

# BOWDOIN COLLEGE

Information as of 30 October 2009

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## First-Year Seminars Offered Fall 2009

### AFRICANA STUDIES

**Africana Studies 10b. Racism.** TTh 11:30-12:55. ROY PARTRIDGE.

Examines issues of racism in the United States, with attention to the social psychology of racism, its history, its relationship to social structure, and its ethical and moral implications. (Same as **Sociology 10**.)

*Note:* This course counts toward the major and minor in gender and women's studies.

**Africana Studies 11c. Slavery and the Literary Imagination.** TTh 10:00-11:25. TESS CHAKKALAKAL.

Introduces students to the literature of slavery. Looks at eighteenth- and nineteenth-century slave narratives, antislavery/proslavery fiction and non-fiction, and visual representations of slavery in the form of photographs, paintings, and minstrel performances. Authors include Equiano, Wheatley, Jefferson, Melville, Douglass, and Stowe. Twentieth- and twenty-first-century narratives include former slave testimonials, novels by Morrison, Faulkner, Williams, Styron, and Jones. (Same as **English 11**.)

**Africana Studies 23c. Writing the Racial Mountain in the Age of Jim Crow.** TTh 10:00-11:25. KEONA ERVIN.

What did it mean to be black in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? What sources did prominent African American leaders in this period draw upon to understand meanings of the racialized self? Explores arguments about and controversies over "the strange meaning of being black" from the post-Reconstruction period to the Great Depression. Focuses on intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and class. (Same as **Gender and Women's Studies 25** and **History 23**.)

### ANTHROPOLOGY

**Anthropology 24b. Culture at the Top of the World.** TTh 2:30-3:55. JAN BRUNSON.

As the highest mountains on earth, the Himalayas have held the fascination of many people around the world. Investigates two divergent cultures that exist at the "Top of the World": the culture of climbing expeditions on Everest, and the culture of the ethnic group commonly referred to as Sherpas. How do the extreme conditions on Everest create a shared culture among mountaineers? Who are the Sherpas, and how has their interaction with climbers altered their identity? What is the nature of the interdependence and the brokerage of power between two such parties? Explores the issues of cultural identity that accompany global tourism by examining the intersection of these two groups.

### ART HISTORY

**Art History 10c. The Art of Winslow Homer.** TTh 1:00-2:25. LINDA DOCHERTY.

A study of Winslow Homer's paintings, prints, and watercolors as individual and cultural expressions. Emphasis is placed on learning to read works of art, to research them, to interpret them in historical context, and to write clearly and intelligently about them. Students work closely with the Homer collection in the Bowdoin College Museum of Art and visit sites that the artist painted at Prout's Neck, Maine.

### ASIAN STUDIES

**Asian Studies 17c. Shanghai Imagined.** TTh 1:00-2:25. BELINDA KONG.

Examines literary and filmic representations of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. Explores how Shanghai imagined itself through its own writers at the time, as well as how it has been imagined retrospectively by contemporary writers and filmmakers, both within mainland China and in the diaspora. Topics include Shanghai's history of semi-colonialism; conceptions of cosmopolitanism and modernity; intersecting discourses of gender, nationalism, and colonialism; the status of Westerners and the figure of the Eurasian; the Sino-Japanese War and representations of the Japanese soldier; the Jewish ghetto; and hybrid cultural forms such as Shanghai jazz. (Same as **English 14**.)

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**Asian Studies 19b. East Asian Politics: Introductory Seminar.** TTh 10:00-11:25. HENRY C. W. LAURENCE.

Surveys the diverse political, social, and economic arrangements across East Asia. China, Japan, and North and South Korea are the main focus, but attention is also paid to the other countries in the region. Examines the relationship between democracy and economic change in East Asia, and asks if the relationship is different in Asia than elsewhere in the world. Other questions include: Are there common “Asian values” and if so, what are they? What is the role of Confucianism in shaping social, political, and economic life in the region? How are economic and technological developments affecting traditional social institutions such as families? How is the status of women changing? What lies ahead for Asia? (Same as **Government 19.**)

**Asian Studies 28c. The History of Tea in East Asia.** TTh 2:30-3:55. LAWRENCE ZHANG.

Tea is one of the world’s most consumed beverages, as well as a significant internationally traded commodity throughout history. Familiarizes the student with the history of tea in East Asia since 800 C.E. to the present. Topics include its modes of consumption and production, trade, aesthetic, as well as notions of tradition and the beverage’s changing role in the twenty-first century. Primary and secondary sources include translated Chinese and Japanese texts on tea. (Same as **History 28.**)

*Note:* This course fulfills the pre-modern requirement for history majors.

## CLASSICS

**Classics 11c. Shame, Honor, and Responsibility.** MW 2:30-3:55. JENNIFER CLARKE KOSAK.

Examines Greek and Roman notions of responsibility to family, state, and self, and the social ideals and pressures that shaped ancient attitudes towards duty, shame, and honor. Readings may include works by Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, Ovid, and Petronius.

## DANCE

**Dance 10c. Understanding Theater and Dance: Doing, Viewing, and Reviewing.** TTh 10:00-11:25. JUNE VAIL.

The goal is appreciation and understanding of contemporary performance. Investigates critical perspectives on dance, drama and other performance events. Develops viewing and writing skills: description, analysis, interpretation, evaluation. Attending live performances, on and off campus, watching films and videos, and participating in studio workshops with performers and writers provide a basis for four essays and other modes of critical response—written, oral, or visual. (Same as **Theater 10.**)

## EDUCATION

**Education 20c. The Educational Crusade.** TTh 1:00-2:25. CHARLES DORN.

Why do you go to school? What is the central purpose of public education in the United States? Should public schools prepare students for college? The workforce? Competent citizenship? Who makes these decisions and through what policy process are they implemented? Explores the ways that public school reformers have answered such questions, from the “Common School Crusaders” of the early nineteenth century to present advocates of “No Child Left Behind.” Examining public education as both a product of social, political, and economic change and as a force in molding American society, highlights enduring tensions in the development and practice of public schooling in a democratic republic.

## ENGLISH

**English 10c. Modern American Poets.** TTh 1:00-2:25. CELESTE GOODRIDGE.

Analysis of the work of authors who may include Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, and Marianne Moore.

**English 11c. Slavery and the Literary Imagination.** TTh 10:00-11:25. TESS CHAKKALAKAL.

Introduces students to the literature of slavery. Looks at eighteenth- and nineteenth-century slave narratives, antislavery/proslavery fiction and non-fiction, and visual representations of slavery in the form of photographs, paintings, and minstrel performances. Authors include Equiano, Wheatley, Jefferson, Melville, Douglass, and Stowe. Twentieth- and twenty-first-century narratives include former slave testimonials, novels by Morrison, Faulkner, Williams, Styron, and Jones. (Same as **Africana Studies 11.**)

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**English 12c. Stoic Heroes and Disenchanted Knights.** TTh 11:30-12:55. MARY AGNES EDSALL.

An inquiry into the construction of heroic and chivalric masculinities in literature from Virgil to Chaucer, with a strong focus on the historical and social contexts that help make these pre-modern texts intelligible. Attention given to sex/gender systems; to the ideological power of myth, legend, and romance; and to the afterlife of ideals of heroism and chivalry. Texts may include Virgil's *Aeneid*, *Beowulf*, *The Song of Roland*, Chrétien de Troyes' *The Knight of the Lion*, Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, and selections from the nineteenth-century "chivalric revival."

**English 13c. Hawthorne.** TTh 2:30-3:55. WILLIAM WATTERSON.

Readings include selected short stories, *Fanshawe*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Blithedale Romance*, *The House of the Seven Gables*, *The Marble Faun*, *Septimus Felton*, and James Mellow's *Nathaniel Hawthorne in His Times*.

**English 14c. Shanghai Imagined.** TTh 1:00-2:25. BELINDA KONG.

Examines literary and filmic representations of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. Explores how Shanghai imagined itself through its own writers at the time, as well as how it has been imagined retrospectively by contemporary writers and filmmakers, both within mainland China and in the diaspora. Topics include Shanghai's history of semi-colonialism; conceptions of cosmopolitanism and modernity; intersecting discourses of gender, nationalism, and colonialism; the status of Westerners and the figure of the Eurasian; the Sino-Japanese War and representations of the Japanese soldier; the Jewish ghetto; and hybrid cultural forms such as Shanghai jazz. (Same as **Asian Studies 17**.)

**English 15c. Utopian Aesthetics.** MW 2:30-3:55. AARON KITCH.

Explores literary dreamworlds from Plato to contemporary America. How do idealized societies relate to existing social orders? What forms of aesthetic, political, and cultural desires find a place in political fantasies? Considers dystopias as well as utopias. Reading may include Plato, Thomas More, Jonathan Swift, Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, William Morris, B.F. Skinner, and Margaret Atwood; films may include *Blade Runner* and *Brazil*.

**English 16c. Alternative Intelligences.** TTh 2:30-3:55. HILARY THOMPSON.

Investigates the concept of intelligence by analyzing literary representations of ways of thinking that are frequently considered exceptional: artificial intelligence, animal cognition, and indigenous knowledge. Explores the societal impact of different definitions of intelligence and considers whether recent literature might suggest new understandings of this concept. Authors to be studied may include Arthur C. Clarke, Kurt Vonnegut, Stanislaw Lem, Jorge Luis Borges, Amitav Ghosh, Colson Whitehead, and Haruki Murakami.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

**Environmental Studies 15c. Frontier Crossings: The Western Experience in American History.** MW 2:30-3:55. MATTHEW KLINGLE.

What accounts for the persistence of the "frontier myth" in American history, and why do Americans continue to find the idea so attractive? Explores the creation of and disputes over what became of the western United States from 1763 to the present. Topics include Euro-American relations with Native Americans; the creation of borders and national identities; the effect of nature and ideology; the role of labor and gender in the backcountry; and the enduring influence of frontier imagery in popular culture. (Same as **History 15**.)

## GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES

**Gender and Women's Studies 25c. Writing the Racial Mountain in the Age of Jim Crow.** TTh 10:00-11:25. KEONA ERVIN.

What did it mean to be black in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? What sources did prominent African American leaders in this period draw upon to understand meanings of the racialized self? Explores arguments about and controversies over "the strange meaning of being black" from the post-Reconstruction period to the Great Depression. Focuses on intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and class. (Same as **Africana Studies 23** and **History 23**.)

## GOVERNMENT

**Government 10b. The Pursuit of Peace.** TTh 11:30-12:55. ALLEN L. SPRINGER.

Examines different strategies for preventing and controlling armed conflict in international society, and emphasizes the role of diplomacy, international law, and international organizations in the peace-making process.

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**Government 25b. American Politics: Representation, Participation, and Power.** MW 2:30-3:55. JANET M. MARTIN.

An introductory seminar in American national politics. Readings, papers, and discussion explore the changing nature of power and participation in the American polity, with a focus on the interaction between individuals (non-voters, voters, party leaders, members of Congress, the President) and political institutions (parties, Congress, the executive branch, the judiciary). Not open to students who have credit for or are concurrently taking **Government 150**.

**Government 26b. Fundamental Questions: Exercises in Political Theory.** TTh 2:30-3:55. JEAN M. YARBROUGH.

Explores the fundamental questions in political life: What is justice? What is happiness? Are human beings equal or unequal by nature? Do they even have a nature, or are they “socially constructed”? Are there ethical standards for political action that exist prior to law and, if so, where do they come from? Nature? God? History? Readings may include Plato, the Bible, Machiavelli, Shakespeare, Marx, Mill, and Nietzsche.

**Government 28b. Human Being and Citizen.** MW 2:30-3:55. PAUL N. FRANCO.

An introduction to the fundamental issues of political philosophy: human nature, the relationship between individual and political community, the nature of justice, the place of virtue, the idea of freedom, and the role of history. Readings span both ancient and modern philosophical literature. Authors may include Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, the American Founders, Tocqueville, Mill, and Nietzsche.

## HISTORY

**History 10c. Monsters, Marvels, and Messiahs: Europe during the Age of Discovery.** MW 1:00-2:25. DALLAS DENERY.

Examines how Europeans have sought to understand themselves and the world around them through travel and travel literature. Particular attention paid to the fascinating ways in which Europeans have used travel narratives to define and distinguish themselves from their “others.”

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**History 23c. Writing the Racial Mountain in the Age of Jim Crow.** TTh 10:00-11:25. KEONA ERVIN.

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**History 28c. The History of Tea in East Asia.** TTh 2:30-3:55. LAWRENCE ZHANG.

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## PHILOSOPHY

**Philosophy 15c. Altruism.** MW 1:00-2:25. LAWRENCE SIMON.

What is altruism? Does it really exist or are all our actions really self-interested? Are self-interest and altruism in conflict? How do we understand altruism from an evolutionary perspective? Can other animals act altruistically? Does morality require that we be altruistic? Are there limits on the amount of altruism morality can require of us? Examines these and related questions concerning the nature of altruism and its role in human life from biological, psychological, and philosophical perspectives.

**Philosophy 18c. Love.** MW 2:30-3:55. SARAH CONLY.

Love. What is the nature and value of love? Why is love so important to us? Is love necessary for a successful life? If so, why? Is life-long love possible? Is love selfish or unselfish? Is the search for love destructive? Uses philosophical texts and some fictional representations to examine these and other questions.

## PSYCHOLOGY

**Psychology 10b. What's on Your Mind? An Introduction to the Brain and Behavior.** TTh 10:00-11:25. SETH J. RAMUS.

A general introduction to the science of psychology, with a specific emphasis on the brain's control of human and animal behavior. Uses historical texts, "popular" science books, and primary literature to explore the mind-body connections within topics such as learning and memory, perception, development, stress, social behavior, personality, and choice.

## RELIGION

**Religion 10c. Seeking a Historical Jesus.** TTh 2:30-3:55. DANIEL ULLUCCI.

Christianity claims that all its beliefs are rooted in the words and actions of one man. But what do we really know about Jesus? Early Christian texts give conflicting reports of his words and actions. Modern authors, filmmakers, and scholars present wildly divergent reconstructions of his life. What can we know about the life, words, and deeds of Jesus? Examines the earliest evidence and the most recent scholarly findings. Emphasis placed on understanding ancient Mediterranean religion and modern historical methodology.

**Religion 25c. The Islamic Revolution of Iran.** MW 2:30-3:55. ROBERT G. MORRISON.

The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran changed the way Muslims and non-Muslims viewed the potential for religion in the political arena. Focuses on the history of Shi'i Islam's views of political involvement, transformative events of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Iranian history, and the careers of religious leaders such as the Ayatollah Khomeini. Concludes by examining religious and political developments in post-revolutionary Iran.

## SOCIOLOGY

**Sociology 10b. Racism.** TTh 11:30-12:55. ROY PARTRIDGE.

Examines issues of racism in the United States, with attention to the social psychology of racism, its history, its relationship to social structure, and its ethical and moral implications. (Same as **Africana Studies 10.**)

*Note:* This course counts toward the major and minor in gender and women's studies.

## THEATER

**Theater 10c. Understanding Theater and Dance: Doing, Viewing, and Reviewing.** TTh 10:00-11:25. JUNE VAIL.

The goal is appreciation and understanding of contemporary performance. Investigates critical perspectives on dance, drama and other performance events. Develops viewing and writing skills: description, analysis, interpretation, evaluation. Attending live performances, on and off campus, watching films and videos, and participating in studio workshops with performers and writers provide a basis for four essays and other modes of critical response—written, oral, or visual. (Same as **Dance 10.**)

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