

# Honors Seminar Descriptions

Fall 2022

HONR 192

## **Section 1: Action as Expression – Everyday Dance for Every Body - Glycenfer, Francie**

*Section 1: MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM*

*Section 3: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM*

Our mouths move to speak, our hands experience the tactile nature of life around us, and our bodies leap for joy. We move our bodies 24/7, even in our sleep, as we are interacting with the world around us. Students will discover how to move more confidently in expressing themselves as unique and valuable individuals whether their movement experience comes from daily actions or are more focused into athletics, dance, etc. Every person has the ability to actively engage in ways that promote social understanding and positively impacts cultures. Actual physical movement ability is not emphasized, rather, this seminar gives students the opportunity to identify the richness of their own movement sources through personal exploration, class discussion, and viewing videos. Societal change has often been driven by many who have harnessed this power of action for the greater good. Action as Expression is found in all aspects of life and can begin within each one of us.

## **Section 2: North American Empires - Sheflin, Doug**

*Section 2: TR 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM*

In some circles, “empire” is a dirty word. It connotes tyranny and authoritarianism, the use of military power to exert control, and the abuse and subjugation of defeated peoples. Others argue that “empire” is something for which nations should strive to become. It suggests a level of power and influence often unparalleled and it ensures that the empire enjoys autonomy and independence on a regional, and sometimes global, scale. What if the truth about empire is somewhere between the good and the bad? In this course, we will utilize the history of empires in North America to better understand the development of the United States and its role in the hemisphere and the world. The study of empires presents a unique venue to view the interaction, and often the clash, of different cultures and disparate world views. In tracing the development of empires on the continent from 1776 to the present, we will utilize environmental, military, political, social, and economic history to explore how the history of empires can inform our understanding of empires today, affording us the chance to better appreciate the sometimes inspirational and sometimes ugly – but always complex – history of the United States.

## **Section 3: See Section 1**

## **Section 4: International Graphic Novels - Davies, Ashley**

*Section 4: MWF 2:00 PM – 2:50 PM*

*Section 29: MWF 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM*

By reading a variety of international graphic novels we'll begin to understand different cultures: their values, their relationships, and their narrative and artistic styles. Through our exploration, we'll challenge the simplistic thinking that often reduces a nation to a caricature or a stop at Disney's Epcot. In the Brazilian Daytripper, we'll consider how celebration of a sea goddess influences the work and demonstrates the complex history of a country. Moving to African Comics, we'll see modern superheroes and re-imagined history. In Israel, Modan's Exit Wounds will help us think through family relationships marked by ongoing political turmoil. Ranma 1/2 from Japan is a delightful tale of high schoolers dealing with gender expectations. Finally, we'll move to Europe with the French graphic novel Blue is the Warmest Color to think about more about romantic relationships. In each geographic area, we'll look at samples of work from these locations to get a better sense of patterns. Using the interdisciplinary approach of cultural studies, we'll consider the connections between the personal, the familial, and the national identity. By bringing graphic novels and scholarly work together, we will develop a better understanding of our increasingly global world and work towards more complex multicultural perspectives.

## **Section 5: The American West: History and Myth – Elkins, Mary**

*Section 5: MWF 10:00 AM –10:50 AM*

*Section 28: MWF 9:00 AM –9:50 AM*

The story of America is, to a large extent, the story of the American West. The histories of New England and the American South and North are significant, of course, but the West and, specifically the movement West, serve as the enduring symbol of American self-definition. In the words of Woodrow Wilson, the 28<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, “The West has been the great word of our history; the westerner has been the type and master of our American life.” It is in this context that this course will consider our topic. We will read, view, and discuss the “facts” of the West and its history and, most especially, the narratives and myths that have grown out of and surround the West. We will consider significant historical moments and events and ideas, larger-than-life characters, both Native Americans and newcomers. We will examine the roles played by the Native Americans, both cooperative and hostile, as warriors, neighbors and victims. Finally, we will see how these narratives and myths have played out throughout the centuries and are still playing out in our own day.

## **Section 6: 20th Century American Gangsters - Vaughan Knaus, Pam**

*Section 6: MWF 12:00 PM – 12:50 PM*

American gangsters in the twentieth century: this class hopes to suggest larger interpretive guidelines for better understanding the epoch. America’s gangsters are best understood not as an aberration, but as an integral part of American history. The twentieth century was a time of intense conflict and millennial expectations, and Italians were at the very heart of mobsters, rum-runners and ‘tough guys.’ Gangsters were not as powerful in the 1920s as is often assumed, nor was law enforcement as much on the defensive. The insurgent political and social movements of the last century--including immigrant unrest and governmental power, Prohibition, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and gambling--drew from even as they sought to transform values and beliefs deeply rooted in American political culture. Students will take from this course some sense of how gangsters served for many Americans as fact and fiction, regarding United States history in the last century.

## **Section 7: The Power of Community: Understanding Human Sustainability - Merline, Anne Marie**

*Section 7: TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM*

Using the book “Happy City” as a guide, we’ll explore together the secrets of living a happy and sustainable life. As the human race migrates back to urban environments, we examine our social selves as a part of living environment. We’ll begin by trying to identify what makes a city great. Successful cities are no accident - it requires a lifetime of good planning that takes people, planet, profit and, of course, purpose into consideration. We’ll discover that our public lives and/or civic well-being is positively linked to personal well-being. We travel the world via E2-- a PBS series that shows how different cities around the world have become happy cities. Is the secret ingredient public spaces for walking, biking, and recreating as in Bogotá Columbia? Is it through a bike share program in Paris? A garden in Cairo? So many cultures, and so many ways to build successful communities.

## **Section 8: - Pompeii: Death of a Roman City – Wilson, Emily**

*Section 8: MWF 3:00 PM – 3:50 PM*

*Section 25: MWF 4:00 PM – 4:50 PM*

When Mt. Vesuvius erupted on August 24, 79 CE, it buried the people and town of Pompeii in over 12 feet of ash, killing any who were left in the city, and preserved the ruins to an extraordinary degree, including Roman brothels, the first ‘beware of dog’ sign, ancient papyrus scrolls with Roman books on them (now burnt to a crisp), a Roman ‘Lamborghini,’ and even bread that had just been pulled from the oven! This class will explore various facets of life in Pompeii that we can learn from the archaeological remains, including prostitution, gladiatorial contests, what the gods looked like, where Romans drank their wine (at the many, many neighborhood bars), how they decorated their houses, and even the types of food they ate! We will also look at the dead of Pompeii, which can illuminate who walked its streets - from the lowliest slave to the most noble of aristocrats - as well as the animals who served as farm labor, pets, and guardians (bodies of dogs, donkeys, horses have been found). Finally, a secondary goal is to introduce students to the basic sets

of evidence available to any scholar of this world (archaeology, literary texts, inscriptions, papyrus scrolls, etc.) and utilize them all to come to a more holistic understanding of what life in Roman Pompeii was like.

### **Section 9: How wildlife influences human society - Vieira, Nicole**

*Section 9: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM*

*Section 10: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM*

Our interactions with wildlife have shaped the course of human society and influence our wellbeing. In early human societies, wild animals served as food and shamanistic totems, and the domestication of wildlife led to major agricultural progress for hunter-gatherer societies. Skipping ahead to Darwin's era, observations of variation in wildlife led to the theory of evolution via natural selection, one of the most important and controversial scientific discoveries of all time. Ultimately, the study of critters widened the rift between science and religion. In modern times, wildlife provides important ecosystem services to humans, like pollination, and they also provide educational opportunities for us to discover more about our moral and ecological standing. In this course, we will cover these fundamental human-wildlife relationships, and will also explore "unusual" influences animals have had on us as exotic pets, as inspiration for children's tales and horror film, as threats through man eating and zoonotic disease transmission, and as psychological cultivators of healing and empathy. We will explore these weird ties with wildlife through popular literature and film, philosophical and spiritual reflection, creative group projects, and outdoor exploration of our campus environment!

### **Section 10: See section 9**

### **Section 11: Who Are You? Exploring Concepts of Identity and Self – Huff, Alyson**

*Section 11: TR 3:30 PM – 4:45 PM*

*Section 31: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM*

Diaries are thought to be among the most democratic and practiced form of writing, yet one of the least studied and valued. In this course, we will uncover the impact of diaries through reading a variety of examples, as well as writing our own. From the wartime diaries of Anne Frank (WWII) and Dang Thuy Tram (Vietnam War), to the private writings of artists Frida Kahlo and Sylvia Plath, diaries are a compelling source of unvarnished observation and thought. But a fundamental question remains: is it ethical to publish and read these private writings? We will probe the form and its standing in society with questions surrounding ethics, audience, purpose, and more. We will read accounts of exploration, scientific and artistic discovery, coming of age, and more. Readings of secondary sources will help contextualize the diary excerpts. Ultimately, we will attempt to answer questions such as: What can diaries illuminate about the individual and society? How did race, class, gender, location, and more impact these writings? How are diaries used in other fields and disciplines? As we read the diaries from a wide range of time and place, students will complete their own diaries and reflections, based upon the parameters presented by our studied diaries.

### **Section 12: Shakespeare and Film – Macrae, Mitchell**

*Section 12: TR 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM*

Moving pictures have been around for over 100 years. Since the early days of this new art form, directors have found the plays of Shakespeare to be ripe material for their work (e.g. The first film production of *Antony and Cleopatra* was a silent film from 1908; Max Reinhardt's 1935 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is a lavish example of an early "talkie"). Since then, Shakespeare on film has only become more prominent, thus continually introducing the Bard's work to new generations of filmgoers. This class will study a selection of Shakespeare's plays and the film versions they inspired. We will gain a solid grounding in the plays themselves, studying the historical context in which they emerged, thus recognizing their role as commercial entertainment. We will study film as its own medium and art form and analyze how directors visually represent the written text of the plays. For each play, we will watch at least two film versions. Plays/films may include *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, and *Henry V*.

**Section 13: Leisure in your life – a look at leisure, recreation, and work in contemporary society - Raadik Cottrell, Jana**

*Section 13: TR 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM*

*Section 17: TR 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM*

To paraphrase Socrates, there is no greater question than “how we should live”. Thus, the issues of value related to time, leisure and work directly address this question. Your course is about leisure in your life, what it means, and what it could mean. You will be asked to think about your own values and behavior. What makes you happy? What kind of experiences do you seek to enhance your life? What do you do when you are relatively free to choose? How do your choices affect your happiness, your health, your family, your friends, and society? Compared to a few decades ago, distinctive boundaries between leisure and work time have blurred; thus, meaningful experiences acquired through leisure, recreation and travel are even more important for a quality of life. Designed to introduce recreation and travel studies, this seminar encourages you to start by examining leisure as it relates to your life and then broaden your understanding to include the rest of the world in the context of healthy lifestyles and livelihoods.

**Section 14: The 1960s in America: Moving Forward or Falling Apart? - Vaughan Knaus, Pam**

*Section 14: MWF 2:00 PM – 2:50 PM*

*Section 20: MWF 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM*

While making no claim to be offering a total interpretation of the 1960s in America, this class will suggest interpretive guidelines for understanding the decade. The 1960s are best examined not as an aberration, but as an integral part of American history. It was a time of intense conflict and millennial expectations, similar in many respects to the one Americans endured a century earlier--with results as mixed, ambiguous and frustrated as those produced by the Civil War. Liberalism was not as powerful in the 1960s as is often assumed, nor, equally was conservatism as much on the defensive. The insurgent political and social movements of the decade--including student unrest and Black Power, the New Left, environmentalism, and feminism--drew from, even as they sought to transform, values and beliefs deeply rooted in American political culture. Ideally, students will take from this course how the 1960s served for a generation of Americans as the dramatization of our humanity. In the process, students will be exposed to a number of historical mediums including film, music, and a tremendous amount of lively class discussion.

**Section 15: Cannibals, Savages, and Deviants: Encounters with the ‘Other’ - Hull, Brian**

*Section 15: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM*

*Section 18: MWF 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM*

This interdisciplinary course will focus on the concept of the ‘Other.’ Historically, descriptions of those peoples or cultures inscribed with ‘difference’ have rarely been neutral and have predictably served to reinforce those in power while relegating others to the margins. The discourses produced are often full of inherent contradictions. In American history, Native Americans have been revered as exemplars of living harmoniously with nature while being simultaneously reviled as ‘savages’ and ‘cannibals.’ These old stereotypes still reverberate in modern representations of indigenous peoples. However, ‘othering’ isn’t limited to the human realm. Perhaps animals were the first sentient beings to have been relegated to the status of ‘otherness,’ though modern science increasingly blurs the lines between our next of kin and ourselves. These phenomena will be looked out through disciplinary lenses as varied as Cultural Studies, Sociology, Primatology, philosophy, Ethnic Studies, Gender Studies and history. Students will consider the historical and modern ways in which representation in literature, film and other media shapes our understanding of the world and our perceptions of both exclusion and inclusiveness. Readings and participation in daily discussions will be key to enhancing understanding of these issues.

## **Section 16: You Are What You Eat” – Food in Our Everyday Life - Raadik Cottrell, Jana**

*Section 16: MW 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM*

Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote in, *Physiologie du Gout, ou Meditations de Gastronomie Transcendante*, 1826: "Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es." [Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are]. The phrase, rooted in the French culture of food appreciation entered the public consciousness in America most likely in 1940's, but truly got a new lease of life in the 1960's hippy era and stayed with us since then. From the individual belief in a healthy diet to the organic/slow food movement as a social phenomenon, issues of food in our life today are related to critical issues of consumerism, sustainable development, social justice, and even political stability. This course adopts an experiential education approach to critically address issues related to food in our everyday life from the aspects of personal choice and consumerism, overproduction, waste and food shortage, and many other. Relationships between food and identity as cultural phenomenon are discussed to address the role of food as a cultural ambassador. Food as state of art today is more than haute cuisine of yesterday; it is the creative exploration of opportunities for a positive change. Food as a social phenomenon today invites us to explore the ways to simplify our lives, cultivate community and spend more time with friends and family. Community gardens, farmers markets, slow food movement are few examples of re-evaluation the role of food in our lives. Through discussions, literary and media explorations, observations, and practical hands-on experiences, you together with your instructor will try to answer the questions of concern: How to make more healthy, tasty and sustainable choices in your everyday food palette as a student? Why does it matter where our food comes from? What does it mean "you are what you eat"?

**Section 17: See section 13**

**Section 18: See section 15**

## **Section 19: Picking the Lock: Exploring the Private Writings of Diaries – Welker, Aly**

*Section 19: TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM*

*Section 32 TR 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM*

Who are you? Seems like a simple enough question, yet it insists upon a deep reflection and investigation of identity, perception, consciousness, and the self. What are you? Only a three-word question, but it demands an interpretation of the concept of self, which is challenging to provide especially with a constantly changing body affected by new experiences. Where are you? This further complicates notions of identity and self, especially when exploring concepts of the individual and death across cultural perspectives. In this seminar we consider our own ideas of who we are, what we are, and where we are as we explore a variety of perspectives on personal identity and the self through diverse written and visual texts, discussions, writing, reflection, and contemplation.

**Section 20: See Section 14**

## **Section 21: Imagining Paris: On Dreams and Reality in the City of Light – Holz, Leah**

*Section 21: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM*

*Section 22: MWF 12:00 PM – 12:50 PM*

Paris between World Wars One and Two in the 1920s and 30s is often depicted as a cultural melting pot where artistic and cultural innovations took center stage. Paris at that time of *les années folles* (the "crazy years") appears freeing, open-minded, and the place to go for budding artists to explore their identities. This course aims to analyze representations of Paris that go beyond romantic imaginations of the city. We will examine Paris in musicals, art, film, music, and novels alongside main artistic and cultural movements that spread outside the city and include: surrealism, the Harlem Renaissance, French colonialism, and the Négritude movement. In this course, students will experience, read, scrutinize, analyze, and discuss a variety of sources and will reflect critically upon the time period as it relates to present-day imaginations of Paris. We will address the questions of how human experiences are translated into art and the cultural implications of art, specifically during the 20th and 21st-centuries in Paris. We will examine societal institutions and the implications of individual and collective behaviors and the impacts on cultural relationships during this time period.

**Section 22: See Section 21**

**Section 23: Empowered by Education: An Exploration of Teaching and Learning Practices - Gedde, Sonja**

*Section 23: TR 5:00 PM – 6:15 PM*

What happens in classrooms is not accidental; learning activities, grading practices, curriculum and classroom climate are all reflective of choices teachers make informed by their own educational philosophies. The study of this phenomena is known as “pedagogy.” This course empowers students to evaluate their educational experiences by acknowledging all of the philosophical and human dimensions of teaching and learning. Learners investigate the “art and science” of teaching and learning by surveying some of the most influential political, economic, social, and cultural conditions that have impacted education. Through this work, learners will leave empowered and better able to understand the schooling processes of which they are a part.

**Section 24: The Power of Love; the Love of Power – Scott, Anne**

*Section 24: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM*

*Section 27: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM*

Does “true love” exist? In what ways does power corrupt? What might a powerful love look like, and when does power resemble love? In this course, we will explore these two complex concepts – their nature, function, interrelationship, motivations, and manifestations. We will also explore the ways in which love and power, and their relationship, lie at the root of so much human achievement, whether for good or ill. We will define, re-define, and contextualize these concepts through a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective provided for us through a carefully selected body of literature: creation myths, short stories, novel, poetry, drama, political theory, spiritual writings, psychology, cultural criticism, and theology. We will also discuss the important corollaries and “kissing cousins” of love and power—e.g., compassion, affection, sympathy, empathy, kindness, charity, ambition, achievement, prestige, and reputation—which underlie our expressions of love and power, drive our successes or failures, and might earn us praise or blame. Finally, we will also discuss two films that illustrate the complexities of these two concepts. Be prepared for engaging discussions, small-group work, academic essays and revisions, a research project, and oral communication practice – all designed to hone your writing, reading, speaking, and thinking skills as we make our way through an exciting semester focused on love and power.

**Section 25: See section 8**

**Section 26: Music in American Culture – Obluda, Dan**

*Section 26: MWF 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM*

Music is something that we engage with on a daily basis, and it brings meaning and joy to our lives and experiences. Like all forms of art, music is closely tied to the culture that cultivates it. Beyond merely consuming and listening to music, studying music from different eras and groups allows us to explore and learn from the perspectives and values of cultures outside of our own. Over the last century, many communities in the United States have used music to reinforce their cultural heritage and identities, and over time, these styles have been transformed and combined into a vast repertory that collectively reflects our rich and diverse national identity. This seminar surveys the broader stylistic and historical trends that have influenced present-day music in the United States. Readings and lectures will cover many types of popular and vernacular genre, including the blues, jazz, musical theater, film music, country, rock, soul, salsa, punk, hip-hop, rap, and many others. By examining music “in culture,” as the course title suggests, we will consider not only isolated musical sounds, forms, and experiences, but also the function and meaning of music for its original practitioners as well as for us.

**Section 27: See Section 24**

**Section 28: See Section 5**

**Section 29: See Section 4**

### **Section 30: Children's Literature and Culture – Gollapudi, Aparna**

*Section 30: MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM*

Talking rabbits that take you down a hole, wicked witches that melt away, rivers of chocolate, magic everywhere – this is the stuff of children's literature. Works meant for young audiences are usually considered light-hearted entertainment that teaches children simple life lessons. Rarely are they considered worthy of serious scholarly attention. However, literature meant for children is as much a product of complex cultural forces and ideologies as the most revered canonical "classic" novels. Books meant for children are often very much engaged with contemporary social, political, and ethical issues, whether it be Lewis Carroll's critique of aristocratic privilege in *Alice in Wonderland* or Roald Dahl's subversion of capitalistic acquisition in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. In addition, some works meant for children have incredibly long-lasting lives in popular culture – including adult popular culture – as they are re-read, reworked, adapted into films, referenced in songs, or turned into consumer merchandise over decades and even centuries. With each new version, children's works absorb contemporary ideologies or perpetuate the cultural agendas of their specific historical moment. This course will explore the some very popular children's works as cultural phenomena that take on different nuances as they are remade to suit new markets. Focusing on 'classics' of children's literature such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Harry Potter (I)*, this course will use rigorous critical interpretation tools to analyze these children's books and/or movies as powerful cultural phenomena offering important insights into the adult world, even as they reveal how the child is constructed in various historical contexts.

**Section 31: See Section 11**

**Section 32: See Section 19**