



Northwestern University School of Professional Studies

OLLI's 2015 Winter Session

4-Weeks

**Tuesday, January 20*–
Monday, February 16, 2015**

**Chicago and Evanston
Study Groups**



**Northwestern is closed on January 19 to honor Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Northwestern University School of Professional Studies

Winter Session

Tuesday, January 20* – Monday, February 16, 2015

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Study Group Descriptions

Chicago Campus

Wieboldt Hall, 339 E. Chicago Ave., Chicago IL 60611

MONDAY

#4259 Faulkner's *The Sound and The Fury*

NEW

Monday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (3 sessions beginning January 26)

Coordinator: Martha Bills

William Faulkner is considered to be one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century and was the recipient of the Nobel Prize in 1949 and the Pulitzer Prize in 1954 and 1962. As stated in the 2013 edition of the *Oxford Book of American Short Stories*, "The extraordinary range and versatility of his work — the brilliance of his formal experimentation — the very ambition of his novels' structural design — these are but the outward aspects of the man's genius. And that, born in Oxford, Mississippi, Faulkner should have spent virtually all of his writing life in that town, creating an immense body of work out of the soil of an undistinguished rural county in Mississippi, only deepens the wonder of his achievement."

One of his most recognized works is *The Sound and the Fury*, a novel about a dysfunctional family in a fictional town of Jefferson, Mississippi. Written in 1929, it ranked number six on Modern Library's 1998 list of the best English language novels of the twentieth century. Join us this winter, as we spend quality time with the Compson family: Quentin, Candace, Jason and Benjy, some of the most memorable characters in American literature.

#4260 *Shop Class as Soulcraft* or Socrates Meets This Old House

NEW

Monday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 26)

Coordinators: John Van Vranken, Roberta Motanky

As this intriguing title suggests, both pedestrian and spiritual realms can be united through one common experience — work that is useful, satisfying, and has value. In his book, *Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work* (Penguin Books paperback, 2010) author Mathew Crawford proposes that participation in the trades provides "rich cognitive challenges and psychic nourishment."

Besides owning and operating a motorcycle repair shop, Crawford is a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia and, holds a doctorate in political

philosophy from the University of Chicago. He contrasts the theoretical experience in a cubicle with his work in the repair shop. He addresses the issues of education, jobs, schools, globalization, corporate influences and the trend toward mass conformity due to advertising within the context of his thesis. He sees the appreciation of the trades a remedy for these influences, via the restoration of shop classes and trade schools and recognition of their valuable contribution to our lives. Join us as we explore this alternative perspective.

#4261 Monday at the Movies – A Salute to Robin Williams

Monday, 1-4pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 26)

Coordinators: Ray Rusnak, Peggy DeLay

Robin Williams was admired greatly for both his comical and dramatic roles. We will pay tribute to him by revisiting four of his films: *The Birdcage*, *Good Morning Vietnam*, *Dead Poet's Society* and *Good Will Hunting*. Each screening will be preceded with biographical information about Williams and an introduction to the film. After the screening, we'll have an in-depth discussion about the film. All are welcome.

#4262 *The New Yorker*

Monday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning on January 26)

Coordinators: Sandy Edidin, Marylyn Miller

Inside its famous covers and beyond the cartoons, *The New Yorker* magazine is dedicated to quality, topical writings and ideas. Our peer-led group discussions will be as varied as the contents of this distinguished magazine. Join us as we explore art, technology, politics, personalities, medicine, movies, fiction, fashion, culture and commentary. You will find your view of our current world expanded. You must have a current subscription to *The New Yorker* magazine.

TUESDAY

#4263 *Great Plains*

NEW

Tuesday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 20)

Coordinator: Dan Burns

For many of us the Great Plains is that vast interior of the country we view from 30,000 feet through an airplane window. Typically we think of it as a place where nothing much exists and nothing much has ever happened. *The New Yorker* writer Ian Frazier begs to differ. His book *Great Plains* (Picador paperback, 1989) is an engaging, humorous blend of travelogue, scholarship, and western adventure. While rambling through the countryside, Frazier provides a history of the land as well as a description of its present day condition and the people who live there. He entertains us with stories of Custer, Crazy Horse, Bonnie and Clyde, Lawrence Welk, and many others. Garrison Keillor has said "This is a brilliant, funny, and altogether perfect book, soaked in research and then aired out on the open plains to evaporate the excess, leaving this modern masterpiece."

#4264 People and Events that Shaped Our World – A Sampler

NEW

Tuesday, 10-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 20)

Coordinators: Mark Chernansky, Rosemary O'Shea

Every so often, a singular event takes place — or people step forward — and the future of the world is altered for good. In this course (a sampler for a future study group) we'll focus on such critical people and events. We will use *The Great Courses: Civilization and Culture* video lecture series, featuring professors J. Rufus Fears and Vejas G. Liulevicius, historians and master storytellers.

We'll start out with a memorable battle that preserved the Athenians — and maybe democracy itself. Then we'll look at two individuals whose economic theses dominate the world today. We'll touch upon two almost simultaneous events that joined continents — effectively creating a global economy. And we'll explore the destruction of tiniest of all elements — and what splitting the atom meant and continues to mean.

Class will begin with a 30 minute video, after which we'll discuss the event, its aftermath and its relevance in history. Some classes may include discussion of what might have been if results of the event were different. For these, we'll refer to the book, *What If*, edited by Robert Cowley; background materials for *What If?* will be provided.

#4265 Real Life Adventurers

NEW

Tuesday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 20)

Coordinators: Lee Ayers, Edie Salzman

Exciting. Amazing. And true. Here's an opportunity for you to experience real-life adventures from the very people who led a life worth writing about... who defied expectations of how one should live and what they can achieve.

In her memoir, *Tracks: A Woman's Solo Trek Across 17,000 Miles of Australian Outback* (Vintage paperback, 1995), we'll follow Robyn Davidson as she tells of her nine-month solo journey across 1,700 miles of Australian desert with only four camels and a dog. A powerful, witty and compelling book — it's one that clings to you long after you've read it. Then in *West with the Night* (North Point Press paperback, 2013), we'll learn how the adventurous childhood in Kenya of English-born Beryl Markham led to her life as a racehorse trainer and one of the first Bush Pilots — and first woman to fly non-stop across the Atlantic from Europe to America. Hemingway was quoted as saying that Markham's writings were "written so ... marvelously well, that I was completely ashamed of myself as a writer...she can write rings around all of us who consider ourselves as writers...it is really a bloody wonderful book."

Join us in reliving the real-life adventures of two authors that make you realize human beings can do anything.

#4266 Meet the Joffrey Ballet**NEW****Tuesday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (3 sessions, January 27 and February 3 on campus, and February 10 at the Auditorium Theatre at 3:15 pm)****Coordinators: Olga Weiss, Judy Widen**

Chicago's own ballet company, the Joffrey Ballet has gone from success to success, presenting world class performances throughout the year, both at the Auditorium Theatre and internationally. Because of its vibrant, innovative and unique perspective on dance, the Joffrey Ballet has become one of the top companies in the world. Our study group will offer participants the opportunity to learn the inner workings of this amazing ballet troupe. The first two sessions will take place on campus. These sessions will be conducted by representatives of the ballet company, with video clips of their repertoire, possibly accompanied by a dancer from the troupe. The last session on February 10th will be held at the Auditorium Theatre beginning at 3:15 pm in order to attend a technical dress rehearsal preceded by an introductory explanation of the ballet we are about to see, given by a representative of the company staff. This study group will provide a rare opportunity to understand and appreciate a great dance company.

#4267 Preston Sturges, Screwball Auteur**NEW****Tuesday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 20)****Coordinator: Dan Burns**

Chicago-born Preston Sturges was one of the cinema's first major writer-directors. He had produced a number of successful screenplays before becoming frustrated by the lack of control he had in translating his screenplays to finished film. Going forward he insisted on directing his own screenplays. What followed produced a golden age and a new high-water mark in the genre of films known as "screwball comedies." Film historian Peter Bogdanovich has written "Sturges in five short years (1940-1944) wrote and directed eight of the funniest, most joyfully inventive and at the same time profoundly human comedies ever produced in America, or anywhere else for that matter. The speed and sparkle of their wit, the wisecracking, typically American exuberance of their dialogue, have never been equaled." The four films we will view are *The Lady Eve* (1941), *Sullivan's Travels* (1942), *The Palm Beach Story* (1942), and *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* (1944). Note: The four films in our class are all hysterically funny. Prospective students should be prepared to laugh uncontrollably.

#4268 Should the U.S. Constitution be Amended?**NEW****Tuesday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 20)****Coordinator: Mark Chernansky**

In his book, *Six Amendments: How and Why We Should Change the Constitution* (Little, Brown and Company hardcover, 2014), the former Supreme Court Justice, John Paul Stevens, offers proposals on how the Constitution needs to change to protect our democracy and the safety and well-being of American citizens. We'll review and discuss several of his proposed amendments to the Constitution. With regards to gerrymandering, Stevens would amend the constitution to say that districts "shall be compact and composed of contiguous territory." Stevens' proposed constitution amendment on campaign finance would allow Congress and state governments to impose "reasonable limits on the amount of money that candidates for public office, or their supporters, may spend in election campaigns." We will also cover his proposed amendments related to federal vs. state jurisdiction, the death penalty and the Second Amendment. Even

though Stevens doesn't address the difficulty in amending the Constitution, we're sure to have stimulating discussions as we debate the pros and cons of his proposals.

WEDNESDAY

#4269 The Path to Happiness: Don't "Have A Nice Day" NEW

Wednesday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinators: Deborah Scott, Joan Sophie

Does "positive thinking" lead to happiness? Do self-help books help? Many of us have tried these over the years, but did they work? In this study group we will examine Oliver Burkeman's argument against these methods of self-improvement, as expressed in his recent book *The Antidote: Happiness For People Who Can't Stand Positive Thinking* (Faber and Faber paperback, 2013).

Burkeman takes us on a journey of exploration into the positive thinking movement and its impact on our ideas about happiness and how to achieve it. By introducing us to thinkers who since ancient times, have speculated about what fosters fulfillment, peace and acceptance of the human condition, Burkeman challenges our ideas of what happiness is and explores the pitfalls inherent in chasing a narrow definition of happiness. Instead of happiness being the ultimate goal, he proposes and describes other paths to a good life. Join us in learning what the stoics, Buddhists, Greek philosophers, experimental psychologists, business consultants and writers have to teach us about what is truly important to living a meaningful life.

#4270 The Requiem Mass in Music NEW

Wednesday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions, beginning January 21)

Coordinators: Laura King, Peggy DeLay

The form of the Requiem Mass has been used for centuries by a variety of different composers of symphonic music. In this study group, we will examine the form of the Mass and specifically the Requiem Mass. We will listen to varieties of recordings and examine how the form has been used by different composers through the ages. The class will attend a concert of Maestro Riccardo Muti conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on February 20th at 1:30 p.m., which features a performance of the *Mozart Requiem*, one of Mozart's most spectacular compositions. Attendance at the concert is optional. Tickets have been reserved for \$90, or you may procure your own ticket.

#4271 Stained Glass Treasures NEW

Wednesday, 10am-noon, off-site (3 sessions, beginning January 21)

Coordinators: Una Malkinson, Lorraine Levey

This study group offers an opportunity to learn first-hand about the restoration, preservation and conservation of stained glass at several of Chicago's treasured venues.

Our first session will be held at the Evanston studio of internationally noted Christopher Botti to view the processes and methods used by his team in the installation of the four sites we will visit during the following two class sessions. Next, we will visit the Tiffany Dome in the Chicago Cultural Center, the newly installed stained glass presentation in the Chicago Pedway and the

Tiffany ceiling in Macy's on State Street. In our final session we will learn the story of the unique stained glass windows in St. James Chapel, a replica of the renowned Sainte-Chappelle in Paris. Mr. Botti's collaboration and expertise has been applied to all these projects and, at this time, he is planning to share his perspectives with us during each of the three sessions. Directions to the first session will be provided in an email prior to the start of the winter session.

#4272 *The Coming Anarchy*

NEW

Wednesday, 1:30-3:30pm Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinator: Manny Kahana

With the end of the Cold War, many people felt that global peace and prosperity could be anticipated. One of today's most provocative authors, Robert Kaplan, presents a less optimistic view of this new world. *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War* (Vintage paperback, 2001) describes a world with a degrading of our environment, the fear of a more rampant spread of famine and disease, and an increasing number of nations being torn by violent wars of fierce tribalism and trenchant regionalism. He postulates how newer "democracies" such as Russia and Venezuela, as well as countries in Africa and the Middle East, are becoming bloody battlegrounds of violence, crime and deadly epidemics, and views America as a nation beset with an alarmingly high number of apathetic citizens, content to concern themselves with matters of entertainment and convenience. Much has happened in the world since the book's 2001 publication. Have Kaplan's predictions proven to be correct, incorrect, or is it still too early to decide? This class requires extensive reading, preparation, and active participation weekly.

#4273 *Curtain Up!*

Wednesday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinators: George Simon, Lynne Simon, Dixie Johnson

Curtain Up! is an active and collegial way to enjoy Chicago theater. As a group, we read aloud together with the script of a play currently performing in Chicago, taking two full class meetings to relish the lines, interpret the action, and envision the staging. After our reading of the play, we go to the theater together to see a performance on stage. The final step occurs when we return to the classroom to discuss how well the stage performance fulfilled our collective vision of the play. When available, a filmed version of the play can be shown, which then can be compared with the stage production.

For the winter session we have selected *Rapture, Blister, Burn* by Gina Gionfriddo at the Goodman Theater. Tickets for the show are purchased at group rates and, as part of the total experience; we participate in a group dinner before the show at a nearby restaurant. Because there is no film for this play, we intend to use one session to talk about theatrical criticism and theory.

#4274 *The Economist Magazine*

Wednesday, 1:30-3:30pm Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinator: Ray Rusnak

The Economist is known for its informative and thought-provoking reporting on political and economic developments around the world. Join us as we review several articles selected from the current week's issue as catalysts for informed and lively discussion on the critical topics of our

time. Subscribing to *The Economist* (student rate available) is encouraged but not a requirement — the only requirements are Internet access and a healthy interest in world affairs. Information on subscriptions, student rates and special rates are available at 1-800-456-6086 or www.economistsubscriptions.com.

#4275 Illuminating the Dark Side of the Universe

NEW

Wednesday, 1:30-3:30pm Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinators: Mary Gaul, John Donahue

Billions of theoretical particles known as WIMPs, or Weakly Interacting Massive Particles, may be passing through your body as you read these words. Based on cosmic observations there is an unseen mass pulling stars around the outskirts of galaxies. Can the discovery of WIMPs provide the answer to the nature of this mysterious mass?

Katherine Freeze, one of the world's leading researchers into the mystery of dark matter, is a professor of physics at the University of Michigan and author of *The Cosmic Cocktail: Three Parts Dark Matter* (Princeton University Press hardback, 2014). Freeze explores different ways researchers learn about dark matter, including sensitive detectors, by-products of WIMP collisions in space, and particle accelerators like Large Hadron Collider at CERN.

This study group aims to gain an understanding of the current status of the search for dark matter which makes up approximately 23% of our universe. If you want to keep pace with possible upcoming discoveries, please join us for a short but focused examination into this subject through readings, video presentations, and discussion.

#4276 From Jesus to Christ

NEW

Wednesday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinator: Les Reiter

In this study group we will examine the life and death of Jesus Christ and the men and women whose belief, conviction and martyrdom created the religion we now know as Christianity. Our guide for this examination is the PBS series *From Jesus to Christ*. Drawing upon historical evidence, the series challenges familiar assumptions and conventional notions about Christian origins. The series highlights archaeological finds that have yielded new understandings of Jesus' class and social status and offers fresh interpretations about the identity of the early Christians and their communities. Each week we will view a one-hour episode of the series followed by a discussion of that topic. The first week examines how Judaism and the Roman Empire shaped Jesus' life. The second week explores the period after the crucifixion of Jesus and traces the beginning of the Jesus Movement. The third will follow the story of the first attempts to write the life of Jesus — the Gospels. The final week chronicles how the Christian movement, as it became separate from Judaism, would face new challenges both internal and external.

THURSDAY

#4277 Exploring the Genius of Erik Larson

NEW

Thursday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 22)

Coordinators: Michael Goodkind, Margaret Van Wissink

Join us for a fascinating exploration of two books by Erik Larson that will whet your appetite for mystery and adventure.

In *Thunderstruck* (Broadway Books paperback, 2007), Erik Larson tells the interwoven stories of two men — Hawley Harvey Crippen, a very unlikely murderer, and Guglielmo Marconi, the obsessive creator of a seemingly supernatural means of communication — whose lives intersect during one of the greatest criminal chases of all time. *Thunderstruck* evokes the dynamism of those years when great shipping companies competed to build the biggest, fastest ocean liners; and scientific advances dazzled the public with visions of a world transformed.

With *In the Garden of the Beasts* (Crown paperback, 2012), Erik Larson invites us to journey to Berlin during Hitler's first year in power, 1933, in the company of a real-life father and daughter from Chicago who suddenly found themselves transported to the heart of the city. They had no conception of the harrowing days that lay ahead. At the time, nothing was certain — Hitler did not yet possess absolute power, and few outsiders expected his government to survive. The family encountered a city suffused with energy and optimism, with some of the most striking, avant-garde buildings in the world.

#4278 Rickey & Robinson

NEW

Thursday, 10am-noon, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 22)

Coordinators: Rich Dubberke, Martha Bills, Joe Hinkel

Jackie Robinson made his major league debut on April 15, 1947, bringing to an end sixty years of segregation in professional baseball. Although several people in major league baseball tried to end segregation, no one succeeded until Brooklyn Dodger's general manager, president and part owner Branch Rickey set his "great experiment" into motion. Robinson faced racism and discrimination as well as widespread resistance both inside and outside of baseball. Jackie Robinson's uniform number 42 has been retired by major league baseball, but since 2004 every major league player wears No. 42 on April 15.

Roger Kahn, the author of *Boys of Summer*, named by *Sports Illustrated* as the best baseball book of all time, has written a new book, *Rickey & Robinson; The True, Untold Story of the integration of Baseball* (Rodale hardcover, 2014) which centers around the two men chiefly responsible for the integration of baseball. We will discuss the book during the first three sessions and in the last session view and compare the 2013 Jackie Robinson movie, *42*. Join us this off-season for a fascinating insider's view of this transformational period in baseball.

#4279 1954: The Year Willie Mays and the First Generation of Black Superstars Changed Major League Baseball Forever **NEW**

Thursday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 22)

Coordinator: Hank Trenkle

In 1954, the civil rights movement was beginning to gather momentum and the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education* that segregation of the races in American public schools is unconstitutional. In this context, the baseball season of 1954 is remembered as one of the most significant for “The Grand Old Game.” In that season, the Cleveland Indians played the New York Giants in the World Series, the first to feature players of color on both teams.

This study group will read the book *1954: The Year Willie Mays and the First Generation of Black Superstars Changed Major League Baseball Forever* (Da Capo Press hardback, 2014), authored by Bill Madden, the award-winning writer for the New York Daily News. In this book, Madden provides a narrative of the 1954 season when African-American players including Larry Doby, Willie Mays, Henry Aaron, and Ernie Banks were changing the game; seven years after Jackie Robinson broke the color line. Madden further discusses the social inequities faced by black players in the early 1950s, and how they managed the slights and prejudices. Join this study group for a thought provoking review of the 1954 season.

#4280 Birds of Prey and the Role of Mothers in Alfred Hitchcock’s *Psycho* and *The Birds* **NEW**

Thursday, 1pm-4pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 22)

Instructor: Troy Parks

Renowned filmmaker Alfred Hitchcock was no stranger to the happy ending; but in his films *Psycho* and *The Birds*, the director retreats into a world of characters doomed by fate. As Norman Bates says in *Psycho*, “You know what I think? I think that we’re all in our private traps, clamped in them, and none of us can ever get out. We scratch and we claw, but only at the air, only at each other, and for all of it, we never budge an inch.” Whether the trap is a controlling mother or a Bodega Bay phone booth, these claim it is impossible to escape one’s fate.

Alfred Hitchcock was obsessed with birds. He scattered images of birds throughout all of his films. But birds and bird motifs completely consume two of these films, *Psycho* and *The Birds*. In this course, we will examine Hitchcock’s motivations and obsessions regarding avian attacks from both birds of prey like Norman Bates in *Psycho* and passive birds that attack unannounced like the gulls and ravens of *The Birds*. We will investigate the similarities in visual style, motif, character motivation, and the fatalistic atmosphere of both films as one work. We will also discuss the many roles of mothers in both films and what this may have had to do with Hitchcock’s own life.

Psycho and *The Birds* follow one another chronologically and cover a period of three years in the life of the filmmaker. Why was Hitchcock obsessed with birds? How do mother and son relationships dominate the films? What is Hitchcock’s solution for overbearing mothers and oedipal sons? What aspects allow these films to work together as a pair within his massive body of work? How is fate imbedded within the films and what does this do for the audience’s

understanding of the characters and their actions? We will answer all of these questions and more through screenings and discussions of both films over four meetings.

Troy Parks studied Cinematography at Columbia College Chicago. He constructs found footage films and installation pieces through optical printing. Troy is currently pursuing his MFA in Creative Writing at Northwestern University and working on a novel and a collection of stories.

#4281 Movies and the Cops

NEW

Thursday, 1-4pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 22)

Coordinator: Bill McGuffage

“A policeman’s lot is a sorry one.” Maybe an old adage, but the films that will be shown in this class will demonstrate its truth. Today’s unrealistic TV cop shows and cop movies offer only shoot-outs, car chases and excessive violence. Our films will show the human side of policemen, the pressures of the job and the emotional toll it takes. The films selected are *The New Centurions*, *Serpico*, *Prince of the City*, *Fort Apache*, *The Bronx*. Please know that these movies contain frequent coarse language and some violent scenes. Discussion of issues raised in each film will follow the presentation.

#4282 Washington Week

Thursday, 1:30-3:30pm, Wieboldt Hall (4 sessions beginning January 22)

Coordinators: Leonard Grossman, Lewis Cohen, Judy Widen, Arlene Shafton

Washington Week provides a lively forum for discussion of news emanating from the nation’s capital. It enables participants to research and share perspectives on activities related to all three branches of federal government. Each session includes video highlights from late night news/comedy programs and a robust discussion of the Hot Topic of the Week, an up-to-the-minute news item selected by a member of the study group. Members prepare for their weekly discussion of Hot Topics by reading newspapers and blog sites, and by listening to cable or network news analysis. We also read and discuss articles about a complex national issue, such as immigration reform or income inequality. Different perspectives are encouraged and listened to respectfully.

During the winter session we will pay close attention to the consequences of the 2014 congressional elections as the House and Senate come back into session. And we will closely monitor the docket of the Supreme Court for matters of significance. Participants are expected to be (or become) keen observers of national news through many different sources. Our discussions are lively, well-informed, and respectful of diverse points of view. You will need access to the Internet to keep up with this fast-paced study group.

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Study Group Descriptions
Evanston Campus
1840 Oak Ave. Suite 200 S, Evanston, IL 60208

MONDAY

4249 Abraham: Father of Three Religions

NEW

Monday, 9:30-11:30am, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 26)

Coordinators: Susan Longo, John Dreibelbis

Is there a way to defuse the long-standing conflict in the Middle East? Perhaps one approach lies in recognizing the commonalities of the people living in the region and those with a vested interest in that area. As the shared ancestor of Jews, Christians, and Muslims does Abraham hold the key to a possible reconciliation — a way to redefine what we think about ourselves and our links to the people who live in the Middle East, in particular Israel? Through Bruce Feiler's book, *Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths* (William Morrow paperback, 2005) we will explore the story of the man who defines faith for half the world and create a personal connection to him and to his city of Jerusalem. Through that connection we may be able to change the stereotypes we have about those living in the Middle East and the future of that area. And we will attempt to find the core values that could provide the solutions to five big issues: Jerusalem, land and the right of return, border security, fundamentalist government rule, and resources such as oil and water.

#4250 *The New Yorker*

Monday, 9:30-11:30am, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 26)

Coordinators: Hillis Howie, Nancy Anderson, Dick Whitaker

This study group is for both longtime fans of *The New Yorker* and newcomers. Each session will examine the contents of the current issue and then explore a previously assigned article in depth, led by a volunteer discussion leader who chose the article. Participants will be encouraged to become "watchers" who briefly discuss cartoons, movie reviews, covers, or some other aspect of the current issue. Join us for lively, engaging conversations. Subscription to the magazine is required.

#4251 *The Coast of Chicago*

NEW

Monday, 1-3pm, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 26)

Coordinator: Art Altman

Stuart Dybek's collection of short stories, *The Coast of Chicago* (Picador paperback, 2004), is set in mid twentieth century Chicago. The stories are sometimes realistic and gritty, but can also be very lyrical and poetic. Dybek, who was born and raised in Chicago, incorporates real neighborhoods and sites from the city, as he describes the difficulties faced by minorities coping with their lives. These humorous and entertaining stories are compelling and particularly apt for the Chicago reader. I invite you to visit a time that no longer exists. The class will cover one to four of these stories per session.

4252 Vikings on Film

Monday, 1-3pm, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 26)

Coordinators: Barbara Peterson, Laura Ann Wilber, Bill Bunn, Harold Richman

As an entertaining postscript to our fall semester's study group on the Vikings, and as a transition to the spring semester course on the history of Scandinavia from Viking times to the present, we offer four weeks of films on the Vikings. The intent of this study group is to provide supplemental information not included in the fall or spring semesters. We will watch a History Channel DVD about archeological findings related to the Vikings that presents both peaceful and violent aspects of this often misunderstood culture. Other films will feature the Normans, Viking offspring and successors, who conquered or colonized many parts of Europe. These warriors included William the Conqueror as well as those who built the Kingdom of Sicily. Their stories could not be written until after Viking times — they had no written language — but the memorized poetry and songs were preserved to later times. The fall study group is not a prerequisite for this study group and no class preparation will be necessary. We hope you will explore this fascinating part of history with us.

TUESDAY

#4253 *The Plays of William Inge*

NEW

Tuesday, 1-3pm, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 20)

Coordinators: Sue Altman, Neal Mancoff

William Inge was among the most important and memorable playwrights of the twentieth century. We will read and discuss one of his powerful plays each week beginning with *Come Back Little Sheba*, then *Picnic*, *Bus Stop*, and finally, *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, available in *William Inge Four Plays* (Grove Press paperback, 1994). The plan is to read them at home and discuss them in class, but most exciting we will read at least two acts aloud in class and discover our inner actor. A play becomes alive and personal when its words are lifted off the page by our voices. Join us and enjoy theater in a new way.

WEDNESDAY

#4254 Creative Writing Workshop

Wednesday, 9:30-11:30am, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinators: Ron Denham, Art Altman

In this workshop, participants improve their creative writing skills across various genres — poetry, creative nonfiction, essay, memoir, and fiction — through practice and by presenting their work to the group for response, encouragement, critique, and suggestions. Revisions and resubmissions will be encouraged. Longer works may be submitted in segments. Writers will enjoy the creative outlet they want while getting the opportunity to produce a finished piece they can be proud of.

#4255 Read Aloud & Discuss Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* NEW

Wednesday, 1-3pm, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 21)

Coordinator: Gordon Berry

Do you like to read poetry aloud? Or read stories aloud? Or read *plays* aloud? Shakespeare's eloquence, expressiveness, brilliant characterizations, and dramatic speeches and actions become more vivid and meaningful when read aloud. We will read *Much Ado About Nothing* — one of Shakespeare's best comedies — aloud, in stages, Act by Act, over the course of four weeks, with pauses to discuss the play. The play includes delightful repartee between Beatrice and Benedek, a more serious additional plot involving lovers Hero and Claudio, a comic character, Dogberry, a villain, Don Pedro, other characters, and in general, the theme of misunderstandings in love relationships. Before the first class, members should read Act 1 and Act 2, scenes 1 and 2 at home. At the end of the first session we will decide which acts should be read at home in preparation for the second class, and we will do likewise for the third and fourth meetings. To aid discussion, renowned Shakespeare scholar David Bevington's paperback editions provide excellent guidance to the Bard's works. Since we will be reading aloud, it's important we all have the same edition of the play, so please obtain the (inexpensive) edition of *Much Ado* edited by David Bevington and David Kastan (Bantam Classics paperback, 1988).

THURSDAY

#4256 Journeys: How They Did It

NEW

Thursday 1-3 pm, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 22)

Coordinator: Jane Roth

Have you ever wondered about how pioneers, immigrants and explorers actually made their journeys? Have you wondered how they decided what to take and how they got along under trying conditions? During this course we will study some historical journeys and one contemporary journey from the point of view of logistics. The first week we will discuss the voyage of the Mayflower with an OLLI member who is a Mayflower descendant and then move on to the Lewis & Clark expedition. The second week will be a docent-led field trip to the Swedish-American Museum to learn about Swedish immigration to the Midwest. Week three will feature a comparison of the Swedish and Mormon immigrants to the West and then move on to the Ernest Shackleton 1910 polar expedition. Week four will feature John Huston, son of an

OLLI member, who will talk about his 2009 North Pole expedition and how logistics have changed in the last 100 years. Readings will be from various websites pertinent to the topics and you may research each journey as much or as little as you wish.

#4257 *Lying*

NEW

Thursday, 1-3 pm, 1840 Oak Ave. (3 sessions beginning January 22)

Coordinator: Dick Whitaker

Lying may seem to be an easy subject. However, *Lying* (Four Elephant press hardback, 2013) by bestselling author and neuroscientist Sam Harris, tells us otherwise. In his brief but thought-provoking essay, Harris explains how humans have evolved to lie well and how we have come to excuse “white lies” as things we say to spare a friend’s discomfort. Harris argues that we can readily simplify our lives and improve social discourse by merely telling the truth in situations where others often lie. Over the course of this study group we will discuss Harris’ essay, watch an interview with the author and review several critiques of the book. Harris’ essays have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Economist*, *Newsweek* and elsewhere. Join us for a lively and stimulating discussion.

FRIDAY

#4258 *The Clash of Civilizations*

NEW

Friday 9:30-11:30am, 1840 Oak Ave. (4 sessions beginning January 23)

Coordinator: Joel Weiss

Samuel Huntington, in his classic book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (Simon & Schuster, 2011), expressed his thesis that there are seven major civilizations (Japan, Islam, U.S., Russia, Europe, China, Latin America) and that with the end of the cold war clashes may occur between civilizations especially at the boundaries where such civilizations meet or have conflicting interests. We will briefly examine his thesis but focus on the Islamic civilization and his examination of the historical, religious, and demographic factors along with the political alignments that explain why Islamic entities have been involved in a large proportion of conflicts in the last fifty years.

The author is a former professor of science and government at Harvard, has served as advisor to a number of U.S. presidents on foreign affairs, and published this book in 1998. As the book is 16 years old, it is fascinating to read Huntington’s mention of issues that could arise after 1998 and which indeed have occurred or are occurring. Our discussions will be based on a 28 page excerpt of the book. Study group members will be notified when a hardcopy of the excerpt is available for pick up in Evanston at 1840 Oak Ave.

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