

## Course Descriptions, Spring Term 2024

### **Monday: 10:00AM - Noon: The Short Story Comes Alive in 19<sup>th</sup> Century America**

The short story became enormously popular in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in America (1850 to 1920). The growth in popularity can be attributed in part to social and cultural factors, such as national expansion and transience, new outlets for publication, an increasingly literate society, and a fascination with life in different parts of America. The short story acquired a distinctively American identity in this period. Through reading and discussing a small set of stories, we'll see how romanticism gave way to realism (e.g., Hawthorne, Poe), how regionalism was used to capture readers' interests (e.g., London, Crane), and how naturalistic stories were used to show life in American society as it really was (e.g., Cather). We'll end with a brief glimpse of modernism, which came on the heels of World War 1 and marked social changes — as seen in stories by Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

In this six-week course, participants will read and discuss two stories for each session. At our first session, I will suggest some supplemental readings (e.g., articles on historical issues or aspects of short story writing).

The stories we will be readings are in the following book:

*Great American Short Stories*, edited by Paul Negri; Dover Press copyright 2002. The book can be purchased from Thrift Books, AbeBooks, Dover Publications, and Amazon (among others).

Here are the stories we will read for each session:

Week 1: Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Young Goodman Brown*; Edgar Allan Poe, *The Tell-Tale Heart*

Week 2: Bret Harte, *The Luck of Roaring Camp*; Stephen Crane, *The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky*

Week 3: Sarah Orne Jewett, *A White Heron*; Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*

Week 4: Jack London, *To Build a Fire*; Ambrose Bierce, *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*

Week 5: Kate Chopin, *A Pair of Silk Stockings*; Willa Cather, *Paul's Case*

Week 6: F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Bernice Bob's Her Hair*; Ernest Hemingway, *The Killers*

**Instructor: Joanne Carlisle, 6 sessions, April 15– May 20 at NOW at Noble Horizons**

### **Tuesday: 10:00 – Noon: Igor Stravinsky**

Can a thoroughly Russian composer who wrote piano sonatas, ballet scores, operas, symphonies, chamber music, tangos, and a Clarinet Concerto for Woody Herman and his First Herd find artistic and personal success in the Hollywood of the 1940's? He did that, and a whole lot more!

Join us as we walk through the life and music of Stravinsky with *The Great Courses'* Professor Robert Greenberg and listen to some outstanding recordings of the maestro and his works.

**Instructor: John Robinson, 8 sessions, April 16 – June 4 at Geer NOTE: New Starting Date!**

## **Tuesday: 2:00 - 4:00 PM: Can We Stop Climate Change?**

Will we believe the science? Equally important, will we act on the science? We have to understand the facts and implications first – before we can act. Carbon dioxide levels, average global temperature, and sea levels are increasing every year with serious implications for all life on the planet, particularly human civilization. The World Bank estimates that by the year 2050 over one hundred million people will be on the road looking for a new place to live.

The course will progress through the following topics:

1. The science behind climate change
2. Climate modeling to understand the impacts of various solutions, both personal and societal
3. An understanding of the role that renewable energy sources can play
4. Getting active in addressing climate change

The course is designed to reach those who are already concerned, want to learn more, and employ that learning to become more vocal/active at any level. The course is not designed for climate deniers. The final session will cover effective communication with others about climate change, and the wide range of options for how and where participants can take concrete action. It includes time to think about what kinds of action particularly interest each person, and plan for what they might like to do going forward

**Instructors: Tony and Margie Lee, 5 sessions (1-4 on Zoom, 5 in person at Geer), Tuesdays, April 9 – May 7)**

## **Thursday: 10:00AM – Noon: The Middle East – Yesterday and Today, Part Two**

Wars, civil wars, factional disputes, and religious schisms have left their stamp on the Middle East since the end of World War I. This has not always been so in the Middle East, as we learned in Part One through the use of documentary films and discussions. In Part Two, we will use the same technique to explore the history of the Middle East from 1918 to the present.

**Instructor: Larry Rand, 8 sessions, April 11 – May 30 at Noble Horizons**