enjoys writers who can both tell a story and excel at descriptions. She has visited Hardy's Wessex and immersed herself in the history of the Victorian era.

### 390 Unquiet Minds: Kay Redfield Jamison and Robert Lowell

Barbara Burr

**Readings:** Kay Redfield Jamison, Robert Lowell, *Setting the River on Fire* (Vintage Books, 2018); Kay Redfield Jamison, *An Unquiet Mind, A Memoir of Moods and Madness* (Vintage Books, 1996). Critical reviews, poetry, and other reading and interviews will be provided on the website.

Both Kay Jamison, the noted author and psychologist, and poet Robert Lowell suffered from severe bipolar disorder. In spite of their misery, both wrote and thought brilliantly. Robert Lowell wrote in a letter to the poet Elizabeth Bishop, "My trouble seems to be to bring together the Puritanical iron hand of constraint and the gushes of pure wildness...rather narrow walking." In this study group, we

shall try to understand the lived experience of bipolar disorder (a condition first described by the ancient Greeks) through reading Kay Jamison's memoir of her own illness and her biography of Robert Lowell, which examines the connections between his illness and his creativity, temperament, and character. We will also read selected poems of Lowell's, particularly those that "render madness" (a quote from the critic Helen Vendler). Study group meetings will consist of discussions based on our reading, which will require about two to three hours per week. Class size limited to 12.

**Barbara Burr** is a child psychiatrist with a long-standing interest in illness narratives as they deepen our understanding of the range of human experience. She has taught a variety of seminars that lie both within and outside the mental health field.

### Thursday 1 pm–3

#### 391 Emerging Pandemics: Not If but When?

Gerald T. Keusch

**Readings:** David Quammen, *Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic* (Norton, 2012). Additional readings and videos will be posted on the class website.

It is difficult to avoid press coverage of emerging dangerous infections, originating in exotic distant locales and inexorably heading our way. Mounting fatalities create fear that we are unprepared, as dramatized by such Hollywood films as *The Andromeda Strain* (1971) and *Contagion* (2011). What is real? What is hype? What is happening and what is not? This course will review the different microbial threats, what makes them more or less virulent, where they originate, how they are transmitted and spread, how infection progresses to illness, and how we respond and reach final resolution, one way or another. We will focus on a few infections that have become familiar names, but remain mysterious: Bird flu, SARS, MERS, Ebola, Zika, and West Nile. Can we diagnose, treat, or prevent them? We will end with a tour of the Boston University maximum containment laboratory to see how it is possible to study these microorganisms safely. This is primarily a discussion class, and a scientific background is not necessary. Two to three hours preparation per week. Class size limited to 25.

**Gerald (Jerry) Keusch** is a professor of medicine and global health at Boston University and an Associate Director of the National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory. He is a clinician and researcher of infectious diseases with extensive experience in developing countries.

#### 392 Frankenstein: Alive and Well at 200

Kate McGillicuddy

**Readings:** Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Maurice Hindle ed. (Penguin Classics, 2003). The SGL will make supplemental materials available on the class website. Some, such as video clips, will be presented in class.

"Man," I cried, "how ignorant thou art in thy pride of wisdom!" This year marks the bicentennial of Mary Shelley's literary masterpiece, *Frankenstein: Or The Modern Prometheus*. A precocious girl of eighteen, Mary Shelley was among a group of friends challenged by Lord Byron to write a ghostly tale. That night, she dreamed the idea that became *Frankenstein*. The novel's structure has been likened to a Russian nesting doll, containing elements of allegory, fable, and epistolary novel, as well as haunting autobiographical references. We will closely read *Frankenstein* and examine its cautionary themes of hubris, scientific transgression, betrayal, and the "other," as well as its deep sense of humanity. We will also consider why the book continues to endure and fascinate us today, especially in light of 350 editions and retellings of the tale, countless film and stage adaptations, a musical comedy, and even a ballet. Approximately two to three hours of reading per week. Class size limited to 13.

**Kate McGillicuddy** has co-led "Reading The New Yorker" for the past few years. A recent Jill Lepore article on *Frankenstein* provided the inspiration to create a study group around this topic.