

LLAIC Spring 2015 Course Descriptions

Course descriptions are in alphabetical order by Course Leader (CL)

In the *Day/time* line of a course description, TBE stands for Temple Beth Elohim, and TST for Temple Shir Tikva. Courses at TBE take place on Mondays and Thursdays, at TST on Tuesdays.

Th-B2-10-TBE: Let's Go for Baroque: Five Great Painters of the Baroque Period

Course Leader: Suzanne Art

Day/time: 10-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE

Course Description:

The distinctive style of painting in 17th century Europe is known as Baroque. At its most exuberant, Baroque art involves startling color contrasts, vivid clashes of light and shadow, and intense emotion in the depiction of religious, historical, or mythological events. But it also includes realistic portraits of royalty and commoners alike, idyllic landscapes, and domestic scenes of middle-class life. Every Baroque painting features a masterful use of light and a sense of drama, whether explicit or implicit. This course will focus upon the lives and major works of the five greatest painters of the Baroque period – Caravaggio, Rubens, Velazquez, Rembrandt, and Vermeer. Each class will begin with a short introduction followed by a Powerpoint slideshow of paintings of a given artist, which members of the class will be encouraged to comment upon. There will be a balance of lecture and class discussion. Assignments will include short videos and relevant articles which are available online, as well as a review of paintings viewed in class. Preparation time will be about one hour.

Books and other resources:

Videos on YouTube (mostly Smarthistory – art history division of Kahn Academy); other videos focusing upon specific painters or works of art available online.

Biography:

I have had a lifelong love of art and history. I received 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, and I have written a series of 12 history/art books for middle school and secondary school students. I have traveled frequently in Europe, spending much of the time in art museums. I have taught two art courses (Painters of the Italian Renaissance and Let's Go for Baroque) for three terms at BOLLI.

Th-C3-10-TBE: Our Threatened Environment: Protecting and Restoring it**Course Leader: Robert Berlin****Day/Time:** 10-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE**Course Description:**

A major issue in the debate over energy and environmental policy is the management and disposal of hazardous and radioactive materials. A Massachusetts Superfund site will provide the basis for examining this issue. We will follow the progression of the cleanup process at this site from its early history of contamination to the present, while integrating the roles of government, industry, and the public at relevant points in the process. The questions of environmental impacts, health and safety, as well as community participation in the decision-making process on a local and national basis associated with waste handling and site remediation, will be related to the issues at our selected site. The controversies created by disposal and remedial approaches and resultant public resistance will be discussed. We will then expand our discussion to the programs at other contaminated sites, such as Love Canal, Woburn, Chernobyl, etc., considering the success in restoring these locations for beneficial use, such as "brownfields." We will look at the significant environmental issues created by the new technologies of fracking, shale oil recovery, geothermal energy and the like. Assignments will be readings from articles and reports found on various websites. About 1-1.5 hours of readings per week (25-30 pages) will be required. The material does not require prior technical knowledge, and has been offered to audiences with diverse backgrounds.

Computer use will be required to access the reading material on the referenced websites.

Biography:

I have a BA in Mechanical Engineering from City College of New York, Masters degrees in Engineering Science and Management, and a Doctorate in Public Health from Columbia University. I worked in various aspects of the nuclear field for over 50 years, the last 20 as a consultant in the environmental assessment and remediation of sites contaminated with radioactive and chemical wastes. This course was developed as an outgrowth of that experience at the request of the Columbia faculty. My teaching career was as an engineering professor at Manhattan College for 15 years, in the Columbia Graduate School of Public Health, and to industrial and lay audiences. I am a licensed professional engineer, reactor operator, and health physicist and coauthored *Radioactive Waste Management* in 1988.

Mo-C3-5b-TBE: An Anthropologist on Mars: Clinical Novels from Oliver Sacks**Course Leader: MaryAnn Byrnes****Day/Time:** 5-week course starting Monday, March 30, at TBE

Course Description:

How does a painter adjust to a life without colors? What about a gifted surgeon who develops Tourette's syndrome? Imagine finding it easier to understand the emotions of animals than people. Each time Dr. Oliver Sacks shares the story of one of these fascinating people, I relish their creativity and resilience. Professor of Neurology and Psychiatry at Columbia University, Dr. Sacks discusses the neurological conditions related to these disorders, but focuses on the people and how they view the world and live their lives. This course will profile a few of Oliver Sacks' amazing adaptable people.

The sessions will be highly interactive, focused on the Clinical Novel of that day. In small and large groups, participants will discuss reactions to the person who is the focus of the day's profile as well as to perplexing questions that I will pose. While individual conditions will be discussed, the focus will be on adaptability and resilience. No prior knowledge of the topic is required, but participants are encouraged to contribute reflections, questions, and additional information on the week's Clinical Novel Interviewee.

Readings for the class will be approximately 50 pages per week, including a reading for the first class. There will be no requirement for oral presentations, but high levels of on-topic contributions are desired and will be impossible to resist.

Books and other resources:

Sacks, Oliver. (1996). *An Anthropologist on Mars: Seven Paradoxical Tales*. Vintage Press. ISBN-10: 0679756973 - Any edition will do. Amazon Price: \$11.84

Biography:

Everyone adapts to life changes, some more easily than others. I have always been fascinated by the creativity with which individuals address challenges in their lives. As a teacher, special education administrator, and educational consultant, I have collaborated with others about hundreds of unusual learners. My undergraduate degree is from the University of Chicago, my masters (in Learning Disabilities) from Northwestern University, and my doctorate (in Learning Theory) from Rutgers University: all emphasized variations in human learning. In addition to the richness of adult learning, I enjoy baking bread, walking (perhaps because of the energy of the bread and necessary because of it), and Reading for the Blind (now known as Learning Ally). This is my fourth year leading and taking adult learning courses; I especially enjoy those that broaden my knowledge and perspective.

Mo-A3-10-TBE: A Musical Journey**Course Leader: Arthur Gerstenfeld**

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Monday, March 2, at TBE. **Note that this course will start one week after the semester begins.**

Course Description:

This course is based on the premise that the more we know about music, the more we will enjoy music. In this course we will be re-introduced to "old friends" (music we may not have heard for a while), and some "new friends." We will start with some music from the U.S. (New York and New Orleans), then go to Vienna, Germany, Russia, London, Africa, Israel, South America. Then, having circled the world, we will return to the U.S. The music and composers we will listen to and discuss will start with the elements of jazz (Scott Joplin), with some classical masters in the middle. The course will include listening to and discussing some of our greatest Jewish composers such as George Gershwin and Aaron Copland, as well as performers such as Itzhak Perlman, Leonard Bernstein and Benny Goodman.

We want to learn from each other. Before each class I will expect that you will have read a bit about the subject matter for that day so that you will be prepared to discuss the composer or the musical piece(s) assigned for that week.

Biography:

I received my Masters and Ph.D. from MIT and have been a professor for most of my life at Boston University, and now at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI). I am about to retire, and although my main teaching area has been in Operations Management, my most recent interest is in the field of music. I gave a course last year called "Music Technology," and this year I am giving an ESL course entitled "Learning Language through Music."

Mo-B2-5a-TBE: Food, Glorious Food!***Course Leader: Sandy Grasfield***

Day/Time: 5-week course starting Monday, Feb. 23, at TBE

Course Description:

We need food to live, of course, but it is so much more to us. It is one of the great pleasures of life, while also being an enemy or obsession to many. There are innumerable aspects to the vast subject of food. In this course, I will present five discrete topics, one each week, linked to new and recent books. At the beginning of each class, I will lecture on the content of the book(s) I read for that week, so that the class will have a foundation of material, augmented by their assigned articles, to inform our class discussion of the issues.

Among the topics we will explore are: how the food manufacturers inject extra salt, fat and sugar into our processed food supply to manipulate our physical and psychological reactions to it; the history of food purity including fascinating tales of skullduggery and fraud; how the history of the world could be told in terms of six beverages which are beer, wine, spirits, coffee, tea and Coca-Cola; Michael Pollan's philosophy of food, culled from three of his books; how the very language used in menu descriptors influences our choices and also illuminates global cross-cultural links and history.

While food history and politics are serious subjects, with significant ramifications for us and our well-being, they are also intriguing, astounding and highly entertaining.

Computer use is necessary, because I will be sending out each week via email recent articles that are relevant to the topic for the week. These will constitute the reading assignments for the class. There will be no books to read. The time necessary to read the article(s) of the week will not exceed an hour.

Biography:

I have found food and all its various facets to be fascinating, stimulating and often surprising. It's been a passion of mine to read all I can about the subject. Some years ago, I taught two semesters of a comprehensive "History and Politics of Food" course at another venue. This course will be all new material.

Mo-A2-10-TBE: Homer Simpson --- Mathematician?!

Course Leader: Joel Kamer

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Monday, Feb. 23, at TBE

Course Description:

How do comedy and math mix? The author of our text informs us how the writers of the animated TV show *The Simpsons* often embed mathematical references. As the show is meant to be fun, our class will use the math references as a springboard to investigate the concepts in a lighthearted manner. We will learn more about the math tucked into Homer's, Marge's, Bart's, or Lisa's conversations. We will not do any mathematical proofs, but we will study mathematical jokes! Neither a degree in mathematics nor being an aficionado of the Simpsons show is required – just bring a willingness to believe (some) math; some, such as narcissistic and vampire numbers, can be amusing.

The class will be part lecture and part discussion. Each week a class member will present a voluntary, short presentation on the life of one of the mathematicians mentioned in our text. The class preparation time should average about 2-3 hours each week, comprising the reading and homework assignment.

Books and other resources:

Simon Singh, *The Simpsons and Their Mathematical Secrets*, Bloomsbury, 2013; ISBN 978-1-62040-277

Biography:

I dabbled in mathematics by getting a Bachelor's and Master's degree in the subject, but then decided to apply what I learned by earning a Master's degree in Actuarial Science and becoming a Fellow of the Society of Actuaries. I like to watch all types of cartoons, not just *The Simpsons*. I believe math can be fun (especially when there are no tests), and would like to share that with others.

Mo-C3-5a-TBE: Two Grandes Dames of Short Fiction

Course Leader: Helen Kolsky

Day/Time: 5-week course starting Monday, Feb. 23, at TBE

Course Description:

Short fiction is no longer thought of as second best to novels. The best of this genre is now akin to the province of good poetry: appreciated by an ever-growing, sophisticated, discerning audience. .. and Alice Munro, recent winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, has long been recognized as one of the best practitioners of this genre. Now, increasingly compared to Munro is Edith Pearlman, a longtime cult favorite and winner of literary prizes who is gaining widespread recognition. What a feast to delve into some works by these two women of a 'certain age'.

This will be a totally directed-discussion class in which the members are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the assigned texts each session. They will be provided with points-to-ponder or study guide questions which will assist them in focusing their reading/understanding so that they can participate meaningfully in the discussion. Members will also be expected to have familiarized themselves with the author's biographical information for a broader understanding of her work.

Related materials... articles, reviews, etc., about the authors... will be welcome; formal presentations or reports will not have a place in this short story group. We devote our time, as much as possible, to the delights within the texts and our insights into these.

The assigned readings and questions will require approximately 2 – 3 hours a week.

Books and other resources:

Pearlman, Edith; *Binocular Vision*, Lookout Books, 2011

Munro, Alice; stories from two different collections will be supplied in hard copies by the CL

Biography:

Helen Kolsky holds a B.A. In English and American Literature from Brandeis University and an M.A. from The New School University in NYC. She was a copywriter and art buyer in several advertising agencies in New York before becoming a high school English teacher and administrator in the NYC school system, eventually creating and directing a career academy within the framework of the larger school. After retiring, she taught English on the community college level before returning to her native Massachusetts in 2004.

Helen has lead several study groups in literature at Temple Israel Lifelong Learning Institute and, most recently, at BOLLI.

Mo-B2-5b-TBE: Knishes and Empanadas: Jewish Stories from Latin America**Course Leader: Gene Kupferschmid****Day/Time:** 5-week course starting Monday, March 30, at TBE**Course Description:**

Most of the work of writers such as Philip Roth, Saul Bellow, Cynthia Ozick and Bernard Malamud encompasses the American Jewish experience, just as the work of some Latin American writers also tells of the Jewish experience, whether the writers themselves are Jewish or not. Most of their themes are familiar ones: immigration, assimilation, aspirations, family ties and fissures, and the roles of women. But a few will be surprisingly different.

No prior knowledge is needed. All materials other than the assigned text (two novellas) will be provided as a course pack. Each session will combine lecture and discussion. No prior knowledge is needed. All materials, other than the assigned texts, will be provided as a course pack or are available on the Net. Each session will combine lecture and discussion.

Books and other resources:

- *Sun Inventions / Perfumes of Carthage* by Teresa Porzecanski. University of New Mexico Press, 2000. ISBN 0-8263-2181-x
- *The House of Memory*, edited by Marjorie Agosín; 1999, Feminist Press at the City University of New York, ISBN 1-55861-209-2.

Biography:

I taught for 30 years in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Boston College during which time I wrote 14 Spanish textbooks and was awarded two NEH fellowships. My primary field of interest is the language, literature and culture of Latin America. I have also lived in Argentina and Mexico.

Th-A3-5b-TBE: The Blues: Origins and Influences**Course Leader: Bonnie Lass****Day/Time:** 5-week course starting Thursday, April 2, at TBE**Course Description:**

This course will provide an introduction to the history of the blues from its roots in Africa and slavery, to its recognition as a fundamental American music, and its development into jazz, gospel, folk, soul, rock and roll, and rap/hip hop. Looking at and listening to famous and/or seminal performers via videos, CDs and DVDs and learning about their historical and cultural influences will comprise class time and

some preparation time. Class members may pursue their favorite blues or blues-influenced style or musician for short presentations to the group. Preparation time will be no more than two hours per week.

Books and other resources (These inform the course and will be recommended, but not required):

- Charters, Ann and Samuel: *Blues Faces: A Portrait of the Blues*, David Godine, 2000.
- Cook, Bruce: *Listen to the Blues*, De Capo Press, 1995.
- Davis, Francis: *The History of the Blues: the Roots, the Music, the People*, De Capo Press, 2003
- Evans, David: *The NPR Curious Listener's Guide to Blues*, Penguin, 2003
- Murray, Albert: *Stomping the Blues*. De Capo Press, 2000.

Biography:

I retired in 2012 from a career in educational publishing and teaching. During the fall term at LLAIC, I was CL for Contemporary Literary Memoir and had a wonderful time! This spring term I'll be building on my experience co-teaching Blues Music at BOLLI and my lifelong passion for contemporary popular music to present this course.

Tu-A3-10-TST: My Kingdom for a Horse

Course Leader: Mary Mansfield

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Tuesday, Feb. 24, at TST

Course Description:

Ever since the beginning of human history, the horse has been a creature of almost mythical fascination for humankind. Horses helped to shape the way we lived. They have aided us in building great civilizations, and they have been almost mystical healers. They have been prominent subjects in the imaginations of painters, sculptors, and story tellers. We are fascinated by their beauty in the wild and their magnificent presence in the domestic arena: from the battlefield to the show ring. Although we no longer "need" these animals to help us in our work and productivity, they are still a very important part of almost every culture in our modern world. Why is this? In this course we will explore humankind's dependence, intrigue, passion, and yes, need for the horse. We might not be able to find a definitive answer, but the goal is to have fun trying.

The primary format of the course will be facilitated discussion of the readings and videos presented during class time. Although not required, there may be occasional brief, voluntary presentations by class members.

Books:

- Scanlan, Lawrence. *Wild About Horses*. New York: Perennial, 2001. Sewell, Anna.
- *Black Beauty*. New York: Signet Classics (Penguin), 2011 Edition. ISBN: 978-0-451-53174-2.
- Hillenbrand, Laura. *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*. New York: Ballantine, 2001.
- Morpurgo, Michael. *War Horse*. New York: Scholastic, 2010.
- Letts, Elizabeth. *The Eighty-Dollar Champion*. New York: Ballantine, 2012.

Biography:

I was born loving horses. As a youngster, I played with stuffed horses, not dolls. I began taking riding lessons when I was seven, but had to stop when my family moved to New York City. The lessons stopped, but not my passion for riding. When my older daughter asked for riding lessons, I joined her, and the rest, as they say, is history. At thirty-nine, I bought my first horse and have been taking lessons ever since, first in eventing, and then in the beautiful, precise discipline of dressage. In my last career, finding schools for children with emotional and learning problems, I came to appreciate the extraordinary value of therapeutic riding—now one of my life's passions. I became an officer of the Bear Spot Foundation, a therapeutic riding center at Bear Spot Farm in Concord, where I keep my horse

I have been a life-long educator: an elementary school teacher, a reading teacher, a reading consultant, a college admissions officer, and a school placement consultant. I have extensive experience in facilitating and training. With my husband Richard, I have developed and co-taught a course on problems in American education.

Tu-A1-10-TST: Creativity and Innovation

Course Leader: Richard Mansfield

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Tuesday, Feb. 24, at TST

Course Description:

Creativity is responsible for the greatest human accomplishments and the finest expressions of culture. Innovation plays a key role in our economy. At an individual level, creativity can be one of the greatest sources of personal accomplishment and satisfaction.

What enables some individuals to produce highly creative works—major advances in the sciences and the arts, and technological breakthroughs? What are the roles of thinking processes, early and later life experiences, and the milieu in which people are trained and work? Are there different kinds of creativity, with different antecedents? What behaviors and skills characterize creative people? To what extent are all of us capable of creativity in our work and our everyday lives? How do teams work together to develop innovations? What role do brain processes play in creative thinking? How can we foster these processes in ourselves? What activities can we

practice to enhance our own creativity? These are some of the questions that will be explored in this course.

Although there will be occasional brief presentations, the primary format of the class will be facilitated discussion of readings and of participants' experience with creative thinking exercises.

Participants will be strongly encouraged (but not required) to prepare and deliver a 10-minute presentation on a creative individual or team or on some aspect of creativity or innovation. Participants should plan on spending about 2 hours per week on required readings plus a half hour on trying out exercises developed to promote creative thinking.

Books:

- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Creativity: The Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics. 1997. Available for \$14.04 at Amazon.com
- Sawyer, Keith. *Group Genius: The Creative Power of Collaboration*. New York: Basic Books, 2007. Available at Amazon.com for \$10.83.
- Carson, Shelley. *Your Creative Brain*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010. Available at Amazon.com for \$11.48.

Biography:

After completing an Ed.D. in Human Development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, I spent a decade on the faculty of Temple University teaching human development and statistics. I also did research on scientific creativity and co-authored a book on this topic. In my second career, as a consultant, starting in 1981, I learned, applied and refined a research approach for studying superior performers in a variety of jobs to identify the skills, traits and behaviors responsible for their effectiveness. In my consulting work for the last 25 years, I have developed many innovations in the assessment of job requirements, leadership competencies, and organizational climate and culture. With my wife Mary, I have developed and taught a course on problems in American education – including the challenge of how design of curriculum and educational processes foster creativity.

Mo-C1-10-TBE: Comparative Religion: God in Different Guises

Course Leader: Rabbi Robert Orkand

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Monday, Feb. 23, at TBE

Course Description:

Throughout history, human beings have sought to understand their world. They have done so in a variety of ways: philosophy, scientific practice and, perhaps the most common, religion. Religion serves a variety of psychological, emotional, personal and social needs, but each religion goes about it in a different way.

What, exactly, is religion? And why does one religious tradition often differ so markedly from another, even when you might not expect it to?

Why, for example, are the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—despite their common source—often so different? And what kinds of factors separate the beliefs of a Hindu or Buddhist not only from those held by Jews, Christians, or Muslims, or by each other, but also from others who identify themselves as Hindus or Buddhists?

The 10 sessions of *Comparative Religion* will offer participants an opportunity to gain a solid grasp of the key ideas of religion itself—the issues that repeatedly surface when one looks at any faith's beliefs, practices, and organization. Using five major religions—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism—as illustrations of how religions can address the same core issues in parallel and different ways, Rabbi Orkand will lead the class in an exploration of religion's complex and multidimensional nature.

No prior knowledge is needed. All materials will be provided. Each session will combine lecture, audio-visual presentations, and discussion.

Biography:

Rabbi Robert Orkand recently retired after 40 years in the pulpit rabbinate, serving congregations in Florida, Illinois, and Connecticut. During his career he taught a variety of topics related to religion, but his favorite was, and remains, Comparative Religion, believing that only through knowledge will people come to understand and accept both that which unites us and that which divides us.

Rabbi Orkand received his B.A. degree from California State University, Northridge, his M.A., M.H.L., and Ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. In 1998 he was awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree (honorary) from HUC-JIR.

Tu-C1-10-TST: A Moviegoer Looks at the (Second) Red Scare 1947-1960 and its Effect on American Political and Cultural Life

Course Leader: Bob Palter

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Tuesday, Feb. 24, at TST (2 blocks)

Course Description:

The (Second) Red Scare refers to the anti-communist fanaticism and paranoia that flourished in the United States between 1947 and 1960, representing the notion that "Reds" (Communists) were an overwhelming present danger to the United States and its citizens. In this course the class will examine through readings, film, and discussion: America's historical antipathy towards and rejection of Communism, the origins of the Cold War, HUAC, The Hollywood Blacklist, McCarthyism, and the political repression that pervaded this country and affected so many lives during this post war era. A combination of documentary as well as commercial films will be

used to amplify and emphasize the materials covered in the readings and class discussions.

During the first thirty minutes of class, questions raised by the reading assignment will be discussed by the class. Class members will be expected to have done the reading assignment and to participate in the class discussion. Next, that day's film will be shown. This will take approximately two hours, with a ten minute break after one hour and thirty minutes. The remaining class time will be devoted to a discussion of the film and its relevance to the reading and prior discussion.

The course is designed for the serious student who is interested in examining an unpleasant period of American history that has a continuing impact in today's world.

The texts will be supplemented by YouTube clips and articles transmitted between class sessions. Therefore computer access is required by every class member as will access to and familiarity with "Word" and "Acrobat Reader".

Estimated reading and preparation time: up to 3 hours per week.

Books and other resources:

- Morgan, Ted, *REDS: McCarthyism in Twentieth Century America*. N.Y.: Random House, 2004. Available new at amazon.com for about \$14 hardcover or \$8 paperback.
- Doherty, Thomas, *Cold War, Cool Medium: Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003. Available at amazon.com for about \$24.

Used copies of both texts are available at amazon.com and at the following sites: abebooks.com (American Book Exchange), bookfinder.com, and betterworldbooks.com.

Biography:

Bob Palter holds academic degrees from M.I.T., The Harvard Business School and lastly UMass Boston where he concentrated on Twentieth American History. Bob has led courses at LLARC, HILR and BOLLI.

He has been fascinated by that period in American history that started with the Great Depression and ended with the end of the Cold War and thinks that this period still has great significance in the lives that we lead today.

Mo-B3-10-TBE: Truth Be Told: Remarkable Non-Fiction

Course Leader: Alorie Parkhill

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Monday, Feb. 23, at TBE

Course Description:

Non-fiction writing can be every bit as challenging, creative and inspiring as fiction, employing drama, magic, vivid imagery and great depth. Yet readers sometimes relegate the form to a lesser status. All the tools of fiction are at the author's disposal. Honesty and a natural style, "without artifice or pomposity," as Joseph Epstein put it, must shape powerful non-fiction. He continued that a writer fascinates "by telling readers things they already know in their hearts but have never been able to formulate for themselves...and by telling them things they do not know and perhaps have never even imagined."

In this class we will consider a range of excellent writers in several fields: nature, science, spirituality, place, and human experience. We will read and discuss authors like Joan Didion, James Baldwin, John McPhee, Annie Dillard, Wendell Berry, Loren Eiseley, Lewis Thomas, Alan Lightman, E.B. White, and others. Class members will be encouraged to give brief backgrounds of the authors. Everyone will receive packets of readings, and also have the texts of Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and Taylor's *My Stroke of Insight*. We will discuss the assignments as a class and in groups. Careful reading and thought should take approximately two hours a week.

Books and other resources:

- *My Stroke of Insight/ A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey*, by Jill Bolte Taylor (A Plume Book, 2009)

Biography:

I am a teacher by trade and passion. I began early writing and directing plays for children. My main teaching career took place at The Cambridge School of Weston over more than 40 years. I taught English as well as courses in myth and religion. Recently, I have taught a few short classes again and was delighted to discover that I could still work with teens in a meaningful way. After retirement, I continued teaching in various lifelong learning centers (Buddhism, myths and Toni Morrison). I became one of the founders of LLAIC where I continue to relish teaching. I rediscovered my excitement about the essay while planning a class in exposition and decided that I would very much enjoy sharing it with my peers.

Tu-A2-5a-TST: The Barber of Seville: A Guided Tour

Course Leader: Philip Radoff

Day/Time: 5-week course starting Tuesday, March 10 and ending April 7, at TST.
Note that this course will start two weeks after the semester begins.

Course Description:

The trilogy of Figaro plays by the French writer, Beaumarchais, has given rise to several operas. We will read the first of the Figaro plays, *The Barber of Seville*, and study Rossini's operatic adaptation of this play. The course will be primarily of the lecture-demonstration variety, with written questions provided in advance of each

session to guide the students' reading and listening. Students will need to have access to a translation of the play, to a recording of the opera, and, ideally, to the accompanying libretto in translation. All of these materials are readily available from on-line vendors and the Minuteman library system. Class members should be prepared to spend about two hours per week on the course. Since the plot develops from week to week, regular attendance is important to get the full impact of the play and the opera. I do not anticipate requiring any student reports, but if someone is keenly interested in a particular topic, I'll consider allowing a short presentation. I will reserve the first few minutes of each session for questions and brief comments.

Books and other resources:

Beaumarachais, *The Barber of Seville and The Marriage of Figaro*. There is a Penguin classic edition available on-line among other inexpensive editions in both Kindle and paperback versions.

Any audio or video recording of Rossini's opera will do. Videos typically come without libretti, but separate libretti are readily available for each of these operas. (A libretto is optional, not required.) DVDs and libretti, new and used, are available from on-line book sellers in relatively inexpensive editions.

Biography:

I have a Ph.D in physics and worked as a physicist for a few years before switching to law. I held various legal positions in private practice, with the US Government, and as inside corporate counsel before retiring in 2004 from Raytheon Company.

I am a current LLAIC member and presented a ten-week course in the Fall. I have also been a member of BALI/BOLLI for about ten years and a BOLLI SGL since 2006. I have led several opera courses at BOLLI and given opera talks as part of BOLLI's Enhancement program and at local libraries.

Th-A3-5a-TBE: Numbers in the News: Studies, Polls and other Figures

Course Leader: Peter Schmidt

Day/Time: 5-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE

Course Description:

The media inundate and assault us with numbers, with the results of medical studies, with polls and their margins of error, with politicians engaging in statistical mud-wrestling, as well as with lotteries and casinos angling for your money. The data are sometimes incomplete or difficult to understand, even misleading, or presented in puzzling graphs and charts.

This course is aimed at the typical newspaper reader trying to make sense of this material. It will seek to provide some context and background so that the numbers and graphs in the media become more comprehensible, and also to encourage a healthy skepticism toward accompanying claims. As we consider representative examples, we will look into subjects such as risk and false rates in medical tests and

studies, bias and significance in polling, lottery odds, the Monte Hall problem, and more.

Numbers imply the use of math, but instead we'll lean heavily on plausibility arguments throughout. To enjoy and profit from the course, you should have some level of comfort with quantities such as averages and percentages, and with the graphical display of information, along with curiosity and a willingness to stretch your quantitative mind.

We will often use materials from newspapers and magazines, so there should be lively discussion along with Course Leader presentation. You'll be encouraged to bring in recent articles of interest for class analysis and critique.

Preparation time will be 1-2 hours per class. Computer facility will be required for email communication and internet searches.

Books and other resources:

- *Flaws and Fallacies in Statistical Thinking*, Stephen K. Campbell. Dover, 2004 (1974). ISBN 0-486-43598-9
- *A Mathematician Reads the Newspaper*, John Allen Paulos. Anchor Books, 2013. ISBN 0-465-08999-2

Biography:

My professional background is that of a physicist and engineer, giving me some practical knowledge of data analysis and presentation, as well as a strong interest in making numerical information accessible to a general audience. In my years at BOLLI and now at LLAIC, I've given a number of courses in subjects both scientific and otherwise, including "Five Physicists Who Changed the World View" last semester.

Mo-C2-10-TBE: Winston Churchill and His "Finest Hours."

Course Leader: Marc Schwarz

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Monday, Feb. 23, at TBE

Course Description:

In 1940 Prime Minister Winston Churchill handed Hitler his first defeat in the Battle of Britain and set the stage for the fall of Nazism. For most of his career Churchill was considered an unreliable and erratic figure, best known for his failures and mistakes. Yet, in 1940 he proved he was the man for job, saying all his previous life had been a preparation for this moment. Galvanizing the nation through his oratory and actions, he won a victory that few thought possible. This study group will evaluate his role and the reasons for his success. I will lecture on occasion, show videos and hope to have vigorous discussions. 1-2 hours of preparation.

Books and other resources:

- John Keegan, *Churchill: A Life* (Penguin, 2007)
- Richard Overy, *The Battle of Britain: Myth and Reality* (Norton, 2002)
- Andrew Roberts, *Hitler and Churchill: A Study in Leadership* (Orion, 2004)

Biography:

I received a BA from Bates college, an MAT from Harvard and a Ph.D. from UCLA. I taught for almost forty years in the history department at UNH. I have also led groups at BOLLI, REGIS AND LLAIC.

Th-B3-10-TBE: Marranos, Conversos, Crypto-Jews: Surviving the Inquisition**Course Leader: Sanford (Sandy) Sherizen**

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE

Course Description:

During the Inquisition, Jews (and Muslims) were given a life-defining choice: convert to Catholicism or leave the country. Some (many?) accepted conversion and adopted their new religion. Some (many?) of these converts kept their identity as Jews, secretly practicing Judaism while outwardly being observing Catholics. Today, a number of their offspring have discovered their background and, in places such as New Mexico, are exploring their mixed identities. This course will explore the history of these phenomena, review central documents, see how people survived the Inquisition, and examine their important impact on the Americas, Europe and North Africa. Converso literature, art, music and other cultural elements will be given.

The class will be interactive, each starting with a summary of the week's topics and an outline of the major issues to be explored. My expectations are that all class members will participate by doing the readings, being part of the discussions and, if they wish, presenting a 10 minute discussion on a topic related to our subject matter. There are no prerequisites, and everyone is welcomed, regardless of educational background or religion.

Books and other resources:

Links to article assignments will be distributed at the beginning of the 10 weeks. Excerpts from leading materials will be provided. Several biographies and articles on specific aspects of Conversos will be suggested.

Biography:

Dr. Sanford Sherizen is a retired cyber security consultant with a background as a sociologist and criminologist. He has over 30 years of experience consulting on

computer crime prevention and privacy protection.

Sherizen has consulted as well as conducted seminars and executive briefings for senior level managers throughout the United States as well as internationally. He served on the Board of Directors of RSA Security, now a division of EMC Corporation and has also served as an independent expert witness.

He has been a professor at a number of universities where he concentrated on crime control, social consequences of technology and the human "peopleware" aspects of cyber crimes.

Outside of his professional activities, he tutors immigrants in English and is a past president of his synagogue in Sudbury. He is a member of the Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects Protections Committee) at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital. As a member of the Brandeis University Lifelong Learning Program (BOLLI), he is a Study Group Leader for courses on privacy and other social issues.

Mo-A1-10-TBE: Four Great Ladies of Film - Katharine Hepburn, Elizabeth Taylor, Audrey Hepburn, and Meryl Streep
Course Leader: Irwin Silver

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Monday, Feb. 23, at TBE (2 blocks)

Course Description:

Katharine Hepburn, Liz Taylor, Audrey Hepburn, and Meryl Streep are considered four of the greatest actresses of all time. The career of all four spans over 80 years of film, going back to 1932. Collectively they have been widely acclaimed by the film industry, winning or being nominated for Academy Awards over 40 times. They have worked with some of the greatest actors, such as Bogart, Tracy, Peck, Newman and Eastwood. Many directors picked these women as their first choice for their pictures. They all have a wide range of acting styles, from drama to comedy and some in musicals, in which they have excelled. I will show 9-10 movies, including dramas, comedies and musicals, including *The African Queen*, *On Golden Pond*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *Doubt*. Discussion will follow each film.

Books and other resources:

Biography:

I am a retired First Vice president from a National Brokerage firm, and I was an Adjunct Professor for 15 years at Northeastern University. I love film and have taught several classes on the subject.

Th-C2-10-TBE: Benjamin Franklin: First American**Course Leader: Marvin Snider and Steven Ward****Day/Time:** 10-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE**Course Description:**

The American Revolution wouldn't have happened as it did without Benjamin Franklin. He utilized his personal charisma in difficult diplomatic efforts to overcome daunting obstacles in order to achieve France's military and financial support for Washington's military campaigns. Franklin was also instrumental in drafting the four required documents needed to achieve American independence: The Declaration of Independence, The U.S. Constitution, and the Treaties with Britain and France. Franklin was the singular signee of all four of these documents. He also spent fifteen years in England and France in pursuit of American goals.

This brilliant man excelled in his many careers: printer, journalist, business man, legislator, diplomat and widely renowned scientist with no formal training. He was the ultimate multi-tasker when his scientific interests overlapped with his other careers. His scientific achievements earned honorary acclaim and world renown. Success in his professional world, however, did not always extend to his family life. He treated his wife benevolently but like a valued employee. He also struggled in his relationship with his loyalist son. He was especially cavalier in appreciating how his fifteen years in France impacted his family.

Franklin remained an ardent loyalist only until it became clear that his repeated efforts to gain reconciliation for the Colonies would not happen, after which his focus turned into ardent support for independence.

Throughout his life Franklin's beliefs about frugality, industry, and his abhorrence of arbitrary authority and entitlement through birth dominated his social perspective. He valued concern for community interest that was tempered by an insistence that it not encourage dependence and thus undermine industry.

Emphasis will be on maximizing class discussion. Members will be expected to have 2- 3 hours per week in preparation. Limited presentations will be made by the CL to provide maximum opportunity for class discussion.

Books and other resources:

Benjamin Franklin: An American Life, Walter Isaacson, Simon & Shuster Paperbacks, 2004

Biography:

Marvin has a PhD in psychology and has practiced both as a clinician and an organizational consultant. Most of his professional life involved working with the complexity and dynamics of family systems and organizations. He has led many courses on diverse topics at the Harvard lifelong learning program (HILR) that included courses on International Hot Spots, Innovators of Political Thought, Cults, Elections, George Washington and Lincoln. Preparation for these courses stimulated

my interest in appreciating the complexity of circumstances that led to the formation and evolution of our country over the first seven presidents.

Steven Ward has an MA and a BA in History and has spent the past 42 years teaching history on the secondary school level, mostly at The Roxbury Latin School in West Roxbury. He has taught courses in Western Civilization as well as A.P. U.S. History, along with electives such as: Modern American History, the American Revolution, the American Civil War, etc. Steve has also coached wrestling, baseball and football on the high school level.

Th-A2-10-TBE: A Look at the American Economy by Sectors

Course Leader: Harriet Janel-Starrett

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE

Course Description:

This course will examine the American economy by researching and discussing some of the key sectors, including: retail businesses; (the mall versus the mall, the superstore); basic industries (steel, chemicals), energy, their impact on other sectors and worldwide demand); technology (the old and new players); and health. Each sector will have a one session introduction, and a one session in-depth discussion of specific companies (old players and new players). Along the way, for those who need the background, we will learn the financial terminology of the "Annual Report," government sources of information, and how we might look at our own observations. This is NOT a "stockpickers" course, but it is an effort to help us be more sophisticated in our analysis of US businesses. It should also be noted that many folks in the room will have retired from these industries, and they are very welcome to share their insights.

The class will be discussion-based with guideline questions prepared by the course leader. In-depth discussion on specific sectors from those who have worked in them will be most welcome. Materials will consist, in the main, of articles, annual reports, and government reports. The course leader will try to limit the assignments to one-two hours a week, but it will be variable depending on the group's experience with financial reporting. There will be an effort to assist beginners with the data/information analysis, as well as a challenge to the more advanced to analyze more deeply. We will share the analytical conclusions.

Computer ability in terms of "retrieval of data" is desirable, but not required, although the CL will distribute all material in printed format.

Biography:

The CL has graduate degrees in economic history, and business. Previous to a business career she was a college (Northeastern), and high school teacher. Her business career began in international consulting with a major firm, working for businesses worldwide. The thrust of the work involved assisting businesses in deciding what products/markets/ to develop, and what their level of investment

should be (strategic planning). Following international consulting, the CL was a director/officer/manager in a number of large companies in the defense, telecommunications, finance, and hospitality industries.

Th-C1-10-TBE: Enchanted Evenings: Great American Musicals and Their Sources

Course Leader: Verne Vance

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE

Course Description:

The classic American musicals developed over the 30 years from 1927 to 1957 remain one of the enduring glories of the American stage. In this course we will examine six of those musicals and the literary sources on which they were based. We will study the process by which those sources were transformed into iconic, long-running Broadway shows that were applauded by critics and public alike. The six musicals are Jerome Kern's *Show Boat*, Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Carousel*, Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate*, Frank Loesser's *Guys and Dolls*, Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady*, and Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*.

My basic goal is for class members to develop a richer understanding of the process by which one literary source is used to create another and a fuller appreciation of what has made these six musicals an enduring part of American culture. The topic is important, as it represents a key element of American culture that helped sustain Americans through the difficult times of the Depression, World War II, the Korean War and aspects of the Cold War. I plan to present the topic through a combination of mini-lectures, audio-visual materials, and facilitated class discussion of the various works. There will probably be little in the way of formal class reports, although I encourage class members to volunteer to share with the class brief reports on matters that are of interest to them, such as the biographies of those involved in creating and starring in the musicals or those who created the literary sources on which the musicals were based. I expect that, in general, class members will require about two hours of class preparation time each week.

Books and other resources:

- Edna Ferber, *Show Boat*, Vintage Movie Classics
- Ferenc Molnar (Trans. Benjamin Glazer), *Liliom*, Playhouse Press, 1999
- William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, various publishers
- Damon Runyon, *Guys and Dolls*, Penguin Books, 1992
- George Bernard Shaw/Alan Jay Lerner, *Pygmalion/My Fair Lady*, Signet Classics, 1980

- William Shakespeare/Arthur Laurents, *Romeo and Juliet/West Side Story*, Laurel-Leaf Books, 1965

Biography:

I have led this course several times at Regis College (LLARC) and Brandeis (BOLLI). I am a retired corporate attorney with a lifelong interest in theatre, including musical theatre. As an avocation, I write and perform in plays in various regional theatre companies.

Th-B1-10-TBE: The Dysfunctional Family: The Dysfunctional Woman

Course Leader: Lois Ziegelman

Day/Time: 10-week course starting Thursday, Feb. 26, at TBE

Course Description:

Although the term "dysfunctional family" is a creation of modern psychology, from classical antiquity onward, the great dramatists - keen analysts of the human psyche - have portrayed the dysfunctional family in a series of brilliant and moving works. This course will focus on the dysfunctional woman. It will be presented as a series of lectures, discussions and the presentations of selected scenes by volunteers from the class. Some works may be discussed more than others, depending on the interest of the group. There will be approximately two and a half hours of reading a week.

Books and other resources:

No specified editions:

- *Medea*, by Euripides
- *A Doll's House*, by Henrik Ibsen
- *The Glass Menagerie*, by Tennessee Williams
- *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf*, by Edward Albee

Biography:

Lois Ziegelman is a Professor Emeritus from Framingham State College, where her specialties were world literature and drama. A recipient of five fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, she has studied, taught and performed literature from classical antiquity to the present.