

USIE Seminars - Spring 2008

Art History 88SA. Islamic Art and Architecture in Spain

Student Facilitator: Christine Lee – Faculty Mentor: Irene Biermann-McKinney

This seminar explores Spanish Islamic Art and its unique multicultural quality. Students enrolled will understand the meaning of art and its relationship to form, function, and social history, and examine the lasting legacy of Spanish Islamic art on our lives today.

Art History 88SB. Depicting Human Sacrifice in Pre-Columbian America

Student Facilitator: Sarah Stuck – Faculty Mentor: Cecelia Klein

This seminar examines the possible motives behind and nature of Pre-Columbian sacrifices through art history, in contrast to colonial explanations and modern representations, and how it impacted and shaped indigenous society. The cultures that students will look at are the Aztec, Teotihuacán, Inka, and Moche.

Education 88S. Autism and Asperger Syndrome in the Media: Through the Eyes of Individuals with Autism

Student Facilitator: Ani Khachoyan – Faculty Mentor: Connie Kasari

Students will be looking at the social, communicative, sensory, and learning world of individuals with autism by using various media sources such as books, documentaries, movies, and websites. Also debated are the various issues on autism such as statistics on autism, campaigns aiming to cure autism, and special education.

English 88S. Taking Bestsellers Seriously: Harry Potter, Ender, and Robert Langdon vs. Those Stuffed-Shirt Yale Professors

Student Facilitator: Roberta Wolfson – Faculty Mentor: Mark McGurl

Can popular bestselling novels be incorporated as legitimate contributions into the academic discourse? Is genre fiction trash or literature? This seminar answers these questions by looking at *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *The DaVinci Code*, and *Ender's Game* and examining their social, political, cultural, and religious implications.

Geography 88S. Refugee Studies: A Multimedia Exploration of the World's Refugees

Student Facilitator: Jamie Zimmerman – Faculty Mentor: Jared Diamond

Motivated by the belief that individuals' stories have the power to catalyze large-scale change, during this seminar, students will embark on a virtual journey that will introduce them to refugees around the world – from Burma and Baghdad to Darfur. Utilizing a variety of media (film, photographs, interviews), and review of international treaties, we will bring refugees' stories to life, while placing their plight in a historical and political framework. Additionally, we will examine the conflicts and environmental disasters that lead to refugee crises, including our connection to these seemingly distant events. Finally, we will look at the ways to get involved, in both refugee aid and preventing similar situations in the future.

History 88S. They're Coming for You: Horror & Science Fiction Films During the Cold War

Student Facilitator: Julian Carmona – Faculty Mentor: Jan Reiff

Films often reflect historical criticisms of the times in which they were released. This is especially the case for horror and science fiction films that came out during the Cold War. Writers and directors, whether subtly or obviously, tried to reflect the nuclear paranoid, unhinged, wartime, suburban nature of the Cold War Culture. This seminar will analyze the impact of horror films in their historical context. It will also stress that film interpretation, especially for horror and science fiction films, is ambiguous. Students will be challenged to create their own interpretations based on viewing films, readings and class discussion.

Human Complex Systems 88SA. From Sand Piles to Students, Chaos to Emergence, Simplicity to Complexity

Student Facilitator: Jacqueline de Borja – Faculty Mentor: Dario Nardi

Have you ever thought that natural phenomena, such as ant colonies, jagged coastlines, or the assembly of people, are not just created at random? Do you wonder about what happens when $2 + 2$ doesn't equal 4,

when events don't settle down into a stable equilibrium? Hopefully, you answered "I sure do!", because this is the seminar for you! We will explore the main themes of Complexity Science, and apply this new science to our own lives + surrounding world.

Human Complex Systems 88SB. The Power of One: How Individuals Become Systemic Changemakers

Student Facilitator: Evan Shulman – Faculty Mentor: Dario Nardi

Ever thought about changing the world? This seminar will equip you with some tools from Human Complex Systems to help you do just that. Read interesting readings, watch thought-provoking videos, and discuss how to best change the world- all in an engaging and enjoyable 50 minutes a week.

Military Science 88S. Simulating U.S. Crisis Decision-Making

Student Facilitator: Swati Srivastava – Faculty Mentor: Casey Miner

This seminar is designed to provide practical involvement with theories and histories of the years past to students interested in actively learning material through role-playing and discussion. You will cover major crises in U.S. diplomacy, instances where national security was put in jeopardy and a swift course of action was demanded from the American leadership. We will apply theories of decision-making during simulations of said crises to not only understand how diplomacy and leadership factor into crucial policy-making, but also how a few can alter the course of history for the many. Students will role-play as key U.S. leaders during international crises, emphasizing practical engagement with political theories and historical backgrounds.

Microbiology, Immunology & Molecular Genetics 88S. Diseases that Changed the World: How Diseases Affected the History of Civilization

Student Facilitator: Erika Villaruel – Faculty Mentor: Larry Simpson

This seminar will study epidemics that impacted the world. Diseases affected civilization, not only in decimating the population, but also in changing the structure and foundation of society. Through the eyes of both a scientist and historian, this seminar will study epidemics that impacted the world, from bubonic plague and smallpox to malaria and AIDS.

Pediatrics 88S. The Heart of Understanding: Empowered to Make a Difference

Student Facilitator: Julianne Ahdout – Faculty Mentor: Juan Alejos

This course will serve as an interactive way of learning about the heart and cardiovascular disease- the #1 killer in the United States. Students will have the opportunity to think like doctors, health advocates, and individuals affected by cardiovascular disease in order to become empowered to spread awareness of the disease in their communities.

Political Science 88S. Play Ball! : A Look at Baseball and Its Political Meanings

Student Facilitator: Anthony Stier – Faculty Mentor: Michael Lofchie

Baseball has become an American staple and constant for people and families across the country. The game and corporation, however, have many political interactions. This seminar will analyze these interactions, as well as study how current Major League Baseball came to be. We'll talk about controversial issues, look at the sport's importance, examine its social ramifications, and have a good time doing so.

Psychology 88S. The Mysterious Mind: Bridging the Gap between Mental Phenomena and Neuroscience

Student Facilitator: Sandhya Ravikumar – Faculty Mentor: Steve Lee

This seminar will investigate mental phenomena such as phantom limb pain, the placebo effect, and the control of unconscious processes. While not typically emphasized in psychology or neuroscience classes, these fascinating anomalies can potentially provide tremendous insight into the profound capacity of the mind and its relationship to the brain.

Women's Studies 88S. Friends, Sisters, and Lovers: A Perspective on Breast Cancer

Student Facilitator: Darlene Edgley – Faculty Mentor: Sharon Bays

This seminar examines the historical, political, and cultural context of breast cancer in women. We will explore the social implications for women diagnosed with breast cancer, including the underpinnings of life with cancer. This course touches on the socioeconomic status (SES) stratification of access to resources for survivorship and explores the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, SES, sexuality, sexual orientation and health care.

World Arts & Cultures 88S. Message of Resistance: Hip-Hop on the Streets Makes History for Nations

Student Facilitator: Dilyara Agisheva – Faculty Mentor: La'Tonya Rease Miles

This seminar's purpose is to understand how hip-hop shapes political resistance. As hip-hop spread with the spread of American Culture to all parts of the world, it shaped the identities of youth all over the globe, especially from those communities that are marginalized from the dominant society. As a class, we will also analyze through readings, videos, music-clips, etc., whether hip-hop can contribute to conflict resolution, with such controversial issues as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.