

Course Descriptions, Spring Term 2015

The Cold War, Part Two: A Documentary History. No sooner had the World War II allies defeated the Third Reich and Japan than division among them led to yet another kind of war: a war of ideology, of words, threats and localized conflagration. This was the Cold War, a war that seemingly ended in 1991 with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Yet celebration in France of the 70th anniversary of D-Day brought the following comment from an article in the *New York Times*: “... wisps of the Cold War that so quickly followed [World War II] were in the air along the sacred French battlefronts, stirred by President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia’s continued flirtation with the old rhetoric, veiled threats and regional chess moves of the defunct Soviet empire. For his part, President Obama worked to brace the European alliance as if it were the 1950s.”

Jeremy Issacs, who produced the documentary *The World at War*, also produced *The Cold War*, using the same techniques and format employed in his previous work. Narrated by Kenneth Branagh, this documentary will help us review and discuss what was a formative event in our lives.

Instructor/Organizer: Larry Rand. Mondays, 10:00 AM – Noon at Noble Horizons Learning Center, April 6 – May 4 (5 sessions)

Eugene O’Neill: His Family On and Off the Stage. This class will explore O’Neill’s life as documented in the excellent biography *O’Neill* by Barbara and Arthur Gelb (Dell Publishing, 1962), now out of print but available used and in libraries. An expanded edition by the Gelbs, *O’Neill: Life with Monte Cristo* (Applause Books), dealing with his early years, is in print and in libraries. Three plays will comprise the syllabus: *Long Day’s Journey in Night*, *Moon for the Misbegotten*, and *Ah Wilderness!*. Each of these plays is drawn from his life. The plays are readily available at bookstores, on line, and at libraries. All three plays are included in the Library of America *Complete Plays of Eugene O’Neill: 1932-1943*. This is the third and final volume of the edition. Via DVD we will have guest stars at our sessions including Jason Robards, Katharine Hepburn, Laurence Olivier, Colleen Dewhurst, Mickey Rooney and many more.

Instructor/Organizer: Thomas Gruenewald. Mondays 2:00 – 4:00 PM at Geer, April 13-May 25 (7 sessions)

Genetically Engineered Foods. This course will provide an update on the Genetically Engineered (GE) crop and food landscape and include discussion about international experiences as well as federal administrative (FDA, USDA, EPA) and state legislative issues. We are very fortunate that the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) National Resources Council is conducting a review of genetically engineered food and crops at this time. The study is broad-ranging and covers not only science updates on food and crop safety, but also on environmental, social, economic and regulatory aspects. The material includes looking at the purported benefits and negative impacts of GE crops, crop characteristics such as yield differentials, reported health impacts associated with the genetically engineered crop system, increased use of pesticides and herbicides (including impacts such as chemical pesticide resistance from weed and bug "pests") and toxic ecosystem impacts spilling over into the environment from the significantly increased load of pesticides being spread over the U.S. since GE crop approvals began in the mid-90's. Besides looking at independent science studies from around the globe, we will review some of the more recent national and state legislative developments, (and leave the judicial arena of this topic for Larry Rand's classes). We will also entertain a conversation about legitimate science "missing in action" on this very timely subject matter, and if time, touch upon the "triple stacked traits" and some of the next generation crops, including recent crop approvals engineered to withstand 2,4-D herbicide spraying (which has roots in Viet Nam era defoliants).

Most class background material can be easily accessed online, including recent scientist presentations in front of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences.

Instructor/Organizer: Leila Baroody. Tuesdays, 10:00 AM – Noon at Noble Horizons Learning Center, April 14 – April 21 (2 sessions, possibly more)

Four Puccini Operas. Although Puccini (1858-1924) lacked the nobility of Verdi, few opera composers can rival him in dramatic flair and skill. He is sentimental, but it is a sentimentality to which millions are glad to respond. His sense of characterization was highly developed and his genius for orchestration enabled him to hold an audience in the palm of his hand. This will be in evidence in the four operas chosen for this semester's offering: *Manon Lescaut* (1892); *La Boheme* (1895); *Tosca* (1898); *Madame Butterfly* (1904).

Instructor/Organizer: Robert Julien. Tuesdays, 2:00 – 4:00 PM at Noble Horizons Learning Center, April 14 – May 5 (4 sessions)

Dialogues of Plato. Selected Readings and Discussion of Plato's *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Symposium* and *The Republic*. Subjects to explore will be Plato's theory of knowledge and ideas, immortality, ethics, love and justice. We will use the Dover Thrift Edition of *Plato's Six Great Dialogues*, beginning with the *Apology*.

Instructor/Organizer: Alfred Ivry. Wednesdays, 10:00 AM – Noon at Noble Horizons Learning Center, April 15 – May 13 (5 sessions)

Civil Rights: An Overview from 1619 to the Present. This course will include: 1. A perception of time and events from slavery beginnings to the *Dred Scott* ruling, with emphasis on political and economic implications. 2. The Civil War and Reconstruction. (1860-1880}, focusing on Constitutional amendments and the States Rights movement. 3. Immigration and the development of industry (1880 to 1954) and the *de facto* and *de jure* segregation and advancement of non-black groups during this period. 4. The Modern Civil Rights movement (1954-2000) and its advancement through law and protest 5. Civil Rights today, featuring a discussion of profiling, attitudes and judgment on where we are today.

Instructor/Organizer: David Bayersdorfer. Wednesdays, 2:00 – 4:00 PM at Geer, April 15 – May 13 (5 sessions)

Oil Is Where You Find It. It is *not* on Park Avenue or Rodeo Drive. It is found in places you don't want to visit. Unless you have a thing for rough seas, barren deserts, frozen wastelands, infectious diseases, mosquitos, despotic dictators or terrorists.

Prices are down by half since 2010. Experts are pontificating on their price forecasts, which range from \$20-\$120 per barrel. At least 54% of the experts will be dead wrong. Either direction will have profound economic and geopolitical consequences for producers and consumers. There will be some big winners and big losers when the dealing is done.

We'll dig deep into the economics of the energy business including renewables and non-conventional sources and new technologies. We'll cover the whole nine yards but with particular emphasis on oil and gas. You will become experts, and the one thing we'll know for sure is that *no* forecast is worth a damn.

Instructor/Organizer: Jerry Jamin. Thursdays, 10:00 AM – Noon at Geer. April 9 – April 30 (4 sessions)