



LLAIC

Lifelong Learners: An Independent Collaborative

Fall 2024 Course Catalog

Come for the Courses, Stay for the Friends

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Art Appreciation

Course Title: City Visions: Venice, Paris, and New York as Seen Through the Eyes of the Artists

Course Leader: Suzanne Art

Course Length/Start: 10 weeks starting on September 12

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TH 11:30-1, Zoom

Course Description:

Cityscapes have been popular since ancient times and are considered treasures by art lovers and historians alike. In this course we will explore three renowned western cities – Venice, Paris, and New York – through the works of some of history's greatest artists.

In the case of Venice, we'll begin with a brief glance at the founding of the city in the lagoon and its evolution as the center of a vast trading empire; we'll also discover how it remained radiant even in its inevitable economic decline. We'll study the Gothic and Renaissance architecture of palazzi and cathedrals and catch glimpses of the lives of various city dwellers through the paintings of Masters from Canaletto to Turner, Whistler, and Sargent. The writings of Ruskin and Henry James will enrich our sense of the place, as will the melodies of Venetian composers Gabrielli and Vivaldi.

Our visit to Paris involves a similar approach, beginning with the small island settlement in the Seine, progressing to the construction of Gothic cathedrals and ultimately the city planning designs of Haussman. Manet, Caillebotte, and Picasso will be among our guides, with Proust and Hemingway offering commentary. Musical interludes include the works of Ravel and Satie, with a bit of Piaf.

Then on to New York, from the founding of New Amsterdam to the building of skyscrapers in the 20th century. We will be guided by Bellows, Hopper, Steichen, Estes, and others, with commentary by Mark Twain, Edith Wharton, and James Baldwin and musical interludes with Gershwin and Sinatra.

The course will be a combination of presentation and discussion, and weekly preparation should take about an hour and a half.

Books and Other Resources:

All assignments will be online. Links will be accessed through a syllabus.

Biography:

I have always loved art, language, and history. My favorite pastime is experiencing paintings in art museums. I have a BA in history, an MA in the French language and literature, and an MA in teaching. I taught history for 16 years at a private school. During that time, I also wrote a series of twelve history books, a major feature of which is the study of the art of a given culture. Nowadays, I take great pleasure from sharing my love of art history with groups of enthusiastic seniors. I have taught many art history courses at LLAIC and BOLLI over the years.

Course Title: Capturing our World: The Documentary Tradition in Photography

Course Leader: Ivy Cubell

Course Length/Start: 6 weeks starting on October 22 and ending on December 10, during the make-up week

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 9:30-11, Zoom

Course Description:

Who are we? How do we live in this world? Documentary photography has been an essential tool for storytelling since the invention of the camera. It's a form of visual art that captures real-life — the everyday and the extraordinary situations — providing a glimpse into the lives of people and cultures around the world. This 6-week course will take a deep dive into each of four genres of documentary photography: photojournalism, social documentary photography, street photography, and environmental/conservation photography. Each session will be a combination of striking visual presentation with accompanying informal lecture, interspersed with lively interaction as we together look closely and analyze individual photographs. For LLAIC members in my previous courses, I plan to focus on photographers that we have not explored in previous classes. I look forward to sharing this dynamic, illuminating, and meaningful odyssey with you!

In terms of pre-class preparation, we will be learning from a variety of videos and readings that will add context to our class sessions and require about 1-2 hours of your time per class. Each preparation will also include a *Close Looking* document with images of some of the photographs that we will be looking at that week, along with some questions for consideration and close-looking.

The course will require desktop (preferably) or laptop computers with as large a viewing screen as possible, so that the images and their details will really stand out for you. You will not be able to view the many images during class closely enough on an iPad or other tablets.

Please note that the last class will be on December 10, during the make-up week.

Books and Other Resources:

I will provide reading and video links directly to class participants via email.

Biography:

I am passionate about art and history and making connections between the two in dynamic and thought-provoking ways. As a Gallery Instructor since 2002 at MFA Boston, I lead specially themed tours through the various collections and special exhibitions, develop tours and training curricula for MFA docents, and lead professional development teacher workshops for schools throughout New England. In addition to my degree in Art History from University of Michigan and Columbia University, I hold an MSW and a JD from Boston University. I have taught *Photography and Painting: A Sibling Rivalry in Focus* for two semesters at LLAIC; have taught *Women and Art: Ancient to Modern* for two semesters at LLAIC; have taught *Visual Analysis: The Art of Seeing Art* for two semesters at LLAIC; and have shared four LLAIC LOVES ART presentations over the several years.

Course Title: Discussing Impressionism

Course Leader: Judith Scott

Course Length/Start: 6 weeks starting on September 10 and ending on October 15, during the break week

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 11:30-1, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

Discussing Impressionism is a 6-week art history course. You will have an opportunity to discuss paintings from this most beloved movement in modern art. The course will re-introduce you to Impressionist artists. An abundance of art slides will give you ample inspiration for engaging in group discussions. You will be encouraged to share thoughts and personal reactions in a judgement-free environment. You will be especially encouraged to analyze Impressionist artists' brushstrokes, depiction of light effects, application of color, compositions, and choice of subjects. I will present information about each artist and artwork as well as context placing Impressionism in the continuum of art history.

This course will explore the works of Claude Monet, Édouard Manet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro, Alfred Sisley, Edgar Degas, Berthe Morisot, and Mary Cassatt. Brief presentation highlight handouts will be available each week. Homework will consist of brief readings to be found online. The readings are intended to provide background information and enhance the classroom discussions. I will email links to the readings before each class. The classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Preparation time should be less than an hour to an hour and a half each week.

Please note that the last class is on October 15, during the break week.

Books and Other Resources:

Homework will consist of brief readings to be found online. No book is required.

Biography:

I was a guide at deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum for over thirteen years, and I am now a Guide Emeritus. I was a docent at Danforth Art Museum and School for fifteen years. I conducted numerous tours at both art museums and taught a significant portion of the Danforth New Docent class. I have been a student of art history for most of my life, and I was an amateur painter for decades. I am a retired senior manager in the computer industry. This is my fifth LLAIC course. Previous courses included *Movements in Modern Art*, *Expressionism in Art*, *Favorite American Artists*, and *More Favorite American Artists*.

Film and Television

Course Title: Films of Classic Hollywood Directors: Alfred Hitchcock

Course Leader: Stan Hitron

Course Length/Start: 6 weeks starting on October 23, during the break week, and ending on December 4

Meeting Time and Location/Format: WED 11:30-1, Zoom

Course Description:

Almost everyone knows Alfred Hitchcock as the “Master of Suspense” (and sometimes horror). He was also a master of film form using its formal elements, especially editing, to have the camera, above all, tell the story. There are dozens of videos on YouTube by experts, enthusiasts, and Hitchcock himself analyzing and appreciating his technique, some of which we’ll view. But what I’m most interested in exploring is his ideas. The plot, what he calls the “MacGuffin,” is something along with suspense, to hold our attention, so he can convey his ideas about the nature of evil, male/female relations, personal responsibility, and scopophilia, among other topics.

It's difficult to pick six from the 53 films that make up his oeuvre. I appreciate last class's suggestions and some of them will be included in my list, I'm sure. I consulted several “best Hitchcock films” lists and came up with these six, most from mid-20th century: *Rebecca*, 1940 (his only Academy Award film); *Shadow of a Doubt*, 1943 (Hitch's favorite and one of mine); *Notorious*, 1946 (a romance); *Strangers on a Train*, 1951 (use of expressionism); *Rear Window*, 1954 (it has it all, Hitch in his prime); and *Vertigo*, 1958 (a darling of academia whose reputation has grown after its initial release.)

The format will be a brief lecture then discussion. All films will be watched individually before class. Films are available to rent for free in DVD format in public libraries or to stream on various streaming platforms, some free with membership others for a charge of \$2.99 to \$3.99.

Preparation time will be around two hours to watch films. In previous classes some students watched films twice. Viewing questions to help students prepare for discussion will be sent out about a week in advance of the film to be discussed for that week's class.

Please note that the first class takes place October 23, during the break week.

Books and Other Resources:

None

Biography:

I am a retired Professor of English and Humanities at Middlesex Community College in Bedford MA. I taught a credit course on film analysis in the classroom and online and a non-credit film discussion class in MILES, MCC's program for lifelong learning before and after my retirement in 2013. I taught my first class for LLAIC in the Fall 2022 semester and have offered a film series on a classic Hollywood director in every subsequent semester.

Course Title: Books Become Movies

Course Leader: Claire Levovsky

Course Length/Start: 6 weeks starting September 10 and ending on October 15, during the break week

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 9:45-11:15, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

What happens when a good book is made into a movie? Is one the duplicate of the other? If not, why not? One week we will read a book and discuss its themes, characters, settings, and historical background. The following week, having seen the movie based on the book, we'll compare the treatment of characters and themes—how closely does the director follow the author's intent? Why do you think any changes were made? Which had the greater impact on you?

The books and movies we'll be discussing are *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens, a heartbreakingly moving coming-of-age murder mystery that is ultimately a magnificent celebration of the natural world; *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrick Backman, a novel about the grumpy old man next door and a profound exploration of the impact one life can have on so many others; and *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann, a riveting true-life murder mystery about one of the most horrible crimes in American history and the birth of the FBI. All three novels were #1 on the New York Times Bestsellers List and both the books and the movies are available in the Minuteman Library System. *Where the Crawdads Sing* is also available on Amazon Prime and Hulu; *A Man Called Ove* is also available on Amazon Prime; and *Killers of the Flower Moon* is also available on Apple TV and Amazon Prime.

Please note that the last class will take place on October 15, during the break week.

Books and Other Resources:

Where the Crawdads Sing, Delia Owens

A Man Called Ove, Fredrick Backman

Killers of the Flower Moon, David Grann

Biography:

I have taught this subject using different books and movies, both at LLAIC and Regis College's adult program. I have a Bachelor's in English and Secondary School, a Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling, and a Master's in professional writing.

Course Title: History of 1960s Television

Course Leader: Bob Tremblay

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on October 22

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 2-3:30, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

In the 1960's television became a political force, featuring the first televised presidential debate. TV journalism also gained prominence as the civil rights era, the JFK assassination and the space race all unfolded on television. Television shows also began being broadcast in color.

This course will be a history of television shows in the 1960's. It will include: comedies (e.g. *The Dick Van Dyke Show, Get Smart*); dramas (e.g. *The Fugitive, Mission: Impossible*); westerns (e.g. *Bonanza, The Wild Wild West*); police shows (e.g. *Mannix, Hawaii Five-0*); made-for-TV films (e.g. *Heidi, How the Grinch Stole Christmas*); cartoons (e.g. *The Flintstones, Johnny Quest*); game shows (e.g. *Match Game, Password*); news shows (e.g. *60 Minutes, The Huntley-Brinkley Report*); public television shows (e.g. Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, Sesame Street); variety and late night shows (e.g. *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In, The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*). Sorry, no weekday daytime TV such as soap operas. I was in school during the 1960s. The format will be lecture with plenty of YouTube clips of TV shows. No advance preparation required.

Books and Other Resources:

None

Biography:

I was an avid viewer—is there a stronger word than that, maybe fanatical—of television shows in the 1960s. The *TV Guide* was my bible. As a journalist for more than 40 years and a film critic for 30 years, I interviewed my share of celebrities who acted in both film and movies. This will be the fifth course I've taught at LLAIC. Previous courses were film appreciation, classical music appreciation, history of the 1960s rock 'n' roll, and history of the movie musical.

Government and Policy

Course Title: A Brief History of American Foreign Policy From 1776 to Today

Course Leader: Bill Brisk

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on September 12

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TH 9:30-11, Zoom

Course Description:

Our foreign policy history includes both major successes (think of ones such as the Marshall Plan to rebuild Germany and Japan after World War II) and major failures, (think of the Vietnam War and the invasion of Iraq). Our children and grandchildren live in a world with some dangerous adversaries (Russia, China and Iran). Our foreign policy is key to our survival. We are more likely to get it right if we try to learn from our foreign policy history – the goal of this course.

The course will cover American foreign policy since 1776 (tracing unilateralism, expansionism, Manifest Destiny, tipping the balance of the First World War, idealism in forming the League of Nations, the Second World War, followed by the Cold War, Bush's New World Order, Vietnam, and the distinctive styles and policies of Trump and Biden). All this will serve as background for Richard Mansfield's course on contemporary issues of American foreign policy that will follow immediately in the second part of the fall courses at the same time. While participants can sign up separately for one of the two courses, it is highly recommended that you take both courses.

We'll begin each class with Q and A regarding the assigned reading. This will lead to brief lectures pertinent to the readings but with personal insights. My goal is to use lectures to spark discussions that will carry through to the end of each class. The syllabus assigns about 55 pages a week of reading from the text, which is especially well and clearly written, and reading ahead is highly recommended. In addition, I will circulate, via email, short contemporary articles culled from *The Economist*.

Because of prior arranged travel, Richard Mansfield will conduct the first session in my absence. I, in turn, will participate to some extent in his course on contemporary issues which follows this one.

Books and Other Resources:

Kaufman, Joyce P. *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2021 (be sure to order the Fifth Edition 2021, which features thoughtful reflections contrasting the successes and failures of Trump and Biden, the present and presumptive candidates in this November's election). Available from Amazon for about \$35.

Two books you might consider *after this course ends* are Richard Haass, *The World: A Brief Introduction*, Penguin Press, 2020 and Fareed Zakaria *Age of Revolutions: Progress and Backlash*, W. W. Norton, March, 2024. I also urge participants who want to keep up with world events to subscribe to *The Economist*.

Biography:

I graduated from Brown (AB), NYU (JD), and Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington (PhD). I chaired the department of political science at the Inter-American University (San German, Puerto Rico) and moved to the University of New Mexico where I taught Latin American politics, international relations and a variety of honors courses. At Suffolk and other law schools I created and taught courses on the emerging subject of elder law. I've written a book about mini-states and published over twenty-five articles and book reviews on Latin American and international politics and, as an elder law attorney, was the lead author of the text on Massachusetts Elder Law which I updated about six times and is now updated by others. I served as president of the Massachusetts Elder Law Association, as a board member of national NAEA, and as Editor in Chief of the National Academy of Elder Law Journal.

Course Title: Foreign Affairs 2024 Discussion

Course Leader: Richard Mansfield

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on October 31

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TH 9:30-11, Zoom

Course Description:

For each class several articles from the 2024 issues of *Foreign Affairs* will be selected for discussion. *Foreign Affairs* is a prestigious journal featuring articles by academics and policy professionals. Each class will focus on a key issue facing the U.S. President and foreign policy professionals. The following issues will be addressed: the war in Ukraine; Israel, Gaza, and the Palestinians; China and U.S. China policy; Russia; and the U.S. role in the international world order. Although the presidential election in November is not expected to focus on foreign policy, there are major differences between and within our two political parties regarding the issues to be covered in the course. Democrats strongly favor supporting Ukraine in its war with Russia, while Republicans are divided on this issue. Democrats are divided on support for Israel's continuing the war against HAMAS. While Democrats favor a strong U.S. role in supporting and enforcing norms of international relations between countries, many Republicans do not. During the presidential campaign, we will track the positions of the candidates on these and other foreign policy issues that arise.

This course, offered in the second half of the semester, will be coordinated with the first-half course on the history of American foreign policy, offered by Bill Brisk, so that connections between historical foreign policy tensions (e.g., isolationism vs. active world leadership) and present divisions between presidential candidates are clarified and explored. Both courses will be offered during the same weekly time slot, for the convenience of participants who choose to enroll in both. Participants are free to enroll in one or both courses.

This is a discussion class. Before discussion of each assigned article, the Course Leader will briefly summarize its key points. Preparation time is about two hours per week.

Books and Other Resources:

Participants will be expected to get a digital or print-and-digital subscription (\$40-\$46) to *Foreign Affairs*.

All assigned articles will be from the 2024 issues of this journal.

Biography:

I have developed, taught, and co-taught several courses involving discussion of current events and policy, including a course like this one, but based on articles from *Foreign Affairs*, 2023. I have also taught and co-taught other courses, mostly in the areas of psychology and sociology.

Course Title: The Supreme Court, The Constitution — Current Issues

Course Leader: Eric Rosen

Course Length/Start: 10 weeks starting on September 12

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TH 2:15-3:45, Zoom

Course Description:

In this class we will consider recent controversial Supreme Court cases including cases on election ballots, presidential immunity, reproductive rights, Second Amendment, including the pending case dealing with Second Amendment Rights of persons convicted of domestic abuse, First Amendment Religious Issues, and the Electoral College. We will discuss these cases and cases pending on voting rights and their impact on the 2024 elections. We will consider legal issues related to the pending criminal prosecution of Donald Trump. We will spend considerable time on the Fourteenth Amendment and its interpretation by the Warren Court and the Roberts Court, and how they have changed in profound ways. We will consider the roots of the Constitution in the unwritten British Constitution and its influence on such important matters as the Second Amendment and other provisions in the Bill of Rights. We will consider in depth such concepts as “Privileges and Immunities,” “Substantive and Procedural Due Process,” and “Equal Protection of the Laws.” The class will be lecture and discussion, in equal doses. Weekly preparation time will be about one hour of reading assignments and optional review of PowerPoint slides.

Books and Other Resources:

An Introduction to Constitutional Law--100 Supreme Cases Everyone Should Know, by Randy Barnett and Josh Blackman, Wolters Kluwer, New York, 2020, optional. It is an excellent summary of many of the cases that we will consider. I will send relevant articles as they become available.

Biography:

I am a lawyer and have a Master’s Degree in Education. In the Master’s program, I studied Constitutional Law from a political science perspective. I taught the *History of Anti-Semitism* at LLAIC, at Temple Beth Elohim and the Congregational Church of South Dartmouth, MA.

History

Course Title: The 1619 Project -- Controversy over the Role of Slavery and Racism in U.S. History

Course Leader: Brooks Goddard

Course Length/Start: 10 weeks starting on September 10

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 9:45-11:15, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

The 1619 Project is a long-term effort by journalists from the *New York Times* that took a critical view of the Patriots in the American Revolution, America's founding fathers, and other revered figures, including Abraham Lincoln. The book argues that slavery and racism were central to America's history. The project led to vigorous debate about whether America's history is exemplary or fundamentally compromised. The 1619 Project—composed of essays written by scholars in their fields—has fueled debates about what we should be teaching about American history in our high schools -- a topic that is likely to be raised during the 2024 election season.

This course will be a discussion course. One idea behind it is that we all should know more than we do and be able to discuss without fear. We shall read and talk about *Born on the Water* and *The 1619 Project, A New Origin Story*. We shall also read *Africa Is My Home* by Edinger & Byrd, as well as "The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates. These books bring information to us that is not necessarily new in time but new in our consciousness. *Born on The Water* is a children's book addressed to all ages (as many children's books are) about how some Black people got to the United States; *Africa Is My Home* has a similar theme.

Please read *Born on the Water*, *Africa Is My Home*, and the preface of *The 1619 Project* prior to the first session. This will be a discussion course with full participation, and reading will average 70± pages per week, which should take approximately one and a quarter hours per week.

Books and Other Resources:

The 1619 Project, Nicole Hannah-Jones, ed. One World, 2021 *Born on the Water*, by Nicole Hannah-Jones and Renee Watson. Kokila, 2021

Africa Is My Home, by Monica Edinger. Candlewick, 2013

"The Case for Reparations," by Ta-Nehisi Coates. *Atlantic Magazine*, June, 2014. (PDF will be provided)

Biography:

I have been a lifelong teacher and learner in a variety of settings, mostly high schools. I've lived and travelled extensively in Africa and Asia. I've lived in Needham in the same house for over 50 years where I continue to garden and read. I have presented this course before.

Course Title: Five Prominent Leaders of the 20th Century

Course Leader: Margalit Lai and Margaret Dergalis

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on October 31

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TH 9:30-11, Zoom

Course Description:

We have all lived through the tumultuous 20th century with its larger-than-life leaders. Some of them, like Stalin and Hitler, we would actually like to forget, if that were possible. In this course, Margaret Dergalis and Margalit Lai will examine five of the most notable leaders from around the world who have had major influence well beyond their borders. They were all complicated personalities with complicated legacies that we will try to explore together. The leaders we have chosen are from four continents and five countries, representing diverse cultures. They are Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Mao Tse Tung, and Winston Churchill. Come join us as we dive into the psychology, culture, achievements, failures, and legacies of those illustrious leaders of our lifetime. We will discuss one leader each week, and the class will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Participants will be given weekly articles and videos to watch and read as optional homework.

Books and Other Resources:

Optional articles and videos will be provided.

Biography:

Margalit Lai: I have given several courses over the years at LLAIC and found that history is my real niche. My last course was about the British empire. Other courses I have given over the years were about Israel, the history of Russia, atheism, and why nations fail.

Margaret Dergalis: I have always been fascinated by history, biography and memoirs. In high school, I debated about a major in history or French. I taught French for a number of years, but my passion has only grown and I look forward to teaming up with Margalit for this in-depth study of world leaders.

Course Title: The Fall of the Roman Republic: Consequences for Modern Democracies

Course Leader: Bill Miniscalco

Course Length/Start: 8 weeks starting on September 11 and ending on November 13

Meeting Time and Location/Format: WED 11:30-1, Zoom

Course Description:

Western democracies, including the United States, are facing serious economic, social, and political problems. Many are experiencing a decline in democratic values or “backsliding” as

political scientists call it. This includes loss of faith in institutions, violation of political norms, and demagogues exploiting populist grievances. Political polarization has become extreme and violence more common. Is this situation unprecedented? History never repeats itself but it sometimes rhymes, and this situation parallels the troubles of the late Roman Republic, which collapsed into a dictatorship.

Important to Roman foundational legends was the revolt against the last king in 509 BCE and the formation of the Republic. The Roman Republic had an elaborate system of laws and norms to ensure that no one person could achieve dominance and persistent power. For almost 400 years it worked. Starting in the second century BCE, however, Roman conquests led to increasing disparities in wealth together with social and economic disruptions. These challenges could no longer be managed by their system of government. Certain wealthy individuals exacerbated the situation by ignoring the norms of the Republic and fanning populist resentment to overturn “the system.” Mob violence became an accepted form of political discourse. This culminated in Julius Caesar, a cunning politician with a ruthless lust for power. Although Caesar was assassinated “to save the Republic,” it was too late and power fell into the hands of emperors — the Roman euphemism for kings.

Are there relevant insights we can gain from the decline and fall of the Roman Republic? We will examine the forces and mechanism responsible for the destruction of the Republic and compare them to what modern democracies are facing. For example, globalization may not be the same as foreign conquests, but it may rhyme well enough to produce similar consequences such as extreme wealth inequality and social displacement.

This course will use a combination of videos, slides, and discussion. Weekly preparation time will be less than one hour.

Please note that the last class will take place on November 13.

Books and Other Resources:

There will be no required reading, but some short articles may be sent out. A list of books will be provided for those interested in pursuing certain topics in greater depth.

Biography:

I have a PhD in physics and spent decades doing basic and applied research. However, I have always had a strong interest in history and literature, to which I now devote more time than to science. I find ancient history particularly fascinating and enjoy visiting archaeological sites, the older the better. One thing I find intriguing is how, despite vast changes in technology and knowledge, similar the social, economic, and political behavior of people has been over millennia. This is part of my motivation for developing this course. Among my non-academic interests are travelling to interesting places and high-performance driving on race tracks.

Leisure Pursuits

Course Title: Memoir Writing: Reflections of our Lives Past and Present

Course Leader: Myrna Rybczyk

Course Length/Start: 10 weeks starting on September 11

Meeting Time and Location/Format: WED 9:30-11, Zoom

Course Description:

Each week we share writings about our lives. We look at how the past and major current events shape us. We also do a short spontaneous write based on an in-class prompt. We let our “Magic Pens” take over. We also share these brief writes. Each participant’s writings help to create a community narrative. The participants support each other, which encourages growth in each person’s writing.

Participants may have many reasons for writing their memoirs. We may gain insight into ourselves. We may want to pass on our history and life lessons learned to family and friends. We may also be recording a personal living history of turbulent times.

We allow a 15-minute chat period starting at 9:15, CLASS BEGINS AT 9:30. Each person reads what they’ve written in the preceding week; this allows for five minutes of reading followed by 5 minutes of comments and suggestions. Since we are writing from our lives, confidentiality is observed, and commentary is positive, respectful, and supportive. We focus on content rather than the mechanics of writing, such as grammar. When everyone has read their piece, we move to writing in response to a prompt followed by reading what we have come to call the “Magic Pen.”

Weekly preparation time varies greatly and is determined by how much time will be needed to read aloud what has been written in the preceding week. We have had several long pieces that exceed the time constraint, and these have been presented in parts to accommodate for that. A typical range is 1-3 hours.

Books and Other Resources:

None

Biography:

I am a graduate of New England Conservatory of Music with a major in Music Therapy, I worked for over 4 years as a Visiting Therapist at the McClean Hospital, during that time I was Assistant Director of Orchard Home for Girls (a branch of N.E. Home for Little Wanderers.) Following that, I taught choral and band music at Monadnock Regional HS, NH. and then became Head Music Therapist at Medfield State Hospital for four years. I have taught piano and voice lessons for over fifty years in my studio. I began Memoir writing with Carol McNamee in 2017 and subsequently became a Course Leader in 2018.

I am currently engaged in the early stages of finding a publisher for a memoir I have written regarding Boston Police Corruption in the early 1960s.

Course Title: The Lilac Players: A Play Reading Group

Course Leader: Maryann Wyner and Roselie Weiss

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on October 22

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 2-3:30, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

The Lilac Players will spend five weeks reading a variety of plays for our enjoyment. Experience is not necessary. You just need to be a bit of a “ham” and have a desire for fun. We always enjoy reading, bonding and emoting. Please sign up as soon as possible, so that we know how many roles we'll need. That will help us choose fun plays to read. No memorization or performances, just reading and enjoying. Remember: “All the world's a stage” and we are it! The plays will be available in PDF format. Each participant will be responsible for bring his/her script with them in either hard copy or on a device. A read-through is encouraged before each meeting.

Books and Other Resources:

Copies of the plays chosen

Biography:

Maryann Wyner: I have been involved in theater since high school as both an actor, stage manager, and properties manager. After one short time on stage at Clark University as a corpse, I waited until my teaching days to get involved. After receiving a BA from Clark, I went on, while teaching, to get an MA in English at Simmons College. At Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall in Waltham, I served as the assistant director and occasional actor for over 30 high school performances. As a teacher, acting was always part of the job, so getting involved in the LILAC Players allowed me to delve into something that has always made me smile. After retiring from teaching, opportunities arose at Temple Shir Tikva where I performed in *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, the *Megillah According to Grease*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*.

Roseli Weiss: I have been in local theater for many years. Recently, I was in a two-year musical production of *We Did It For You* – the history of the women's right to vote, and currently am a costumed guide on the Freedom Trail. I am a retired public school superintendent with three masters degrees and a doctorate and have spent over 40 years in education from teaching to principalship to directorship.

Course Title: The Joy of Winter Birding

Course Leader: Jeff Zupan

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on November 19, with field trips

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 2-3:30 for first meeting, TU December 3, 19, and 17, and January 7

Course Description:

So, you always wanted to be a birdwatcher (birder)! Now you have no excuse! This course will teach you how to identify the common birds in our area in the winter and give you tips to maximize your chance of seeing them, what equipment to have, and which guidebooks and apps to use. We will have one classroom session highlighting those birds we are likely to see in four field trips that will follow soon thereafter. This will be done by showing photographs of these likely birds, indicating their defining characteristics. Then we will go out in the field to see them, traveling to four “hotspots” for birding. The classroom session will be on November 19, and the field trips will be on December 3, 10, 17, and January 7. The trips will be to four separate locations. At least two classes would span most of a full day, with the other two of shorter duration.

Weekly prep time varies. You could use the recommended materials to study the birds expected in advance to enable you to get more out of the course.

Books and Other Resources:

These are recommended but not required.

Peterson, *Birds of the Eastern and Central North America*, Houghton Mifflin, 2002

David Allen Sibley, *The Sibley Guide to Birds*, Alfred A. Knopf, 2000

Merlin app for iPhone for identification by sight or song

eBird to track sightings and identification in your area

A good pair of binoculars for field trips is helpful. This site may be helpful: <https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/binoculars.html>

Biography:

I have been a birder since 1958 and have traveled locally and beyond to see birds. There are over 10,500 species of birds in the world and I have seen only a mere 1,900 plus and counting, but have seen just about all those we can expect to see in eastern Massachusetts. Professionally, I am a retired urban transportation planner.

Literature

Course Title: Mystery Fiction Goes to Court: Legal Dramas in Books and Movies

Course Leader: Sandy Grasfield and Dana Kaplan

Course Length/Start: 10 weeks starting on September 10

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 11:30-1, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

If any profession is dominating the news nowadays, it's the law. Is it because we're a litigious society at heart? Or that our view of the US as a "nation of laws" is being challenged? Or just the sheer drama of the courtroom? Come join our classes (in two parts!) and explore these and related topics. One fact is not in dispute: the law, lawbreakers, and their defenders and prosecutors make for some very compelling storytelling.

Over the 10 weeks, we will read and discuss a book one week, a film (to be viewed at home) the next. We WON'T be comparing the print and film versions of the same works. We WILL be looking at related topics in the book-movie pairings. We think it's important that class members encounter the topics first in books, so while you'll know the books in advance, we won't reveal the movies until the week before. Because there are so many great books and films under the broad heading of "legal thriller," we have decided to offer the topic in two parts, Part 1 in Fall 2024, Part 2 in Spring 2025. Each 10-week course will present different books and films.

Books will be readily available through the Minuteman Library system or as inexpensive used books on Amazon. Films will all be available as rental CDs, free on Kanopy, or at small rental fees from major streaming services or YouTube.

Books and Other Resources:

The following is a list of books under consideration for Part 1, Fall 2024. We will hold back the movie list as we prefer to have the class members encounter the topics first in the books.

Scott Turow: Presumed Innocent

John Grisham: The Runaway Jury

Lisa Scottoline: Mistaken Identity

David Dow: Confessions of an Innocent Man

William Landry: Defending Jacob

Biography:

Sandy Grasfield: I was a middle school librarian and media specialist for thirty years. I have taught several courses at LLAIC and elsewhere, including *The History and Politics of Food*, *The Plays and Memoirs of Lillian Hellman*, and *Great Photographs and Photographers of the Depression Era*.

Dana and I have presented four successful courses focused on mystery novels and a lecture class on the Gilded Age in American history. We also ran a monthly summer book group, "Food and Memories," focused on culinary memoirs.

Dana Kaplan: I had a varied career as a marketing and sales promotional writer and manager of creative teams. My focus was business-to-business. I have been an avid reader of crime/mystery fiction my whole life, beginning (of course) with Nancy Drew. I enjoy approaching these books the same way I do all fiction worth reading: for plot, narrative progression, description, character treatment, and above all, the author's underlying themes.

In addition to the mystery classes presented with Sandy, I collaborated with Lois Novotny on a course reading and discussing culinary memoirs.

Course Title: Children's Picture Books: Banned and Bannable

Course Leader: Anna Markus

Course Length/Start: 6 weeks starting on October 22 and ending on December 10, which is during the make-up week

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 11:30-1, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

In many parts of the country, children's picture books are being banned. Why is this happening? This will be an interactive course on banned and bannable children's picture books. The class will work in groups of 4-6 and will examine and discuss books that have been banned or are vulnerable to censorship. The main topics to be covered will be: the Constitution, the right to free speech, immigration, LGBTQ+ individuals, and books about different family constellations. The format of the class will be discussion and lecture; weekly preparation time should be about one hour.

Please note that the last class is on December 10, during the make-up week.

Books and Other Resources:

I will provide the picture books we will be studying.

Biography:

After starting in the classroom, I returned to school, and received my doctorate in education from The University of Massachusetts. I have spent the majority of my 40+ year career in academia as a professor of Developmental Psychology concentrating on progressive education, and social issues in children's literature. I have taught at Goddard College, Smith College, Mount Holyoke College, and The University of Massachusetts. Later in my career I received a master's degree in mental health counseling and worked as a therapist for several years.

Course Title: Beyond the Great Gatsby: The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald

Course Leader: Maryann Wyner

Course Length/Start: 8 weeks starting September 10 and ending on November 12

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 9:45-11:15, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

Most of us may think of *The Great Gatsby* in connection with F. Scott Fitzgerald, but Fitzgerald wrote over 160 short stories during his 20-year career, and many reflected the post-World War I era's newfound prosperity, consumerism, and shifting sexual mores—the period known as “the Jazz Age.” In our 8-week course, we will explore 24 of these pieces as well as examine the life of

Fitzgerald and its impact on his writing. A tragic figure, it is said that Fitzgerald's fiction seems to be anticipating his life, and we will look for these connections as we explore this 20th century American writer.

Each week will include about a 15-20 minute presentation followed by discussion of three short stories. Guided reading questions will be provided. Occasionally I may use articles found online. Weekly preparation time should be about 1 ½ hours.

Books and Other Resources:

The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, editor Matthew J. Bruccoli, Scribner paperback. Available on Amazon.

Biography:

I began my adult life as a teacher, and after starting a family and managing a craft store, I returned to the field of education, teaching high school English and History and in my later working years as a tutor and a middle school library assistant. I hold a Bachelor's degree from Clark University and a Master's in English from Simmons College. My last teaching position was at Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall in Waltham, MA. Upon retirement in 2014, I found LLAIC, and here I got to teach and learn at the same time . . . and not grade papers or ask anyone to remove his hoodie! I have taught several courses, including Somerset Maugham's short stories, Harper Lee's Mockingbird and Watchman, young adult literature, the Great Migration in America, and the short stories of Mark Twain and Kate Chopin. I have also been involved in high school theater productions and the Lilac Players.

Opera and Musicals

Course Title: Story Comes First: The Craft of Musical Theater

Course Leader: Art Finstein

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on September 10

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 11:30-1, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

In this class we'll look at songs/scenes from multiple shows from the past 70 years to learn how music uniquely serves and advances story. In virtually every successful musical, the creators' compositional choices must demonstrate WHY they write to begin with. We'll analyze the positioning of songs in the play, the formal design of songs, their melodic and harmonic styles and impacts, and structural/textual formats, to understand how these elements serve the stories' goals. Examples will come from a wide variety of pieces, including the *Music Man*, *Into the Woods*, *She Loves Me*, *1776*, *Les Miserables*, *Fiddler...*, *Cabaret*, *Hamilton*, *Come from Away*, *My Fair Lady*, and *La Cage Aux Folles*. The format will be a combination of videos, audio, lecture, and discussion. Prep time will be 1-2 hours per week of reading, listening, and viewing online of materials I will provide.

Books and Other Resources:

I will provide materials.

Biography:

I hold degrees in Music History and Theory and taught in public schools for 32 years. Since 1970 I've music-directed more than 200 productions of musicals in scholastic, community, and professional theater circuits. I've taught at LLAIC and BOLLI multiple times since 2008.

Course Title: Shakespeare, Opera, and Ballet: Transforming One Art Form into Another

Course Leader: Lois Novotny

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks beginning October 22

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TU 11:30-1, in person at Temple Shalom

Course Description:

Shakespeare's plays have been the jumping-off point for filmmakers, novelists, songwriters, composers, artists, and choreographers. Explore how five of his works have been transformed into other art forms for the theater. We'll consider the changes made in creating operas and ballets based on some of his best-known plays. After an introduction, each week will focus on a single work, and a large part of each class will be watching segments of stellar performances of the operas and ballets on DVDs. We'll be looking at Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Balanchine's choreography; Verdi's *Otello*, *Macbeth*, and *Falstaff* and Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, with MacMillan's choreography. No prior knowledge of music, opera, or ballet required. Summaries of the plays and of the operas and ballets will be provided. This is not primarily a discussion course, but there should be time for some discussion.

Preparation time will be minimal (half an hour or less) to read the provided summaries of the week's works.

Books and Other Resources:

No required books, summaries of the operas, ballets, and plays will be provided.

Biography:

After completing all course work for a Ph.D in musicology, and when it became apparent that the job market for college teaching (the only work for which the degree was relevant) had completely ceased to exist, I went to law school. I attend performances of concerts, opera, and ballet in Boston and New York (still have a Met subscription). On travels to Europe, I've had the pleasure of seeing opera in Parma, Palermo, Naples, Rome, Venice, Milan, Prague, Budapest, Paris, St. Petersburg, and Moscow, and at many of the great opera houses, including La Scala, La Fenice, and

the Maryiinsky and Bolshoi theaters. I've taught several courses at LLAIC on opera and ballet, and (for variation), Jane Austen and food (with Dana Kaplan).

Politics

Course Title: The Elections —2024

Course Leader: Don Bermont

Course Length/Start: 6 weeks starting on October 23

Meeting Time and Location/Format: WED 9:30-11, Zoom

Course Description:

The elections that will be held in November 2024 will be one of the most significant in US history. The candidates for president are two men who have both been president and who, except for their age, could not be more different. The down-ballot races will often be contests that reflect the personalities and positions of the men at the top. The results of this election will make a huge difference in what happens in America society and the rest of the world. One side has already announced that if they don't win the election, they will do what they can to change the results. We could be in for months of chaos. I hope this course will be a place where we can sort things out, find ways to be of influence if we wish, and keep our fears and confusion from overwhelming us. For each class, I will provide some information about various races and we will discuss what everyone has learned from every source available.

Please note that this class begins on October 23, during the break week.

Books and Other Resources:

There is too much information out there. TV, newspapers, social media Substacks, personal blogs, TikTok, and about three hundred books pro and con. People are free to choose their own and talk about them, and pay attention to the election news as much as you wish or you can stand, but so that we have a common basis for discussion, I will occasionally send articles or note upcoming TV shows for everyone to read or watch

Biography:

I have led many courses at LLAIC on many different topics. I have been actively involved in aspects of this election for over a year. The differences between the two candidates and parties astonish me. Before I came to LLAIC I worked as a psychologist/psychotherapist in several mill towns and cities in Massachusetts, spending the last 35 years in Lowell. I live in Concord with my wife, my children and grandchildren are nearby. My emotional escape has been my devotion to this year's Celtics.

Course Title: Red State, Blue State – The Threat to American Democracy

Course Leader: Len Glassman

Course Length/Start: 5 weeks starting on September 12

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TH 2:15-3:45, Zoom

Course Description:

Each week I will be covering a different aspect of why, as a country, we're so polarized today politically and socially. Before each of the five weekly sessions, I'll send out a few YouTube videos and relevant articles focusing on the weekly segment to be discussed. Each week I'll give an opening statement, offer some questions, and open things up to a roundtable discussion. Things will naturally flow from there. Preparation will be a half hour to one hour per weekly session.

Books and Other Resources:

I suggest reading (not required) but will provide a synopsis of two books:

The Kingdom, The Power, and The Glory by Tim Alberta, Harper, 2023

White Rural Rage, by Tom Schaller and Paul Waldman, Random House 2024

Additionally, I'll be sending out relevant articles related to each week's topic to all class members.

Biography:

I've run my own automotive parts manufacturing and distribution business, twenty as owner and company president. These days I work as a volunteer for S.C.O.R.E. (Service Core Of Retired Executives) which is an SBA funded mentoring program for small businesses and startups. My wife and I also own and run Big Fish Products (www.biggfishproducts.com). We sell outdoor sport clothing to raise money we donate for both Parkinson's Disease research and cancer research. For recreation, I play pickleball, golf, cards, and fish relentlessly off my boat. I read extensively particularly on subjects such as politics, American foreign policy, history, and current events. For several years I've led the "Great Decisions" course at LLIAC.

My educational background is a BS in business from Northeastern University, many adult education courses, and graduate degree from The University of Hard Knocks (fifty years in business).

Societal Issues

Course Title: American Education – On Life Support?

Course Leader: Richard and Mary Mansfield

Course Length/Start: 10 weeks starting on September 11

Meeting Time and Location/Format: WED 11:30-1, Zoom

Course Description:

In this discussion course, we will read about and discuss the most important and controversial issues regarding the goals and content of education. We will mainly focus on primary and secondary education but will also touch on some issues related to preschool and college

education. Among the issues we will discuss are:

- a. What worked well and less well during the Covid pandemic?
- b. What should it mean to educate students to participate in our democracy?
- c. What, if anything, should students be taught about morality and religion?
- d. What should be taught about sex and sexual orientation?
- e. How should schools address bullying and cyber-bullying?
- f. What is the effect of America's vast economic and social inequality on educational outcomes?
- g. What should schools teach about the history of racism and discrimination in America?
- h. How should schools address the increasing diversity of their populations?
- i. Who controls and who should control our schools?
- j. How has high-stakes testing affected curriculum and outcomes?
- k. Who is going into teaching today, and why?
- l. How effective are charter schools, and how has their introduction affected public schools in the same cities and towns?

Although we have our own views on these issues, we will present the arguments on the major sides of each issue.

Weekly preparation time should be 1-2 hours.

Books and Other Resources:

American Education, 20th Edition, by Joel Spring, Routledge, 2022.

We will also send pdfs and links to articles on our topics.

Biography:

Richard and Mary have co-taught many courses at LLAIC. Both had careers in education. Mary held many educational positions in her career: elementary school teacher, reading teacher, educational consultant on reading instruction, textbook editor, college admissions representative, and consultant on college and special school placement. Richard's first career was as a university professor of human development in a college of education. Later, as a consultant, some of his clients included educational institutions and firms. Both Richard and Mary have served on LLAIC's Curriculum Committee since LLAIC's start in 2014.

Course Title: Understanding Crime and Crime Control Options

Course Leader: Sandy Sherizen

Course Length/Start: 6 weeks starting on October 31 and ending on December 12, during the make-up week

Meeting Time and Location/Format: TH 11:30-1, Zoom

Course Description:

This is a 6-week exploration of major crime issues. The purpose is to introduce various approaches to understanding why people commit crimes and what, if anything, can be done to prevent these acts. We will examine major categories of crime, crime control strategies, the politics of crime, why certain people become victims (victimology), violence, guns, and emerging crimes such as cybercrimes. Criminological, sociological, psychological, economic, and other perspectives will be discussed in terms of how successful these approaches are in responding to crime problems. Hot topics of the day will be examined, including white collar crime, why the U.S. has such an extraordinary imprisonment rate, how race and class determines who gets arrested, restorative justice, and other emerging crime issues. Examples will be given from the U.S. as well as other nations. The format will be class discussions with lectures to introduce and highlight the weekly topics. Prep time will be about 2 hours a week, and materials provided are optional.

Please note that the last class will be on December 12, during the make-up week.

Books and Other Resources:

Materials will be made available directly online and/or emailed links sent to all class members. I will select readily available articles for each week. The materials could include government policy and analyses, university research, advocate position papers, and sometimes even way-out thought pieces.

Biography:

Trained as a sociologist, I became a criminologist and then became a computer security and privacy professional. I have taught at various universities, led seminars, and given speeches in many settings around the world. Flunking retirement, I have taught English as Second Language to adult immigrants, served on a patient research ethics and safety board at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and am a mentor in a College Behind Bars Program taught by professors at Emerson. I have taught lifelong courses on Your Privacy is at Risk, The Sociology of "Deviant" Behaviors, Surviving the Inquisition: Marranos/Crypto Jews/ Conversos, and Positive and Negative Social Consequences of Technology.

Fall 2024 Course Schedule

TUESDAYS AT Temple Shalom unless otherwise noted				
PERIOD	In person	In person	In person	Zoom
1 9:45 – 11:15	Levovsky 6a Books Become Movies	Goddard 10 The 1619 Project: Controversy over Slavery and Racism	Wyner 8 Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald	Cubell 6b Documentary Tradition in Photography Starts 10/22, 9:30-11
2 11:30- 1:00	Scott 6a Discussing Impressionism Markus 6b Children's Books Banned and Bannable	Grasfield/Kaplan 10 Mystery Fiction Goes to Court	Finstein 5a The Craft of Musical Theater Novotny 5b Shakespeare, Opera and Ballet	
3 2:00 – 3:30	Wyner-Weiss 5b LILAC Players Play Reading	Zupan 5b Winter Bird Watching Starts 11/19	Tremblay 5b History of 1960s Television	

WEDNESDAYS on Zoom				
PERIOD				
1 9:30 – 11:00	Bermont 6b The Elections – 2024 Starts 10/23	Rybczyk 10 Memoir Writing		
2 11:30- 1:00	Snider 5a Shared Perspectives Hitron 6b Films of Alfred Hitchcock Starts 10/23	Mansfields 10 American Education	Miniscalco 8 Fall of the Roman Republic	

THURSDAYS on ZOOM				
PERIOD				
1 9:30 – 11:00	Brisk 5a History of American Foreign Policy Mansfield 5b Foreign Affairs 2024 Discussion	Lai /Dergalis 5b Prominent Leaders of the 20 th Century		
2 11:30- 1:00	Sherizen 6b Crime and Crime Control	Art 10 City Visions: Venice, Paris and New York		
3 2:15– 3:45	Rosen 10 Supreme Court & the Constitution	Glassman 5a Red State, Blue State		

- Class times may vary for in-person and Zoom.
- Number of weeks is indicated by the number following the Course Leader's name
- A = first half of semester; b = second half of semester

Fall 2024 Class Dates

Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays
Sept. 10	Sept. 11	Sept. 12
Sept. 17	Sept. 18	Sept. 19
Sept. 24	Sept. 25	Sept. 26
Oct. 1	No Class	No Class
Oct. 8	Oct. 9	Oct. 10
Break Week	Oct. 16	Oct. 17
Oct. 22	Break Week	Break Week
Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31
No Class	Nov. 6	Nov. 7
Nov. 12	Nov. 13	Nov. 14
Nov. 19	Nov. 20	Nov. 21
No Class	No Class	No Class
Dec. 3	Dec. 4	Dec. 5
Dec. 10 (makeup)	Dec. 11 (makeup)	Dec. 12 (makeup)

How to Register for LLAIC Courses

In order to register for Fall 2024 courses, you must have a current LLAIC membership. You can purchase or renew an annual membership, using a credit card, at our website: www.LLAIC.org,

At our website you can also register for courses starting at 10:00 A.M. Monday, July 22, when Fall Course Registration opens. Courses cost \$10 per course week: a 10-week course costs \$100, a 5-week course costs \$50, etc. You pay by credit card at our website. Course registration is on a first come, first served basis, and some courses fill up quickly. Within minutes of registration and payment for a course, , you will receive an email confirmation

Course Locations

Some courses are offered via Zoom, and you can take them from your home. In-person courses are offered at our new rented space at Temple Shalom, 175 Temple St., West Newton, MA. At in-person courses masking is now optional.

Questions

If you have questions about course registration or LLAIC, you can write to INFO@LLAIC.ORG or call and leave a message at 508-453-1205.