Winter 2009

Long-Courses

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• Film Odyssey: Drama Queens
• The Science of Music and Sound
• Religions in American History
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• Baron Haussmann's Paris Through the Eyes of Artists
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Short-Courses

• Exploring Cultural Identities in Contemporary American Short Fiction
• Excellent Cadavers: A Primer on the Mafia
• Flesh Made of Stone and Sea: The Life and Poetry of Robinson Jeffers, 1887-1962
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• The Natural World: A Social History
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Long-Courses

California History and Culture--taught by Bob Senkewicz
Back by popular demand! Invented as a magical island in a sixteenth century Spanish novel, California has exercised an imaginative influence on the world for more than four hundred years. From the days of the Spanish conquest, through the frenzy of the Gold Rush, the fantasies of Hollywood, and the tragedies of the Dust Bowl, to the innovative universe of Silicon Valley, California has always been a place where people have projected their hopes, anxieties, and dreams of the future.
Philosophy of Religion—taught by Rob Lovering
Some of the questions to be considered in this class include: What reasons do we have for believing that God does (and does not) exist? Are the beliefs that God exists and that evil exists logically consistent? Even if they are, is it rational to believe that God exists given the variety and profusion of evil in the world? Evidence aside, is it problematic to believe in God's existence on the basis of faith? Is religious language cognitively meaningful? When, if ever, are we justified in believing that a miracle has occurred? Is morality based on God's commands?

Film Odyssey: Drama Queens—taught by Mark Larson
Join us for this special edition of Film Odyssey as we explore and discuss the film world of ladies who've been wronged (Baby Face), ladies who can handle a rifle (Johnny Guitar), ladies who can't stand their mothers (Now, Voyager), ladies who love too much (Strangers When We Meet) and ladies who love Rock Hudson (Magnificent Obsession).

The Science of Music and Sound—taught by Bill Pezzaglia
This course will explore three aspects of musical acoustics. First, the physical (wavelike) nature of the phenomenon of sound and how it carries its message from one place to another. Second, how do we produce sound using musical instruments, electric speakers or vocal chords? Third, how is sound perceived by the ear as pleasing or noise, and how did this influence the western concept of music? Participants are welcomed to bring in their musical instruments to be analyzed.

Religion in American History—taught by James Bennett
This course will explore the role of religion in American history, and the way that the United States has shaped religious experience. Moving from the Colonial era to the present, major themes will include: the idea of a chosen nation, religious pluralism and liberty, race, immigration, and the relationship between religion and politics in the United States.

How Nations and People Deal With the Horrors of Their Past—taught by Jane Curry
Many times in contemporary politics, the question of what to do about the horrors of the past is a major political question: try to kill the leaders as we did in Iraq; hold a truth commission and get the story out with the hope of reconciliation; open files for people to see who said what about them; bar the bad guys from political office; or draw a thick line and go on. In our own lives, this plays out in the question of whether to forgive or not and whether memories make reconciliation and "going on" possible for us.

This class will consider three recent cases that are significant in international politics and reflect on choices we each make in our lives by viewing the stories on film and talking about what happened and what it can teach us about forgiveness, remembrance, and going on. We will watch Lives of Others about the East German secret police, the man they monitored, and what moral choices people made when the files were opened (won
the 2006 best foreign film Oscar); *Long Night's Journey into Day* (documentary on victims and perpetrators who went through the Truth and Reconciliation process in South Africa--made by two Bay Area film makers); and a film about the Holocaust and how people have dealt with videos from the Spielberg Shoah Project of interviews with Holocaust survivors.

**Modern Israel--taught by Rabbi Dana Magat**

During the 60 years since Israel's independence from England, what has been going on in this tiny nation? What was happening in Israel long before she became a sovereign nation? Through discussion we'll explore some of the major themes of Israel's history. We will look at some of the politics, people and religious links through the ages.

**Baron Haussmann's Paris through the Eyes of Artists--taught by Brigid Barton**

During the Second Empire of Napoleon III from 1852-1870, the Baron Haussmann was in charge of the transformation of Paris into the quintessential modern city. New large boulevards, monuments, vast public spaces, and massive new infrastructure altered Paris forever. This course will investigate the controversial rebuilding project and the respective roles that the Emperor and the Prefect played in reshaping the city. The major focus of the course, however, will be on artists' reactions to the new city. We will analyze how major avant-garde figures such as Manet, Degas, and Monet represented this new urban landscape in their painting, and how they interpreted the changes this new landscape made to the life of Paris' inhabitants, both rich and poor.

**Investing During Retirement--taught by Rich Willis**

Join us as we examine the investing process for the retiree. We will cover how to construct and manage a portfolio of investments tailored to the unique needs of each individual. Asset allocation, security selection, and market timing are key determinants of investing success and each will be analyzed. There will also be an in-depth survey of behavioral finance, which explains how psychological biases, cognitive errors, and emotions negatively affect investment decisions. We will also discuss the role of the financial media and how to use it more effectively.

**The Armchair Traveler Returns to France--taught by Dorothea French**

In this course we'll explore two popular regions of France that have rich and complex histories: Provence and Burgundy. We'll begin tracing the Romans in Gaul from Alise-St-Reine, the site of Caesar's victory over the Gaulish chieftain Vercingetorix, then travel down the Rhone River to Provence, visiting the still impressive remnants of Roman civilization such as amphitheaters, theatres, triumphal arches, aqueducts, temples, and baths. Medieval Burgundy was a wealthy and prosperous region and a center of religious faith that produced Romanesque masterpieces. Burgundy's Golden Age occurred in the 14th and 15th centuries when the duchy reached its peak controlling territory not only in France but Flanders and parts of Holland. Join Dorothea and Wes French for a tour of some of the cultural highlights of these regions. Take a hot air balloon ride over the vineyards of the Cote d'Or and see with your own eyes the construction of a castle using tools from the 12th century. Explore the canals of Burgundy and visit the sites of the industrial revolution in France.
The Historical Jesus—taught by Catherine Murphy
Jesus of Nazareth is a pivotal figure in world history. But what do we really know about the man? After all, his name wasn't really "Jesus," but Yeshua (Jesus is the Greek translation of his name). What else has been lost in translation and across the centuries, and what has been added? What did Jesus really say and do, and why was this faithful Jew executed by the Roman Empire? Come learn about recent discoveries, about sifting history from our sources, about a fresh perspective on the man, and about the ways faith perspectives developed about him after his death.

Short-Courses

Exploring Cultural Identities in Contemporary American Short Fiction—taught by Marilyn Edelstein
In this course, we will read and discuss a select group of finely crafted and thought-provoking short stories by contemporary American writers who explore the meanings of culture and of cross-cultural and cross-generational communication. For session 1, we'll read and discuss Jhumpa Lahiri's *When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine* and Sherman Alexie's *This Is What It Means To Say Phoenix, Arizona*. For session 2, we'll read and discuss Hisaye Yamamoto's *Seventeen Syllables* and Gish Jen's *Who's Irish?* These texts will give us the opportunity to explore the short story as a genre and to consider the diversity of styles and themes in recent American writing. The Osher office will send out copies of the stories to those who pre-register for the course.

Excellent Cadavers: A Primer on the Mafia—taught by Douglas Kenning
Back by popular demand, this class will begin with the historical background of the Mafia. We will watch it evolve from its birth in rural poverty and feudal negligence, to a uniquely Sicilian quasi-populist shadow local paternal authority, through its bloody struggles for power within itself and against the Italian state, to its becoming a web of international syndicates profiting from extortion, gambling, and drug dealing. Finally, we'll look at Mafia literature and at the growing anti-Mafia movement in Italy. At the end of the class all of you must swear to forget everything you heard.

Flesh Made of Stone and Sea: The Life and Poetry of Robinson Jeffers, 1887-1962—taught by Kirk Glaser
Robinson Jeffers was a major American poet whose reputation once rivaled that of Frost and Eliot. He lived most of his life on the Carmel headlands of California in the stone house and tower that he largely built himself, and his poetry transports readers through all their senses to that coastal landscape with its sea and fog and granite walls of mountains, its steep redwood valleys and grassy highlands, its shoals of sardines darkening the waters and solitary hawks piercing the relentless summer sky. This naturalist's love of detail was shot through with a spiritual vision born of immersion in the natural world and shaped by his classical European education, a father who was a Presbyterian minister and Biblical scholar, and a deep understanding of modern science. His poems record the experience of attempting to inhabit a landscape that enchanted him with a cosmic vision, yet one that resisted all efforts to be contained by human thought or desire. Out of this
crucible, Jeffers forged an ecological vision that enabled him to speak as if for the landscape itself, and because of this he has been a major influence on the American environmental movement as well as American poetry.

In this two-session course, we will explore Jeffers' unique life in a Carmel at once wild and remote yet a stopover for many major figures of the era who Jeffers met--from Ginger Rogers to Salvador Dali to Langston Hughes. Primarily, though, we will read and discuss select poems that focus on how Jeffers wedds his naturalist's eye with a spiritual vision, rubbing flesh, stone, and word together in his efforts to understand humankind's place in the scheme of creation.

**Dreams and World Religions--taught by Kelly Bulkeley**
This course will explore the surprisingly powerful role that dreams have played in the world's religious traditions. Dreams have served as a wellspring of prophecy and revelation, as a guide for rituals and healing, and as a visionary opening to new apprehensions of reality. Drawing on research from his new book *Dreaming in the World's Religion: A Comparative History*, Dr. Bulkeley will tell the fascinating story of how dreaming has shaped the religious history of humankind, from the *Upanishads* of Hinduism to the *Qur'an* of Islam, from the birth dream of Buddha's mother to the sexuality tempting nightmares of St. Augustine, from the Native American vision quest to Australian Aboriginal journeys in the Dreamtime. Dr. Bulkeley will also discuss the many connections between religious history and modern science, showing how current brain-mind research actually supports an appreciation for the spiritual potency of dreaming. Students will be invited to share their own insights and experiences, and the class format will encourage questions, dialogue, and conversation.

**The Natural World: A Social History--taught by Daniel Graham**
This class will explore the history of the way people--especially in the west--have thought about the relationship between humans and the natural world. The first port of the class will borrow from a classic book on the subject, the late geographer Clarence Glacken's *Traces on the Rhodian Shore*, which finds three persistent themes in western thought on the subject through the late 18th century: "the idea of a designed earth; the idea of environmental influence; and the idea of man [sic] as a geographic agent" (from the preface). The second part of the class will pick up from there with the Darwinian revolution, including the sordid histories of scientific racism and ecological imperialism. We will wind up by looking at salient political issues of the day--indigenous and rural peoples' struggles, the anti-GMO (genetically modified organisms) movement, and the debate over global warming--as a way of examining the ancient ideas we have inherited and the new ones we are forging as we continue grappling over the question of our place in the natural world.

**Behind the Scenes of Over the Mountain--taught by Brian Thorstenson**
Join playwright Brian Thorstenson as he discusses his play *Over the Mountain* in which a war rages. On one side of the mountain there are banned books, two men cataloguing
photographs of prisoners, and women acting as human shields against a bombing mission. On the other side two sisters meet in the rain. Hannah has stayed in their childhood home, stayed in the middle of the war zone. Jo escaped over the mountain. Their meeting, fraught with accusations and misunderstandings, with the decisions of the past, may be their last. Have they failed each other? Or has the war forced them to fail each other? This is a story about the decisions of necessity in the face of the extremities of war.

*Course:*

**The Economy and You-- taught by Thomas Russell**
The events of October 2008 have raised fundamental questions about the financial system in the US. The partial nationalization of the banking system and the bailout of Bear Stearns and AIG suggest to some that a free market financial system simply cannot handle the challenges of allocating savings to its most productive uses. This course will outline the reasons for the financial meltdown of 2008. It will also discuss the relationship between problems of Wall Street and the recession of Main Street. Finally, it will examine the consequences for the average citizen of the new relationship between government and markets which is likely to emerge from the ashes of the crisis.

**Google and Beyond: Finding the "Good Stuff" on the Internet-- taught by Gail Gradowski**
This short course will teach you how to get the most out of search engines and introduce you to the wide array of academic databases available to you in the library at Santa Clara University. You will learn to exploit the advanced search features of the two major search engines, Google and Yahoo. You will also discover alternatives to these search engines, other ways to find quality information on the world wide web. SCU subscribes to a dizzying array of databases that you can access as a visitor to the library. While you cannot learn how to search all of these in a short course, you can begin exploring them and find out which ones are likely to be of the greatest use to you. There will also be ample opportunities to ask about specific research problems you may have encountered.