

# BOWDOIN COLLEGE

## First-Year Seminars to be Offered Spring 2009

Information as of 30 October 2008

### AFRICANA STUDIES

**Africana Studies 20c.d. African American Children's Literature.** TTh 1:00-2:25. ELIZABETH MUTHER.

Beginning with W. E. B. Du Bois's serial magazine of the 1920s, *The Brownies' Book*, explores a century of African American literature for and about children. Examines the strong tradition of child-narrated fiction for teens and adults from the 1960s and 70s by such writers as Ernest Gaines, Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, Louise Meriwether, and Ann Petry. Considers the emergence of a conscious Black Arts aesthetic in children's literature and its relationship to the flowering of multicultural children's literature in recent decades. Explores prize-winning fiction and graphic narratives for middle readers and adolescents as well as the collaborations of writers and artists in the contemporary "golden age" of African American picture books. (Same as **English 20**.)

### ART HISTORY

**Art History 12c. Picasso and Matisse.** TTh 2:30-3:55. PAMELA FLETCHER.

Examines the painting of Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, in the context of modern painting, philosophy, and history. Particular attention is paid to the creative exchanges and rivalries between the two artists, as well as their role in the popular understanding of modern art and the role of the artist in society.

**Art History 21c. Art and Globalization.** MW 11:30-12:55. LAUREN KROIZ.

Explores the intersection of contemporary art with globalization by framing our contemporary period within a larger modern history of cultural and mercantile exchange. Introduces vocabulary, techniques, and methods of art history to explore how artists and artworks enforce and destabilize the shifting boundaries between nations, cultures, religions, and peoples. Considers, for example, the recent rise of international art biennials and global museum expansions as evidence contemporary visual art can bridge national differences, alongside riots over cartoons of the Islamic prophet Muhammad that challenge the unifying role of visual representation in an era of globalization.

### ENGLISH

**English 19c. Imaginary Plagues.** MWF 8:30-9:25. ANN KIBBIE.

Explores the representation of plagues and epidemic diseases in literature and film. Novels will include Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*, Albert Camus' *The Plague* and José Saramago's *Blindness*. Films will include Elia Kazan's *Panic in the Streets*; Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) and Philip Kaufman's 1978 remake; and John Carpenter's *The Thing* (1982).

**English 20c.d. African American Children's Literature.** TTh 1:00-2:25. ELIZABETH MUTHER.

Beginning with W. E. B. Du Bois's serial magazine of the 1920s, *The Brownies' Book*, explores a century of African American literature for and about children. Examines the strong tradition of child-narrated fiction for teens and adults from the 1960s and 70s by such writers as Ernest Gaines, Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, Louise Meriwether, and Ann Petry. Considers the emergence of a conscious Black Arts aesthetic in children's literature and its relationship to the flowering of multicultural children's literature in recent decades. Explores prize-winning fiction and graphic narratives for middle readers and adolescents as well as the collaborations of writers and artists in the contemporary "golden age" of African American picture books. (Same as **Africana Studies 20**.)

**English 21c. Shakespeare's Afterlives.** TTh 1:00-2:25. AARON KITCH.

Falstaff in the suburbs, Richard III in Nazi Germany, King Lear on an Iowa farm. We explore how England's most famous author has been translated and appropriated over the centuries. Topics include political, aesthetic, and cultural meanings in the process of adapting Shakespeare as well as the media shift a play experiences as it moves from page to stage to image (and sometimes back again). In addition to reading representative plays by Shakespeare, authors may include W. H. Auden, Isak Denisen, Tom Stoppard, and Jane Smiley. Screenings of films may include Richard Loncraine's *Richard III* and Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books*.

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**English 22c. Femmes Fatales, Lady Killers, and Other Dangerous Women.** TTh 2:30-3:55 and film screenings M 7:00-9:55pm. AVIVA BRIEFEL.

Explores a popular cinematic image: the dangerous—and sometimes deadly—woman. By analyzing a range of films from classical Hollywood cinema to the present day, explores the various forms that this female figure assumes: the femme fatale, the tragic mulatto, the jealous or vindictive woman, the murderous lesbian, the revenge seeker, etc. Examines why the various permutations of the dangerous female have attained such a prevalent place on the silver screen. What is so seductive about the deadly woman? Also introduces students to film criticism. Films may include *Basic Instinct*, *Carrie*, *Double Indemnity*, *Fatal Attraction*, *Gilda*, *Kill Bill*, *Mildred Pierce*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Thelma and Louise*, and *Vertigo*. (Same as **Gay and Lesbian Studies 22** and **Gender and Women's Studies 19**.)

**English 23c. Arab and Jew in Literature and Film.** MW 11:30-12:55. MARILYN REIZBAUM.

Considers the interface between Arabs and Jews as produced on page and screen. Offers both geographical and generic range, bringing into view texts that talk to each other across ethnic, religious, historical, and theoretical boundaries. When these two figures are placed in relation to each other, they must invoke the Middle East, in particular Palestine-Israel: discusses works in translation, fiction and poetry, from the broad region, and may include authors Anton Shammas, Mahmoud Darwish, Ronit Matalon, Shimon Ballas, Haim Hazazz; writers in English such as Naomi Shihab Nye, Ammiel Alcalay, Philip Roth, Edward Said, and Ella Shohat; films by Elia Suleiman (*Chronicle of a Disappearance*), Khleifi (*Wedding in Galilee*), Gitai (*Kippur*), Abu-Assad (*Paradise Now*), Kolirin (*The Band's Visit*), Kassovitz (*Hate*); and visual artists Mona Hatoum and Adi Nes.

## 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**.)

## FRENCH

**French 18c. Don Juan and His Critics.** TTh 10:00-11:25. ANNELLE CURULLA.

Investigates the myth of Don Juan in French and British literature of the Enlightenment and Romantic periods. Works include Molière, Laclos, Haywood, Byron, and Baudelaire. Studies male and female avatars and enemies of Don Juan in light of broader issues concerning liberty and conformity, religion and disbelief, seduction and individual rights, as well as gender and sexuality.

## GAY AND LESBIAN STUDIES

**Gay and Lesbian Studies 22c. Femmes Fatales, Lady Killers, and Other Dangerous Women.** TTh 2:30-3: 55 and film screenings M 7:00-9:55pm. AVIVA BRIEFEL.

Explores a popular cinematic image: the dangerous—and sometimes deadly—woman. By analyzing a range of films from classical Hollywood cinema to the present day, explores the various forms that this female figure assumes: the femme fatale, the tragic mulatto, the jealous or vindictive woman, the murderous lesbian, the revenge seeker, etc. Examines why the various permutations of the dangerous female have attained such a prevalent place on the silver screen. What is so seductive about the deadly woman? Also introduces students to film criticism. Films may include *Basic Instinct*, *Carrie*, *Double Indemnity*, *Fatal Attraction*, *Gilda*, *Kill Bill*, *Mildred Pierce*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Thelma and Louise*, and *Vertigo*. (Same as **English 22** and **Gender and Women's Studies 19**.)

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## GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES

**Gender and Women's Studies 19c. Femmes Fatales, Lady Killers, and Other Dangerous Women.** TTh 2:30-3: 55 and film screenings M 7:00-9:55pm. AVIVA BRIEFEL.

Explores a popular cinematic image: the dangerous—and sometimes deadly—woman. By analyzing a range of films from classical Hollywood cinema to the present day, explores the various forms that this female figure assumes: the femme fatale, the tragic mulatto, the jealous or vindictive woman, the murderous lesbian, the revenge seeker, etc. Examines why the various permutations of the dangerous female have attained such a prevalent place on the silver screen. What is so seductive about the deadly woman? Also introduces students to film criticism. Films may include *Basic Instinct*, *Carrie*, *Double Indemnity*, *Fatal Attraction*, *Gilda*, *Kill Bill*, *Mildred Pierce*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Thelma and Louise*, and *Vertigo*. (Same as **English 22** and **Gay and Lesbian Studies 22**.)

**Gender and Women's Studies 21c. Bad Girls of the 1950s.** MW 1:00-2:25. JENNIFER SCANLON.

Explores the representation and life experiences of women who did not fit the cultural norm of suburban motherhood in 1950s America. Focuses on issues of class, race, sexuality and gender in a decade shaped by fears about nuclear war and communism, and by social and political conformity. Topics include teenage pregnancy, women's grassroots political leadership, single womanhood, civil rights, emergent feminism, and, finally, the enduring cultural resonance of the apron-clad 1950s mom. Engages a variety of primary and secondary sources. (Same as **History 19**.)

## GOVERNMENT

**Government 23b,d. Imperialism and Colonialism: Power, Influence, and Inequality in World Politics.** TTh 11:30-12:55. ERICKA A. ALBAUGH.

Especially since 9/11, America has been criticized for its global dominance and accused of harboring imperial ambitions. Examines a long history of conquest and control by strong countries over weak, focusing on the expansion of European influence over much of the globe, which involved both direct settlement and indirect control. Assesses the motivations for this expansion and the economic, social, and political consequences it had within Europe and in the peripheral areas of conquest. Considers whether the United States, as the current world hegemon and compared to historical world powers, is abusing its power or making the world a more peaceful place.

## HISTORY

**History 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 **Environmental Studies 15**.)

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## PHILOSOPHY

**Philosophy 14c. The Nature of Poetry.** TTh 10:00-11:25. DENIS CORISH.

What is the nature of poetry? This is a philosophical question, considered by using traditional and contemporary poems as examples. Also considers the relation of philosophy to poetry in the particularly interesting case of the condemnation of poetry by the Greek philosopher Plato.

## SOCIOLOGY

**Sociology 22b. In the Facebook Age.** TTh 10:00-11:25. DHIRAJ MURTHY.

Explores new media forms through discourses of culture, race, space, and power. From the development of the first electronic messaging systems in the 1960s to the advent of interactive social networking Web sites such as Facebook, Bebo and hi5, the role of computer mediated communication in shaping economies, politics, and societies is discussed. Uses a wide range of sources—recent social science research, Web sites, Facebook, YouTube videos—to examine the roles of new media both in the United States and abroad.

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